

**FACTORS THAT MIGHT HAVE AN INFLUENCE IN THE MOTIVATION OF  
THE STUDENTS FROM THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH PROGRAM TO  
LEARN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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PASTO  
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**Monograph Presented to The English and French Program as a  
Requirement Of Partial Fulfillment To Obtain The B.A In Education**

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PASTO  
2003**

NOTE OF ACCEPTANCE

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San Juan de Pasto, 13 august 2003

I do not know how many names I can write in this page .....

I only know that the persons I love and who love me know their names should  
be written here as they are in my heart..  
They know who they are....

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## **ABSTRACT**

Motivation is a psychological variable influenced by many factors that determines the way a task is carried out, and its success. The present work describes what are the factors that might influence the motivation of the students from the English and French program to learn English as a foreign language, according to the opinion of the students from the program. The information was collected by means of a questionnaire composed of 32 statements and a scale of 5 items to answer it. According to the students there are internal and external factors that influence their motivation to learn English, but the most relevant influence is felt in the external aspects such as the methodology used by the teacher. Students manifest they need more creativity from teachers in the classes development .

## **RESUMEN**

La motivación es una variable psicológica influenciada por muchos factores que determina la forma en la que se lleva a cabo una tarea y su éxito final. El presente trabajo describe cuales son los factores que pueden influenciar la motivación de los estudiantes del programa de Ingles -Francés para aprender Ingles como lengua extranjera, según la opinión de los estudiantes. La información fue recolectada por medio de una encuesta compuesta por 32 oraciones y una escala de 5 ítem para contestarla. Según los estudiantes hay factores internos y externos que influyen la motivación, pero son mas relevantes los factores externos como la metodología usada por el profesor en el desarrollo de las clases. Los estudiantes manifiestan que necesitan mas creatividad por parte de los profesores en el desarrollo de las clases.

## INTRODUCTION

Teaching a foreign language is a complex process that involves many internal and external factors. A big part of these factors are related directly to the students, who are principal participants of this process. Among these factors and in a place of remarkable importance, motivation can be listed. Its influence in the learning process cannot be denied, although its own nature seems so confusing to researchers, who have not been able to understand how it comes to be and how it influences human behavior.

Language teachers ask recurrently how could they make their task more effective by dealing properly with motivation. Maybe the answer could be provided by the careful interpretation of what happens inside the classroom and of the attitudes of the students towards what they are doing. Research inside the classroom is surely a useful tool teachers are provided with to improve the task they do, obtaining not only benefits for the students but also knowledge and criteria to enhance the quality of their work.

## **1. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

This chapter is a presentation of the research problem, the influence of motivation of the students from the English and French program of the University of Nariño in relation to learning English as a foreign language, and the reasons that motivated research in this topic. The limitations, delimitation and significance of the study are stated and mentioned as well.

### **1.1 THE PROBLEM**

**1.1.1 Introduction to the problem.** Teaching a foreign language is a complex process that involves many internal and external factors. A big part of these factors are related directly to the students, who are principal participants of this process. Among these factors and in a place of remarkable importance, motivation can be listed. Its influence in the learning process cannot be denied, although its own nature seems so confusing to researchers, who have not been able to understand how it comes to be and how it influences human behavior.

Although its unquestionable importance, motivation is only one of the factors mediating in the learning process of a foreign or second language and it is directly and indirectly influenced by the other factors that take part in it. For language teachers, it is surely valuable to have a sight or at least a partial view of what happens in students' minds in relation to motivation to learn a foreign language because this view can give them elements to solve the problems of their work, or to make their task more effective, which is the goal of each good teacher.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.2.1 **Research question.** What is the influence of the motivation of the students from the English and French program in relation to learning English as a foreign language?

## 1.3 DELIMITATIONS

1.3.1 **Definition of terms. Motivation:** According to Harmer quoted by Bernaus , motivation is “some kind of internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a course of action. If I perceive a goal and that goal is sufficiently attractive, I will be strongly motivated to do whatever is necessary to reach that goal”<sup>1</sup>. This does not mean that motivation is constant and that it does not have any change, according to Marshall quoted by Reeve motivation “is more a dynamic process and not a fix status”<sup>2</sup>.

1.3.2 **Population.** The population studied were twenty-eight students from the English and French program of the University of Nariño, seven from each semester men and women chosen at random, whose ages ranged from 17 to 34 years old and belonged to an average socio-economical level.

1.3.3 **Geographical.** This research took place at the University of Nariño located on the Panamericana Avenue. The university is located in the city of Pasto, department of Nariño, Colombia. The physical conditions of the university are privileged, and in a very good shape.

1.3.4 **Time.** The research was developed from May 2003 to August 2003.

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<sup>1</sup> BERNAUS, Mercedes. Activities that motivate and increase students' output. In: Forum. Vol, 25. No,1. (1987). P.45.

<sup>2</sup> REEVE, Jhon. Motivación y Emocion. Madrid: McGraw-Hill, 1994. p.50.

## **1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

**1.4.3 Purpose.** To find out what is the influence of the motivation of the students from the English and French program in relation to learning English as a foreign language.

## **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This research is important because it is intended to give us (the people involved in one way or another with the English and French program) a view of what is truly happening to the actors of the learning process. This is useful as an evaluation of the way this might influence the results of the process, and as information for us to create the necessary strategies or tools to change or improve the work we are doing as teachers and as students. My purpose is to do something useful for our program since it is always expected to grow and to improve.

Students and teachers are responsible for what happens in the learning process. Together they must be part of a team with a common interest: To change or correct work failures in order to improve the English and French program. With this research I start the path for future researchers interested in making our major better.

## **1.6 LIMITATIONS**

The information was collected in a qualitative way, by means of surveys applied to twenty-eight of the students from the English and French program. Because of the size of the sample it is possible that the conclusions might not be general to all the population, and only be elements to form a general view of the incidence of motivation in a foreign language learning process.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

**2.1.1 Concepts Of Motivation.** Motivation is a difficult concept to be defined in a unique way, because of the influence that the perceptions of each author in each subject and in determined time have or have had over it. The following are some definitions made by modern authors.

One of the definitions given by Atkinson quoted by Naranjo & Ordoñez states it as “a tendency activation to act to produce one or more effects”<sup>3</sup>. This implies that someone will act in a determined way with the expectancy of achieving a particular goal or getting something he or she wants. Here, the “desire” to get or to achieve something, is what makes the whole process work. Young quoted by the same authors, states that motivation is “A process to wake up the action, to keep the activity in process and to regulate the activity patron”<sup>4</sup>. It could be inferred that if motivation decreases in the development of any activity, it is likely that the quality of the way in which this was developed lessens, or that the process can be interrupted at any stage because of the lack of motivational impulse.

Mayor Martinez defines motivation as “ A psychological process, a force that urges from the interior, and impulses to action”<sup>5</sup>. According to this, motivation is what makes us act. And it comes always from inside us; not taking into account the exterior conditions that can have an influence on it. Jeremy Harmer quoted by Bernaus states that motivation is “some kind of internal drive that

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<sup>3</sup> CAICEDO, P. Y ORBES, G. Factores que inciden en la motivación de los estudiantes de bachillerato, para el aprendizaje del area de Ingles desde el punto de vista de los profesores. Pasto : P. Caicedo, 2002. p. 23. Tesis de grado (Licenciado en Lenguas Modernas: Ingles-Frances). Universidad de Nariño. Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Programa de Lenguas Modernas: Ingles - Frances.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid . , p.24.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid . , p.25.



encourages somebody to pursue a course of action. If we perceive a goal and that goal is sufficiently attractive, we will be strongly motivated to do whatever is necessary to reach that goal”<sup>6</sup>. This definition does not acknowledge any kind of external influences that could affect motivation. Motivation depends only on you and on the attractiveness of the goal, and if the goal is sufficiently attractive motivation is supposed to be constant.

According to Marshall quoted by Reeve motivation “is more a dynamic process and not a fix status”<sup>7</sup>. Motivation is constantly changing, growing or decreasing, and there are two kinds of motivation, self-regulated, that comes from inside you, or regulated by the conditions of the environment. Both agents, internal and external contribute to the motivation to make a person act in a determined way.

