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Challenges of autonomous acquisition of English grammar at the tertiary level

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The Covid pandemic in the world seems to have introduced changes to stay in foreign language acquisition as well because both students and the teaching staff have realized that the use of technology-based forms of language acquisition can be applied also when studies are not held online. The situation has also facilitated autonomous learning. The goal of the present study is to investigate the challenges students experienced when acquiring English grammar autonomously via blended learning classes. The research participants were undergraduate students of a foreign language and business programme at a university in Latvia. The way how they did grammar exercises autonomously, the students' opinion obtained from a survey on autonomous acquisition of English grammar and the students' test results were analysed. The research findings indicate that many students found it difficult to acquire English grammar when they were not guided by lecturers or textbooks in a passive learning environment but had to be responsible for their own learning. The variety of resources offered also caused problems. At the same time, the test results were better for those students who had spent more time practicing the grammar exercises available for self-study. The research findings allow the authors to conclude that students should be encouraged and assisted in developing their metacognitive strategies necessary for autonomous learning, which are also useful in their future careers in the modern labour environment.

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