



el segundo idioma

The importance of a second language

The globalized world in which we live demands the ability to speak a second language. This linguistic capacity allows people to form part of the interconnected, global community and to effectively communicate information in a number of diverse spheres, including in business and culture.

Dr. Masatoshi Sato of the Faculty of Education at the Universidad Andrés Bello is studying the ways in which students acquire a second language and how this learning process can be improved.

"Specifically, our research uses the scientific method to examine the instructional styles used within classrooms that help students to learn more effectively," explains Dr. Sato.

Furthermore, Dr. Sato has diagnosed the current status of language education in Chile, a country in which English is taught as a second language. "The principal challenge being faced today is that instructors are teaching in the same way that they were taught. In Chile, the educational methods underlying teaching English as a second language are very traditional. For example, English is taught in Spanish, and students are asked to memorize grammatical rules and vocabulary without having an opportunity to practice the language," says Dr. Sato.

The principal objective of Dr. Sato's research, which is funded by a Fondecyt de Iniciación Project, is to deeply explore pedagogical methods that can be used to further the learning of a second language. "Our goal is to understand the mechanisms that facilitate the learning process, thereby contributing to scientific understandings on the acquisition of a second language. Through our results, we hope to contribute to the current educational system by providing relevant information to language instructors, in addition to providing technical training on techniques that have been scientifically supported as effective," concludes Dr. Masatoshi Sato.