For this author, persons have lots of motifs with different intensity that can influence in the behavior at any moment. A person can have many different motifs to act at a time, a strong motif and several weak motifs. The strongest motif has more influence over the behavior of a person, the other motifs do not affect behavior immediately, but they can influence behavior at any time. The power of our motifs grows and decreases with the time.

For the purposes of this research, the definition of motivation that best explains its meaning, is that of Marshall, because it acknowledges the importance of internal motivation but also the existence of external influences. From my point of view, behavior is influenced by a strong motif from many different motifs, and they are changing constantly for many reasons, I agree with the author because motivation is something that is always becoming different.

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<sup>6</sup> BERNAUS, Mercedes. Activities that motivate and increase students' output. In: Forum. Vol, 25. No,1. (1987). P.45.

<sup>7</sup> REEVE, Jhon. Motivación y Emocion. Madrid: McGraw-Hill, 1994. p. 12-20.

**2.1.2 Four general approaches to motivation.** Motivation is a field of study that has been studied by many authors of different subject matters. The motivational approaches differ in their concepts of motivation but are useful to help you understand this phenomenon. I will examine briefly each approach according to a proposal made by Woolfolk<sup>8</sup>.

**2.1.2.1 Behavioral approach.** This approach parts from the theories of classic conditioning, and takes into account two important concepts: reward and incentive. Reward is an attractive object or event supplied as a consequence of a behavior, an Incentive is an object or event that encourages or discourages behavior. According to this approach if we are constantly reinforced for certain behaviors, we may develop habits or tendencies to act in certain ways. For example, if a student receives money each time she obtains a good grade, she will be studying to get good grades all the time. The reward is the money for the behavior of obtaining good grades. This reward becomes an incentive because she studies in order to get good grades and obtain the reward.

**2.1.2.2 Humanistic approach.** This approach was born as a reply to behavioral approach. Among the principal theoreticians of this approach Maslow and Rogers could be mentioned. This approach emphasizes on concepts as personal freedom, choice, self-determination, sense of competence, self esteem, autonomy, self-actualization and striving for personal growth. People are continually motivated by the inborn need to fulfill their potential. According to this, if I have a home, money, good health and emotional stability I will look for learning or doing things that will make me feel satisfied or be a better person. But it is necessary that these basic needs be completely satisfied.

**2.1.2.3 Cognitive approach.** It appeared also as an answer to behavioral approach. From this point of view behavior is determined by our thinking, not simply by whether we have been rewarded or punished for the behavior in the

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<sup>8</sup> WOOLFOLK, Anita. Educational Psychology. Needham Heights : Allyn and Bacon, 1998. p. 26.

past. Behavior is initiated and regulated by plans, goals, schemas, expectations, and attributions. That is to say that people respond not to external events or physical conditions but rather to their interpretations of these events. These authors consider people as active and curious, always searching for information to solve personally relevant problems.

**2.1.2.4 Social Learning approach.** Westen states that “learning is the basis of behavior but mental processes (such as motivation) have a determining role in the way individuals respond to their environment”<sup>9</sup>. This approach is an integration of behavioral and cognitive approaches, because it takes into account both, behaviorists’ concern with the effects or outcomes of behavior and the cognitivists’ interest in the impact of individuals beliefs and expectations in the behavior of an individual. These theories incorporate concepts of conditioning from behaviorism adding a focus on cognition and on social learning. Albert Bandura is one of the principal theoreticians in this approach. He proposes that learning is the basis of personality and personality dispositions tend to be shaped by their consequences. The way people act reflects an interaction between the requirements of the situation and the persons’ learned tendencies to behave in a particular way under specific circumstances, which reflects their knowledge, expectations and beliefs. Woolfolk states that “Humans are always developing mental images of the environment and expectations about it, these images influence our behavior”<sup>10</sup> our actions reflect the schemas we use to understand the world, our expectations about what will happen if we act in a particular way and the degree to which we believe we can attain our goals. This theory is eminently rational, because according to this, thought is what produces behavior.

Several conditions must be met for a behavior to occur in face to a stimulus:

- **Encoding:** The individuals categorize the event or stimulus according to their expectancies, beliefs or previous experience.

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<sup>9</sup> WESTEN, Drew. Psychology: Mind, Brain and Culture. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996. p. 30.

<sup>10</sup> WOOLFOLK, Op. Cit., p. 244.

- **Personal value:** The individuals assign value to the possible consequence of the behavior expected according to the personal relevance of the goal.
- **Behavioral plan:** The individual formulates a plan of action to face the stimulus. This plan receives the influence of two important factors, the *behavior outcome expectancy* (expectation that the behavior will produce the desired outcome) and the *self-efficacy expectancy* (belief in the own ability to execute the behavior). Within this theory this aspect receives the name of the expectancy X value. This theory tries to explain motivation and emphasizes individuals' expectations for success combined with their valuing of the goal, that is to say how precious is the achievement of the goal for the individual.

It answers the following questions:

If I try hard, can I succeed? **EXPECTANCY**

If I succeed, will the outcome be valuable or rewarding to me? **VALUE**

If both, value of the goal and expectancy are zero, there is no motivation to work towards the goal. For example, if my goal is to make an English conversational club at the University, my *value* of that goal will be high if I really like English and want to practice it, the outcome will be fluency at speaking and a wide vocabulary, and the *expectancy* will be high also, if I consider myself good enough at speaking English, that is to say, able to develop the necessary tasks to reach that goal, then, It could be said that my motivation to work in order to reach the goal is high. On the contrary, if my goal is to join a chorus, the *expectancy* will be very low because I consider myself a terrible musician and the worst singer. So I know I won't be able to sing, and the *value* will be low. This is also due to the fact that joining a chorus is useless to me and motivation to work towards the goal will be zero. From my point of view this is the approach that best explains the reasons why people behave in a determined way.

- **Behavior:** The plan designed is executed. Each individual puts to work his/her *competences* which are the skills required to execute the behavior.
- **Self- regulation** This is a process of monitoring and adjusting behaviors and goals according to the consequences of the actions carried out and of the motivations and goals of each individual. When the goals change , the individual design another behavioral plan, executes this plan and self regulates the actions and goals.

According to Woolfolk <sup>11</sup>, the social learning approach proposes that we learn many things from the people around us with or without reinforcement, through social learning. Among these mechanisms are the following:

- **Observational learning:** It consists on learning by observing the behavior of others and the consequences this brought them. The impact of this kind of learning in humans is enormous, by observing we learn how to dress, to live, to face social situations.
- **Modeling:** This is a kind of observational learning in which learns to reproduce a behavior exhibited by a model. The likelihood that a person will imitate depends on factors such as the model's prestige, likeability and attractiveness. It also depends on the behavior's likely outcome.
- **Vicarious conditioning:** An individual can learn the consequences of an action by observing its consequences to someone else.
- **Tutelage:** This Kind of learning works in formal education, for example when you read a book or when you are taught a concept in formal instruction.

**2.1.3 Type s Of Motivation.** Motivation is more a dynamic process than a determined status. Motivation is always changing. It could be self-regulated or

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<sup>11</sup> WOOLFOLK, Op. Cit., p. 244-255.

regulated, in other words intrinsic or extrinsic motivations, according to the factors that influence it.

**2.1.3.1 Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.** When a student is intrinsically motivated he wants to learn for self-satisfaction or curiosity. He feels the necessity or the desire to learn.

According to Reeve, quoted by Caicedo & Orbes <sup>12</sup>, extrinsic motivation is based on external factors as money or rewards of any kind.

Students' attitudes can show teachers the kind of motivation they have. Williams & Burden quoted by Caicedo & Orbes<sup>13</sup> establishes five dimensions that compare intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation:

**INTRINSIC**

**EXTRINSIC**

Preference for Challenge.

Preference for easy  
work

Curiosity/ Interest

Satisfy teacher/ Get grades

Independence

Teacher dependence to solve  
difficulties

Independent judgment

Dependency on teacher's  
judgment about what to do

Internal success' criteria

External success' criteria

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<sup>12</sup> CAICEDO, P. Y ORBES, G. Factores que inciden en la motivación de los estudiantes de bachillerato, para el aprendizaje del área de Inglés desde el punto de vista de los profesores. Pasto : P. Caicedo, 2002. p. 32. Tesis de grado (Licenciado en Lenguas Modernas: Inglés-Francés). Universidad de Nariño. Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Programa de Lenguas Modernas: Inglés - Francés.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.33.

## 2.1.4 Motivation In Foreign Language Learning

Among the authors that have worked on motivation in foreign language learning the following could be mentioned:

Brown who made the following asseveration:

“Motivation is probably the most often used catch-all term for explaining the success or failure of virtually any complex task. It is easy to figure that in a task it is due simply to the fact that someone is “motivated”. It is easy in second language learning to claim that a learner will be successful with the proper motivation. Such claims are of course not erroneous, for countless studies and experiments in human learning have shown that motivation is a key to learning. However, what does it mean to say that someone is motivated? How do you create, foster and maintain motivation?

Motivation is commonly thought of as an inner drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves one to a particular action. More specifically, human beings universally have needs or drives that are more or less innate, yet their intensity is environmentally conditioned”<sup>14</sup>.

Our experience corroborates these ideas. When we are interested in learning one of the subject matters at the university, we are likely to achieve good results. On the contrary, when we do not want to learn a language because we do not like it, we fail our purpose. In order to achieve second language learning goals it is important to count on that impulse towards learning, because usefulness rarely influences it. Motivation is necessary to success in any kind of purpose. Brown quoted by Rivers<sup>15</sup>, proposes also the concept of “Confluent

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<sup>14</sup> BROWN, Douglas. Principles of language learning and teaching. New Jersey : Prentice Hall. 1987. p. 114.

<sup>15</sup> RIVERS, Wilga. Psychology, linguistics and Language teaching. In. Forum. Vol. 20. No. 2. (1982). P.11-20.

education”, which takes into account the intellect and the feelings in individual and group learning in order to guarantee success.

Ausubel, quoted by Brown, D., cited by Naranjo & Ordoñez <sup>16</sup> states a scale of six desires or needs of human organism commonly identified as undergirding the construct of motivation:

- The need for **exploration**, for seeing “the other side of the mountain”, for probing the unknown.
- The need for **manipulation**, for operating –to use Skinner’s term- on the environment and causing change.
- The need for **activity**, for movement and exercise, both physical and mental.
- The need for **stimulation**, the need to be stimulated by the environment, by other people, or by ideas thoughts or feelings.
- The need for **knowledge**, the need to process and internalize the results of exploration, manipulation, activity, and stimulation, to resolve contradictions, to quest for solutions to problems and for self-consistent systems of knowledge.
- The need of **ego enhancement**, for the self to be known and to be accepted and approved by others.

Brown <sup>17</sup>, also quotes Gardner & Lambert, who proposed two kinds of motivation in foreign languages: **INTEGRATIVE AND INSTRUMENTAL MOTIVATION.**

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<sup>16</sup> BROWN, Op. Cit., p. 114-116.

<sup>17</sup> BROWN, Op. Cit., p. 61.



A learner with integrative motivation wants to learn the language in order to be able to communicate with this community, to participate in its activities, and to learn about its culture. On the other hand, a learner with instrumental motivation wants to obtain the practical rewards of learning the language, for example to get a good job, to translate a book, or to get good grades.

As an example of integrative motivation I will mention the students from the English and French program who learn the languages with the object of traveling abroad, to know people from other cultures, because of their curiosity. An example of instrumental motivation are those students from the faculties who have to make two English levels in order to fulfill a requirement asked by the university. For these authors, learners with a higher integrative orientation are likely to achieve greater proficiency than those with instrumental motivation.

In this point, a question arises. The question can be formulated as: What is the kind of motivation that the students from the English and French program have?

According to Showstack <sup>18</sup> student's motivation should be examined before starting with the process. He proposes the following questionnaire to be applied to the students at the beginning of the process:

- Why do I want to learn the language?
- How do I want to use the language?
- What exactly do I want to learn and how must I go about learning it?
- Would I rather study a language or do something else with my time?

If the student is not motivated enough he/she would not be able to carry out some activities (inside and outside the classroom) necessities to achieve the learning goals. Students must be prepared to make sacrifices to learn a foreign language. If the student is not motivated enough he/she would be wasting his

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<sup>18</sup> SHOWSTACK, Richard. 10 rules for adult second language learners. In: Forum. Vol, 28. No, 3. (1980). P. 6-8.

partners' time and that of the teacher. Students have to understand that in foreign language learning there are rewards but there must be effort.

Bernaus suggests that for enhancing student's motivation teachers should offer attractive goals providing proper conditions and stimulating students' interest in learning. Teacher must be motivated to motivate students.

**2.1.5 Factors That Influence Students' Motivation For Learning A Foreign Language.** To list the factors that influence the motivation of the students to learn English a distinction between internal and external factors could be made.

**2.1.5.1 Internal factors.** Among the internal factors that influence students motivation could be listed:

- **Students' personality:** According to Strevens quoted by Bastidas (1991) quoted by Cardenas the learner is "an individual with his own profile of characteristics that mark him as different from all other learners, even though he shares the universal characteristic of all humans"<sup>20</sup>. Each person is a different world with his own characteristics that define him as unique in the world. Each one of us receives different influences from our environment and from the experiences we had had through our lives. Each teacher has to be aware of the differences among students, respect them, and help students to adapt to this atmosphere.
- **Cultural factors:** Anthropology defines culture as the lifestyle chosen by a person or group of persons to be in this world. This, covers aspects as ideas, traditions and behaviors that differ from people to people. Culture cannot be conceptualized as correct and incorrect; because these perceptions are highly influenced by what we think is good or bad. Each culture should be respected and considered as unique no matter the differences. Culture influences our

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<sup>20</sup> CARDENAS, Claudia. High school teachers preparation and updating in Pasto. Pasto : Claudia Cardenas, 2002. p.36. Tesis de grado( licenciado en Lenguas Modernas: Ingles- Frances). Universidad de Nariño. Facultad de ciencias Humanas. Programa de Lenguas Modernas: Ingles - Frances.

perceptions about the world and of course about foreign language learning. It is important to teach culture with the language, and the teacher attitude towards foreign language culture must be positive.

- **Students' self esteem** This aspect determines success in foreign language learning, and influences motivation. Teacher must not label students as good or bad. As Cai-Ren states "teachers' low expectations could well be a determining factor in students failure"<sup>21</sup>. If a student believes that he is going to be able to carry out an activity he is likely to succeed in it, and this depends on the self-concept the student has.
- **Learning aptitude:** According to Krashen quoted by Bialystok and Frolich quoted by Hann "Aptitude is most important referring to formal learning where the learner' conscious knowledge is increased, while attitude has its greatest effects on acquisition which refers to the unconscious assimilation of the foreign language"<sup>22</sup>.

**2.1.5.2 External factors.** There are several external aspects that influence motivation. Among them we could list:

- **Learning environment.** The physical conditions in which the learning process is carried out are determinant in its results. According to Stern quoted by Cardenas "Language learning and teaching can not be considered out of context, setting or background"<sup>23</sup>. This aspect refers to the conditions of the building, of the classroom, of the seats, If there is enough light, if it is cold or hot, if the environment is agreeable or not, etc. In the particular case of the University of Nariño the buildings and the classrooms are in their best

<sup>21</sup> CAI\_REN, Wang. Fostering Students' self esteem in EFL Classroom. In: Forum. Vol 23. No, 2. (1985). P.33 -34.

<sup>22</sup> HANN, Cora. Dealing with variables in the language classroom. In: Forum. Vol, 27. No, 4. (1989). P. 9-11.

<sup>23</sup> CARDENAS, Claudia. High school teachers preparastion and updating in Pasto. Pasto : Claudia Cardenas, 2002. p.37. Tesis de grado( licenciado en Lenguas Modernas: Ingles- Frances). Universidad de Nariño. Facultad de ciencias Humanas. Programa de Lenguas Modernas: Ingles - Frances.

conditions and give all kind of facilities and commodities to the students. There are also different resources as a special library, each classroom has it own TV set and VCR, each floor has big and clean toilets etc.

- **Materials and methodology used by the teacher.** Teaching is a profession that involves high levels of creativity from teachers. To teach a language there are many different strategies that can be applied in an environment depending on its characteristics. According to Bastidas quoted by Cardenas “Methodology is the most central aspect of teaching, and is being renovated constantly...The methodology is like a bridge where the teacher and his students meet each other and start establishing their relationship”<sup>24</sup>. Methodology is very complex and needs lots of attention, it includes:

- LESSONS
- ACTIVITIES
- CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT
- TREATMENT OF ERRORS
- TEACHING EACH SKILL
- TEACHING LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

- **The teacher.** According to Miller “The most crucial factors in effective teaching are who the teacher is and how he acts in the classroom”<sup>25</sup>. As we mentioned before, the teacher is one of the principal actors in the learning process because there are many factors that depend on him. Teachers must be able to know their students, to understand them to listen to them and to cherish them. As Anita Woolfolk says “All good teaching begins with an understanding of students and learning”<sup>26</sup>. The role of the teacher must be that of guide and facilitator of the process. According to Bastidas, quoted by Cardenas<sup>27</sup>, being a teacher includes several aspects, such as:

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>25</sup> MILLER, Patricia. 10 characteristics of a good teacher. In. Forum. Vol, 25. No, 1. (1987). P. 41-490.

<sup>26</sup> WOOLFOLK, Anita. Educational Psychology. Needham Heights : Allyn and Bacon, 1998. p. 206.

<sup>27</sup> MILLER. Op. Cit., 41-490.

- **TEACHERS' BELIEFS:** Wallace quoted by Cardenas "Teaching is a personal activity, each teacher has his/her own assumptions about what teaching should be" <sup>28</sup>. This refers to the point of view the teacher has about being a teacher, I could say then, that if teacher is happy about what he does, we will see that the results of his work are going to be better. But in our society, the image of the teacher is that of a person who wins money easily, who complains a lot about everything and who always repeats the same story, year after year. Teaching is a profession people choose, because they could not get into another career of their interest. It is really difficult to find persons with dedication towards teaching.

- **TEACHERS' PREPARATION:** This refers to how proficient the teacher is in his subject, and specifically in our field how proficient he is in using the foreign language. This depends on the kind of student the teacher had been at the university and furthermore, we could include also the kind of updating the teacher had had after his graduation. We have to remember that knowledge and science is something that changes everyday and there are many new things we should know.

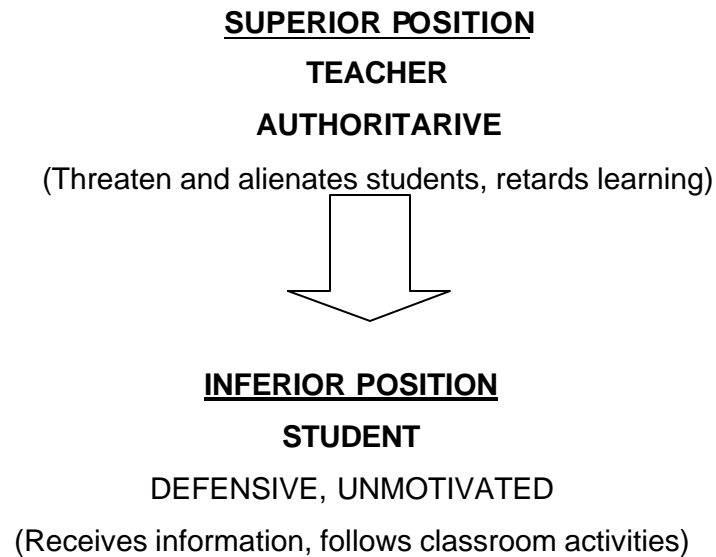
- **TEACHERS' CHARACTERISTICS:** In teaching, personality is marked in the work you do and in the way you do it. The effectiveness of teaching depends on it. To be a good teacher you must be prepared to do all kinds of things, in order to make your students enthusiastic about learning, Teachers' characteristics can enhance or despise teaching.

• **Interaction between teacher and learner.** Harmatz quoted by Hann states that "The teacher is the most important single element in any classroom. His/her personality and attitudes determine how effectively learning will take

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<sup>28</sup> CARDENAS, Claudia. High school teachers preparation and updating in Pasto. Pasto : Claudia Cardenas, 2002. p.37. Tesis de grado( licenciado en Lenguas Modernas: Ingles- Frances). Universidad de Nariño. Facultad de ciencias Human as. Programa de Lenguas Modernas: Ingles- Frances.

place”<sup>29</sup>. It can be inferred that it depends on the teacher the type of interaction established in the classroom. The following diagram based on the same author explains the most common type of interaction found in the classrooms:



This type of interaction demotivates students. When a teacher is rigid “inhibits students, classroom activities are awkward and nonproductive, and students are reduced to machines that are expected to give a predicted response”<sup>30</sup>. To encourage students’ motivation the atmosphere must be of a healthy give –and–take where the opinions, thoughts and experiences of each student be considered worth. Decotterd<sup>31</sup>, proposes several aspects that can make students’ motivation grow:

- A teacher must know the sociology of the area where the institution is located and get rid of prejudices about how people are in that particular place.
- Teacher has to know the class as a group, and be aware of the interrelationships within the group.
- Teacher should know the student as an individual.

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<sup>29</sup> HANN, Cora. Dealing with variables in the language classroom. In: Forum. Vol, 27. No, 4. (1989). P. 9-11.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 9-11.

<sup>31</sup> DECOTTERD, Daniel. Depth and Motivation. In: Forum. Vol,25. No,2. (1987). P. 42-43.

**2.1.6 PREVIOUS RESEARCH.** In the field of motivation, several studies referring to motivation in high schools have been done, for example:

- Naranjo, R.A. & Ordoñez, F. (2001) Students' Motivation Level For Learning English As A Foreign Language In High Schools. They measured the level of motivation high school students have to learn English as a foreign language. They also tried to find if there is any difference between boys and girls when learning English. They wanted to find changes in students motivation through their progress from sixth to eleventh grade. This was a descriptive research; the data was collected in a quantitative way. The authors found that 709 students out of 1652 had a high demotivation level. 509 had a low motivation level, 328 were insecure, 26 were motivated and 0 had a high motivation level. The results showed that girls are less demotivated to learn English than boys. This research also found out that the motivation level for learning English as a foreign language in high school lowers through the high school grades from sixth to eleventh.

- Benavides, W.G. & Caicedo, G. D. (2001) Some Factors That Contribute To High School Students' Demotivation In Learning English. The research problem was related to finding the possible reasons the students have to be demotivated to learn English as a foreign language. The objective of the study was to identify some of the factors that affect students motivation to learn English in high school. This research was conducted mainly upon diagnosis and analysis of concepts. The data collection was made by means of questionnaires and an interview given to the students. The authors proceeded to find out what was the rate of motivated or demotivated students. From 216 students 27.2 % were highly motivated, 27.42 % were motivated, 22.38% were insecure, 14.42 % were demotivated and 8.3 % were highly demotivated. They have made a report of the change of motivation through the student's levels from sixth to eleventh grade. According to this there is a high percentage of motivation from sixth to eighth grade while there is a high percentage of demotivation in 9 10

and 11 grades. The authors classified the factors that influence motivation in external and internal factors.

- Santacruz, K.J & Trejo, A.M. (2002). Nivel de Motivación Para el Aprendizaje del Ingles en la Escuela Primaria. The authors measured the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language of boys and girls of a selected group of elementary schools at Pasto city. They also wanted to know if the level of motivation is different in boys and girls, and if that motivation changes through the elementary levels from first to fifth. This was a descriptive research, surveys and interviews were used to collect data. From 305 students surveyed 170 had a high level of motivation, 121 an intermediate level and 14 had a low level. They did not find students with a very high or a very low motivation level. In this research they found that girls were more motivated to learn English as a foreign language than boys. They also found that students' motivation decreased through the levels in the elementary school.

- Caicedo, P. & Orbes, D. Factores que Inciden en la Motivación de los Estudiantes de Bachillerato para el Aprendizaje del Área de Ingles Desde el Punto de Vista de los Profesores. The authors were interested in finding out what are some of the factors that influence the motivation of the high school students with relation to English learning, from the point of view of the teachers. Their objective was to analyze the factors stated by the teachers and to compare them with the opinion of the students. This was a qualitative research and the authors collected the information by means of interviews. The subjects were six teachers whose ages ranged from thirty two to fifty two years old, they were from a medium and medium high socio-economic level, and worked in three different high schools of a low and medium low socio-economic level. The authors found different factors that influence the motivation of the high school students, internal and external factors. Among the internal factors we could quote the lack of comprehension of the English language (aspect that includes the differences in its writing and pronunciation and the difficulties in the evaluations), the students' lack of responsibility towards the subject matter, the role of the teacher (teacher's personality, dynamism and methodology), the



materials used in the development of the class and the socio-economic level of the students.

For the factors that might have an influence in the motivation of the students for their permanence in the English and French program of the university there has not been developed any research. From this point I state my research questions

**WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT MIGHT HAVE AN INFLUENCE IN THE MOTIVATION OF THE STUDENTS FROM THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH PROGRAM TO LEARN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE ?**

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

Now that the theoretical foundations of the research field have been studied, and the objective has been stated, in this chapter it is explained how the study was carried out. First it will be given information about the population studied, then, about the type of research it was used, and finally, about the ethical issues that support the credibility of this work.

#### **3.1 DESIGN**

This is a qualitative research. This study is basically descriptive, because it is intended to describe in a systematic way, the characteristics of a population and its situation, in this particular case, the incidence of motivation in a foreign language learning process. The information collected was analyzed carefully in order to draw useful conditions, although it is not intended to make predictions. The description was done based on the information given by the students in the surveys, which were the instrument chosen to collect the information.

#### **3.2 SUBJECTS AND SETTING**

In this descriptive research the subjects were 28 students from the English and French program of the University of Nariño, seven from each semester, women and men chosen at random. The students belong to an average socio-economical status and a good number of them come from different parts of the department of Nariño. Their ages are between 17 and 34 years old.

#### **3.3 MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT**

the development of this study surveys were used to collect the information because they provided the specific information needed to describe the

phenomena studied. The surveys were composed of thirty-two statements. For the possible answers five items were provided: never, occasionally, sometimes, usually and always. After reading each statement the subject chose the item that better suited to describe his/her situation.

### **3.4 PROCEDURE**

For the development of this research the selection of the subjects that participated in it was made and the explicit permission to use the information they gave in the interviews was asked. Then the survey was applied. With the information collected in the survey, the analysis of the information was made. At last, the conclusions of my work are presented and will be socialized with the subjects.

### **3.5 PILOT STUDY**

Applying the survey to six students tested the measurement instrument. This was done in order to determine the time they would take answering it and to state possible misunderstandings in the statements. After the pilot study some of the questions of the survey had to be re written because they were ambiguous, or because according to the participants, it was not possible to answer them with the first scale provided to do so.

### **3.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

In this research the information was collected through surveys. I analyzed the information collected as Claudia Cardenas Jimenez analyzed information in her work "High School Teachers' Preparation and Updating in Pasto" according to a proposal made by Bastidas in one of his essays. The steps for the data analysis are:

- Data organization.

- Identification of preliminary ideas, in order to get a global vision of the whole collected information.
- Generation of categories, topics or patterns to relate common events and to reduce the collected information.
- Testing of the emergent hypothesis.
- Data interpretation.
- Report of results.

The surveys were composed of thirty-two statements. For the possible answers five items were provided: never, occasionally, sometimes, usually and always. After reading each statement the subject chose the item that better suited for his/her situation. As a mean to verify the real position of students in face to the situations presented in the statements, some statements were formulated twice in the survey, but in a different way.

### **3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES**

For the correct development of my research work, I took into account the next aspects:

- **Informed consent.** The participants in this research were informed of what was done and the way it was done. I got the explicit authorization of the subjects before applying the measurement instruments.
- **Voluntary participation.** Anyone was forced to participate in the development of this research.
- **Confidentiality.** No names or specific data that allows identification of the subjects is disclosed.
- **Consequences.** Since this is a descriptive work, it will not make physical nor psychological harm to the collaborators.

- **Reciprocity.** I will be thankful to my collaborators and I will share the results of my work with them.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Once the survey has been applied, the next step in the development of this research is the presentation and analysis of the information collected through it. In this chapter the results obtained in the survey are presented and later, carefully analyzed in order to describe the situation studied, which is the principal objective of this work.

### **4.1 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Since this is a qualitative study, for a complete data analysis, patterns were found with the information collected and categories and subcategories were established to list the factors that might have an influence in the motivation of the students from the English and French program to learn English as a foreign language. According to the answers the students gave in the survey, these factors can be grouped into two categories: INTERNAL and EXTERNAL FACTORS. The results of the survey are shown in chart number 1, statements in red refer to external factors and statements in blue refer to internal factors. (See the survey in the appendix). Although it was not required, some of the participants accompanied their answers with written and oral comments about some of the factors that are more relevant to them.

**Table 1.**  
**Results of the Survey**

STATEMENT	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Occasionally	Never
	Students	Students	Students	Students	Students
I consider myself a good English student	28,57%	32,14%	35,71%	3,57%	0%
My academic work is good	39,28%	28,57%	28,57%	3,57%	0%
I like going to English class	46,42%	32,14%	14,28%	7,14%	0%
The methodology used in my English class is motivating	3,57%	42,85%	35,71%	17,85%	0%
English is difficult for me	0%	10,71%	21,42%	50%	17,85%
Difficulties in learning English make me feel demotivated	3,57%	14,28%	25%	28,57%	28,57%
I am the only one responsible for my motivation to learn English	21,42%	42,85%	10,71%	21,42%	3,57%
I feel satisfied with my work in the English class	42,85%	25%	28,57%	0%	3,57%
English is the most important subject matter	42,85%	39,28%	10,71%	3,57%	3,57%
The teacher helps me to solve problems related to my English learning	35,71%	39,28%	17,85%	7,14%	0%
I feel demotivated when the teacher's mood is not good	7,14%	28,57%	25%	28,57%	10,71%
I feel demotivated when the English teacher does not use materials or visual aids in the class	21,42%	21,42%	25%	14,28%	17,85%
The English teacher makes me feel demotivated	7,14%	14,28%	7,14%	46,42%	25%
The English classes are motivating in all aspects	3,57%	32,14%	42,85%	17,85%	3,57%

STATEMENT	Always Students	Usually Students	Sometime s Students	Occasiona lly Students	Never Students
My relationship with classmates interfere with my motivation to learn English	7,14%	10,71%	17,85%	28,57%	35,71%
The English teacher is patient when I do not understand a topic or exercise	50%	32,14%	7,14%	7,14%	3,57%
The English teacher develops activities that motivate students	3,57%	39,28%	46,42%	10,71%	0%
I think I am good in learning English	39,28%	42,85%	17,85%	0%	0%
The English teacher assigns difficult tasks that demotivates me	0%	10,71%	14,28%	32,14%	42,85%
Grades are my most important goal in the English class	14,28%	14,28%	25%	28,57%	25%
I always count on the teacher to solve my difficulties in English	10,71%	28,57%	21,42%	35,71%	3,57%
The English teacher gives praise when I do things right	10,71%	28,57%	21,42%	17,85%	25%
I feel my personality interferes with my work in English	14,28%	21,42%	28,57%	10,71%	25%
The physical conditions of the University have inference in my motivation to learn English	10,71%	17,85%	17,85%	10,71%	42,85%
The dynamism and creativity of my English teacher makes me feel motivated	35,71%	21,42%	25%	14,28%	3,57%
The relationship between the English teacher and I interfere in my motivation	21,42%	17,85%	17,85%	14,28%	28,57%
I think I will learn English very well	39,28%	39,28%	17,85%	0%	3,57%
I spend part of my free time studying or practicing English	14,28%	39,28%	32,14%	14,28%	0%
The criticism my classmates do in relation to my English demotivates me	3,57%	3,57%	28,57%	28,57%	35,71%



STATEMENT	Always Students	Usually Students	Sometimes Students	Occasionally Students	Never Students
The way my English teacher corrects my mistakes makes me feel demotivated	0%	7,14%	25%	32,14%	35,71%
The demands the English teacher does to me in class motivate me to learn more	10,71%	39,28%	42,85%	7,14%	0%
English is useful to me	85,71%	7,14%	3,57%	3,57%	0%

**4.1.1 Internal factors.** Among the internal factors that can be listed are the following: Self-concept, interest, comprehension, responsibility and personal goal value concept.

- **Self-concept:** The first statement in the survey was “I consider myself a good English student”. 28,57% of the participants answered *always*, 32,14 % of the participants answered *usually*. 35,71 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, and 3,57 % of the participants answered *occasionally*. According to this, the participants have a good concept of themselves, which is very relevant for the achievement of any task, specially for the achievement of any learning goal, Cai Ren <sup>32</sup> had pointed that the more a student believes in his capacity to achieve a goal, it is most likely that he/she will achieve it. Bandura quoted by Woolfolk <sup>33</sup> in his Value x Expectancy theory confirms this point. For him, success in a task depends mainly on two factors: how able of doing it the person considers himself and how important is for him to achieve success. These results can be compared with those of the statement “ I think I am good in learning English”. This statement has the same meaning of the first one, but it was re-formulated with the intention of confirming the results gotten in the first statement.

<sup>32</sup> CAI\_REN, Wang. Fostering Students’ self esteem in EFL Classroom. In: Forum. Vol 23. No, 2. (1985). P.33 -34.

<sup>33</sup> WOOLFOLK, Anita. Educational Psychology. Needham Heights : Allyn and Bacon, 1998. p. 206.

For the second statement “My academic work is good” 39,28% of the participants answered *always*, 28,57% of the participants answered *usually*, 28,57% of the participants answered *sometimes* and 3,57 % of the participants answered *occasionally*. Students consider that their work is satisfactory, and that the effort they make to learn English is enough; therefore they expect to see good results. From their point of view they make what is necessary to achieve success. Woolfolk <sup>34</sup> suggests that a student is motivated to learn when he/she “has the tendency to find academic activities meaningful and worthwhile, and tries to derive benefits from them. Motivation in learning involves more than wanting or intending to learn; it includes the quality of the student’s mental efforts. If the student were not motivated enough he/she would not be able to carry out some activities (inside and outside the classroom) necessary to achieve the learning goals. Students must be prepared to make sacrifices to learn a foreign language. If the student were not motivated enough he/she would be wasting his classmates’ time and that of the teacher.

For the statement “I feel my personality interferes with my work in English” 14,28 % of the participants answered *always*, 21,42 % of the participants answered *usually*, 28,57% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 10,71 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 25 % of the participants answered *never*. Here, results differ and it is not easy to find any pattern. Strevens states that the learner is “an individual with his own profile of characteristics that mark him as different from all other learners, even though he shares the universal characteristic of all humans”<sup>35</sup>, this confirms the fact that those differences that make each one of us unique in the world can also determine for a person how big is the influence of the own personality in the learning of English. There have been authors that have tried to state how differently introvert persons and extrovert persons learn English, but no affirmation can be made until now. The

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p.208.

<sup>35</sup> CARDENAS, Claudia. High school teachers preparation and updating in Pasto. Pasto : Claudia Cardenas, 2002. p.32. Tesis de grado( licenciado en Lenguas Modernas: Ingles- Frances). Universidad de Nariño. Facultad de ciencias Humanas. Programa de Lenguas Modernas: Ingles- Frances.

way each one of us experiences formal instruction and language learning is different, so it would be difficult to make generalizations referring to this aspect. According to the comments made for some of the participants it may be inferred that for some of the participants their personality interferes in certain aspects such as oral participation in class activities, but it is worth to mention that anxiety in oral production is caused by many correlative factors, some of them (mentioned by participants) are the relationship among classmates and the relationship between teacher and students

For the statement "I think I will learn English very well" 39,28% of the participants answered *always*, 39,28% of the participants answered *usually*, 17,85 % of the participants answered *sometimes* and 3,57 % of the participants answered *never*. From here it might be inferred that students have a high expectancy in their achievement of their goal, which is learning English, that is to say that they trust their abilities and capacities to carry out satisfactorily their learning goal, and this influences positively their motivation. Students expect to speak English fluently and use it efficiently by the end of the major. In the Expectancy X value theory, the believe the individual has of himself or herself, in the capacities he/she has, plays an important role in the level of motivation a person has in the development of any task, and this motivation determines success in it.

- **Interest:** For the statement "I like going to English class" 46,42 % of the participants answered *always*, 32,14 % of the participants answered *usually*, 14,28 % of the participants answered *sometimes* and 7,14 % of the participants answered *occasionally*. It is worth noticing that no student answered never. It might be said that if a student likes English class it is because he/she finds it pleasant and useful. Like and dislike are human emotions inspired by the nature of an activity, maybe English class is fun and interesting. It can then be said that English classes fulfill the human necessity for activity, stimulation, knowledge

and ego enhancement proposed by Ausubel quoted by Brown<sup>36</sup>, in his scale of six desires or needs of human organism commonly identified as undergirding the construct of motivation.

For the statement “English is the most important subject matter for me” 42,85% of the participants answered *always*, 39,28% of the participants answered *usually*, 10,71 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 3,57 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 3,57% of the participants answered *never*. These answers suggest that for students, English has the first place of importance among the different subject matters studied in the major, even in relation to French, the other language offered by our program. It can not be assumed that this is because of the like for English, or the dislike for French, since a part of the students from the English and French program entered the program interested in both languages, not only in one. Students say that the importance of English is due to practical reasons such as its usefulness in the future (here in Colombia the foreign language required in the high schools is English and the access to scholarships seems easier to English speaking countries). It seems that for the program French is not as important as English and students infer this because of the noticeable reduction in the number of hours devoted to French as the semesters progress.

For the statement “I spend part of my free time studying and practicing English” 14,28% of the participants answered *always*, 39,28% of the participants answered *usually*, 32,14% of the participants answered *sometimes*, and 14,28% of the participants answered *occasionally*. It seems that students are conscious about the extra effort that must be done in order to learn English well. From the students’ answers it can be implied that not all the participants expect to learn everything at the University and through the teacher. There are some of them who do their individual part of the work.

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<sup>36</sup> BROWN, Douglas. Principles of language learning and teaching. New Jersey : Prentice Hall. 1987. p. 56.

- **Comprehension:** For the statement “English is difficult for me”, 10,71 % of the participants answered *usually*, 21,42 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 50 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 17,85 % of the participants answered *never*. The nature of the language itself is an aspect that makes learning English difficult for the students, although it seems that it is not for the participants in this research. Its differences with Spanish and most of all its differences between the spelling and the pronunciation system are aspects not easily assimilated by some students. There are students who are able to speak English but who do not have good spelling or who confuse words. Furthermore there are some students for whom it is difficult to associate correctly both systems. For students who make the effort to understand English without success this lack of comprehension is demotivating. If a student is conscious of his /her low proficiency in spite of the efforts he /she has made it is likely that the task will be abandoned or at least that the quality diminishes. This is the internal aspect that has the highest influence in the motivation of the students to learn English. But from the results gotten in the statement “ Difficulties in learning English make me feel demotivated” it might be inferred that the students from the English and French program are persistent, and very interested in achieving their goal, and work hard to cope with difficulties of English.

- **Responsibility:** For the statement “I am the only one responsible for my motivation to learn English” 21,42% of the participants answered *always*, 42,85% of the participants answered *usually*, 10,71% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 21,42% of the participants answered *occasionally*, and 3,57% of the participants answered *never*. According to this, students are intrinsically motivated because they are independent. They do not consider the teacher the center of their learning process and therefore carry out the necessary tasks to learn English because they are interested in it and not because it is an obligation. This independence is a sign of commitment and responsibility. For the statement “I feel satisfied with my work in the English class” 42,85 % of the participants answered *always*, 25 % of the participants

answered *usually*, 28,57% of the participants answered *sometimes* and 3,57 % of the participants answered *never*. From here it can be inferred that if a student is truly satisfied with the work he/she has done to achieve a goal, it is because a sincere effort has been made and therefore shows commitment.

- **Personal goal value concept:** For the statement “English is useful to me” 85,71% of the participants answered *always*, 7,14% of the participants answered *usually*, 3,57% of the participants answered *sometimes* and 3,57% of the participants answered *occasionally*. As suggested by Bandura’s theory quoted by Woolfolk<sup>37</sup> motivation can be defined in terms of the answer given to the questions: If I try hard, can I succeed? (to know what the person’s expectancy of his/her own achievement of the goal is) and, If I succeed, will the outcome be valuable or rewarding to me? (to know how valuable is the goal for the individual). If both expectancy and value of the goal are high, it can be said that the individual is highly motivated and good results in the development of the task can be expected. If the students from the English and French program consider a great value to learn English, and besides, judge themselves as being able to do so, it is likely that their motivation is high and therefore they will learn English well.

**4.1.2 External factors.** This category includes the following factors: methodology, teacher’s role, materials used in class, class development, learning environment and grades and evaluation.

- **Methodology.** For the statement “the methodology used in my English class is motivating” 3,57 % of the participants answered *always*, 42,85 % of the participants answered *usually*, 35,71 % of the participants answered *sometimes* and 17,85 % of the participants answered *occasionally*. Participants seem to be very interested in this aspect. According to them there are few teachers who use special and different strategies to teach and reinforce themes different from the traditional one using the board and the marker. They think that some

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<sup>37</sup> WOOLFOLK, Anita. Educational Psychology. Needham Heights : Allyn and Bacon, 1998. p. 216.

activities to foster students' interest and like for English should be promoted by the teachers. Some of the participants mentioned that they liked a lot when the English teacher developed games and class activities to reinforce a topic or to introduce a new one. Teaching is a profession that involves high levels of creativity from teachers. To teach a language there are many different strategies that can be applied in an environment depending on its characteristics. According to Bastidas quoted by Cardenas <sup>38</sup>the methodology is the most central aspect of teaching, and is being renovated constantly. The methodology is like a bridge where the teacher and his students meet each other and start establishing their relationship. Methodology is very complex and needs lots of attention.

- **Teacher's role:** For the statement " The teacher helped me to solve problems related to my English learning" 35,71% of the participants answered *always*, 39,28% of the participants answered *usually*, 10,71% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 3,57% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 3,57% of the participants answered *never*. The teacher has many roles in the student's learning process, depending on the kind of activity that is being developed: teachers' roles are that of an advisor, an evaluator, a counselor and a guide. According to the answers given by the participants, the students trust the teacher and he/she is a good guide that provides correct feedback in a comprehensible way. To be good guides, teachers must devote extra time in getting to know what the weaknesses and abilities of their students are, and make suggestions according to their particular needs. Nevertheless the results gotten for the statement "I always count on the teacher to solve my difficulties in English", disclose that even though teacher is eager to help students with their difficulties at any time, most of the times they prefer to be independent and look for their own answers, definite sign of independence.

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<sup>38</sup> CARDENAS, Claudia. High school teachers preparation and updating in Pasto. Pasto : Claudia Cardenas, 2002. p.32-34. Tesis de grado( licenciado en Lenguas Modernas: Ingles- Frances). Universidad de Nariño. Facultad de ciencias Humanas. Programa de Lenguas Modernas: Ingles- Frances.

For the statement “I feel demotivated when the teacher’s mood is not good” 10,71 % of the participants answered *always*, 28,57% of the participants answered *usually*, 25 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 28,57% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 10,71 % of the participants answered *never*. The work teachers do reflects certain aspects of their personality, such as the disposition they have to deal with different kind of personalities. According to Miller <sup>39</sup> “The most crucial factors in effective teaching are who the teacher is and how he acts in the classroom”. It can be expected that an unmotivated teacher be a cause of demotivation. When learning a foreign language a person needs to feel at ease because he/she is putting the guard down and risking his/her self esteem and self concept in the development of an activity that involves criticism of other people, among them the teacher, who is viewed as an authority who can construct or destruct the self confidence of a student in his/her capacities only with his attitudes inside the classroom. Comments are made about teachers who behave in a rude and impolite way towards students making them feel anxious.

For the statement “The English teacher makes me feel demotivated” 7,14% of the participants answered *always*, 14,28% of the participants answered *usually*, 7,14 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 46,42% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 25% of the participants answered *never*. “According to Miller the key to effective teaching is the teacher and the way he acts in the classroom, if a teacher knows how to deal properly with the different variables intervening in the learning process then, a part of success is guaranteed.

For the statement “the English teacher is patient when I do not understand a topic or exercise” 50 % of the participants answered *always*, 32,14 % of the participants answered *usually*, 7,14 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 7,14 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 7,14 % of the participants answered *never*. This confirms that English teachers are good guides, since students ask them for help so recurrently.

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<sup>39</sup> MILLER, Patricia. 10 characteristics of a good teacher. *In\_* Forum. Vol. 25. No. 1. (1987). P. 41-490.



For the statement "The English teacher develops activities that motivate students" 3,57 % of the participants answered *always*, 39,28% of the participants answered *usually*, 46,42 % of the participants answered *sometimes* and 10,71 % of the participants answered *occasionally*. These results suggest that students need more activities to not lose their motivation and interest about learning English. They want to use materials and activities that according to their point of view accomplish not only their knowledge needs, but also their need of interaction. These results confirm those gotten for the statement "The dynamism and creativity of my English teacher interfere with my motivation" because if teachers would be more creative referring to the use of resources and activities it might be that students would be more motivated.

For the statement "The English teacher assigns difficult tasks that demotivate me" 10,71 % of the participants answered *usually*, 14,28 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 32,14 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 42,85 % of the participants answered *never*. For the students, they are responsible for their own learning and the tasks assigned are seen as steps to be fulfilled to pursue a goal.

For the statement "The English teacher gives praise when I do things right" 10,71 % of the participants answered *always*, 28,57% of the participants answered *usually*, 21,42 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 17,85 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 25 % of the participants answered *never*. Some students wrote that the only feedback they receive from teachers are grades, the only cue to know how they work is going, unless, of course, they ask teacher for suggestions or advice. According to students, teachers are not spontaneous to tell them if they are doing a good job. Maybe for students it would be more motivating if teachers gave more praise to them for the good results achieved and not only that but also to give feedback in a soft, kind way when needed for students to feel that they are given suggestions and not that

they are being criticized, although criticism does not seem to be a trait of the English teachers at the University, as suggested by the results gotten for the statement “The way my English teacher corrects my mistakes makes me feel demotivated (see table 1).

For the statement “The demands the English teacher does to me in class motivate me to learn more” 10,71 % of the participants answered *always*, 39,28% of the participants answered *usually*, 42,85 % of the participants answered *sometimes* and 7,14 % of the participants answered *occasionally*. This confirms that the students’ motivation to learn English is intrinsic, they face the challenge and they try to success in the development of difficult tasks.

- **Materials:** For the statement “I feel demotivated when the English teacher does not use materials or visual aids in class” 21,42% of the participants answered *always*, 21,42% of the participants answered *usually* 25% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 14,28% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 25% of the participants answered *never*. It depends on the students’ learning style and how important the use of materials and visual aids is in class. However, according to Brown<sup>40</sup> and Bernaus<sup>41</sup> in Language learning it is better if materials and aids are used in the development of the classes, because they awake and maintain students interest in the activities carried out.

- **Class development:** For the statement “The English classes are motivating in all aspects 3,57 % of the participants answered *always*, 32,14 % of the participants answered *usually*, 42,85 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 17,85 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 3,57 % of the participants answered *never*. In the development of a class many changes in students attention are observed. It is not easy to make a person pay attention

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<sup>40</sup> BROWN, Douglas. Principles of language learning and teaching. New Jersey : Prentice Hall. 1987.

<sup>41</sup> BERNAUS, Mercedes. Activities that motivate and increase students’ output. In: Forum. Vol, 25. No,1. (1987).

continuously to what happens in a classroom for a long period of time. For an optimum usage of the time it is necessary that teachers consider the use of different kinds of activities in a class according to the particular needs of the students.

- **Learning environment:** For the statement “my relationship with classmates interferes with my motivation to learn English” 7,14 % of the participants answered *always*, 10,71 % of the participants answered *usually*, 17,85 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 28,57% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 35,71 % of the participants answered *never*. For the more independent students the relationships are not important if they do not have to make any cooperative work, besides the ambiance in the university allows people to be individualistic.

For the people who feel that the ambiance in the classroom is not positive for them, it can be said that maybe it is because of problems among classmates. According to the results gotten for the statement “The criticism my classmates do in relation to my English demotivate me”, the students have an internal success criteria and criticism does not affect their self-concept or the perception they have about the work they are doing. Williams and Burden define a person intrinsically motivated to carry out a task according to how important is criticism for them, among other factors.

For the statement “ The physical conditions of the university have inference in my motivation to learn English” 21,42 % of the participants answered *always*, 17,85 % of the participants answered *usually*, 17,85 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 14,28 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 28,57% of the participants answered *never*. Differences in these answers are due to some of these students do not enjoy the benefits of the installations of the university, such as the TV sets, the tape recorders, the computers and the laboratories. But if conditions were not as good, and the resources were not as

reachable it is likely that students would not feel at ease the time they spend at the university.

For the statement “The relationship between the English teacher and I interfere in my motivation” 35,71 % of the participants answered *always*, 21,42 % of the participants answered *usually*, 25 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 14,28 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 3,57 % of the participants answered *never*. It depends on the teacher the type of interaction established in the classroom. According to Hartmatz quoted by Hann<sup>42</sup>, when a teacher is rigid “inhibits students, classroom activities are awkward and nonproductive, and students are reduced to machines that are expected to give a predicted response”. Teacher is a key to successful learning not only because he “owns” the knowledge but also because he determined the kind of interaction that will exist inside the classroom.

- **Grades and evaluation:** For the statement “Grades are my most important goal in the English class” 14,28 % of the participants answered *always*, 14,28 % of the participants answered *usually*, 25 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 28,57% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 25 % of the participants answered *never*. These results are not easy to interpret. According to the characteristics of these students drawn by the answers they have given in the surveys, they are motivated to learn English and accomplish the tasks because they know this is a necessary step to achieve their goal. But why some students should be worried or interested in grades?. I think that it is because they must achieve good grades if they want to continue into the next level or semester. So, it seems that within our system it is not going to be easy to separate the genuine interest in learning and the interest in getting good grades, although it is worth mentioning that interest in grades does not imply lack of interest in achieving a goal. In many cases the genuine interest for learning and achieving a goal produces good grades and scholarships for good students, this is a benefit that students do not want to lose, so they start to work

hard with a double interest: achieving their learning goals and getting or maintaining a scholarship.

## **4.2 LIMITATIONS**

For the purposes of this research, the information was collected by means of surveys applied to twenty-eight of the students from the English and French program. The questions of the survey were focused only towards English since that is the field dealt with in this research. After the pilot study some of the questions of the survey had to be re written because they were ambiguous, or was not possible to answer them with the scale provided to do so, but no other problem was found with the survey. However, the survey had to be done twice because the first time, a big part of the participants answered the survey as if the questions covered both the English and the French area. The second time specifications were included in the survey.

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<sup>42</sup> HANN, Cora. Dealing with variables in the language classroom. In: Forum. Vol, 27. No, 4. (1989). P.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 CONCLUSIONS

From the results gotten in the survey it can be concluded that the motivation of the students from the English and French program to learn English as a foreign language is high, and intrinsic. According to the value X expectancy theory proposed by Bandura quoted by Woolfolk <sup>43</sup> to explain how motivation works, there are two important aspects that define how motivated an individual is to work towards a goal: *self efficacy expectancy* and *behavior outcome expectancy* . The former refers to how able believes himself the individual to carry out an activity and to develop the necessary skills required to do so, the later refers to how useful and valuable are considered the results the individual will get with his actions. The students from the English and French program consider they have the necessary skills to reach their goal, that they make the necessary effort to learn English. This is and will be useful for their professional purposes . Therefore they make the necessary efforts, work hard and cope with difficulties because their motivation towards their goal is high.

Motivation has been defined as intrinsic (when a person learns for self-satisfaction and curiosity) and extrinsic (when a person learns thinking about the practical rewards he will get). Williams and Burden quoted by Caicedo and Orbes <sup>44</sup> establishes 5 dimensions that define intrinsic motivation:

- Preference for challenge
- Curiosity/ interest
- Independence

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<sup>43</sup> WOOLFOLK, Anita. Educational Psychology. Needham Heights : Allyn and Bacon, 1998. p. 216

<sup>44</sup> CAICEDO, P. Y ORBES, G. Factores que inciden en la motivación de los estudiantes de bachillerato, para el aprendizaje del area de Ingles desde el punto de vista de los profesores. Pasto : P. Caicedo, 2002. p. 32. Tesis de grado (Licenciado en Lenguas Modernas: Ingles-Frances). Universidad de Nariño. Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Programa de Lenguas Modernas: Ingles - Frances.

- Independent judgment
- Internal success criteria

The students from the English and French program have all these characteristics. They have a preference for challenge because they consider the difficulties in the tasks assigned by the teacher as steps to be fulfilled to achieve a goal, and the problems related to comprehension of English do not demotivate them. Students do not study to get good grades or satisfy teachers, they consider the teacher a guide but not a jury that must be obeyed or satisfied. Students are independent, although they know they can count on the teacher to solve difficulties in their learning process they prefer to work on their own to overcome difficulties. Students have an internal success criteria because criticism from the teacher and from their classmates do not affect their self-concept or the way they work to reach a goal.

Through this work the importance of external factors when dealing with motivation is acknowledged. Students recognize the importance of a creative teacher and of a proper methodology not only to make students enthusiastic and motivated but also to maintain the interest of motivated students. All the external aspects are important variables that work together to create the right ambiance for students to be comfortable, if one of the factors is not working as it should the other factors can be affected. If a teacher is not creative in the development of his classes methodology would not be interesting for students and progressively they will lose interest in the class.

University students are independent, they know what their goal is and what they must do to achieve it. However it is the teacher's task to facilitate the road they have to go through and give them clues for them to decide what they should do and how they should do it to achieve their learning goals. It helps for a student to remain motivated to have a person who recognizes the things he is doing

good to give him praise and also a person who gives him advice –not orders- if he is not doing things as he should.

Since students do not give much importance to the physical conditions of the university –not only referring to the conditions of the buildings and classrooms, but also to the existent resources - it can be said that these resources need to be used more by the teachers and by the same students. The tape recorders, the VCRs and the computers offer new alternatives for students to break up with monotony in the normal development of their classes and also new ways for them to learn or to practice what they already know. Monotony can be taken as a demotivating factor to carry out any activity, and since we have the necessary resources the only thing we have to do is to put them to work to increase the students motivation and to avoid monotony.

It is important a good ambiance among classmates in a classroom, and good relationships between students. Oral participation is not easy in a hostile ambiance full of criticism. The teacher takes the first step in fostering students' trust in him or her with his or her attitude. For a lot of students a teacher with an arrogant attitude it is not always the best even though all the knowledge he can have. After all teaching and learning are processes that involve human beings, not only knowledge. Teachers have to be conscious of the different psychological variables that intervene in language learning and also of the influence of their attitudes in students motivation which is one of those variables As Cai-Ren <sup>45</sup> states “teachers' low expectations could well be a determining factor in students failure”, and also a determining factor in their motivation.

It is worth to mention that these conclusions are made upon the results obtained through the survey, and may not be general to all the students from the English and French program. This represents only what a small sample of students think about the external factors that affect their motivation, and my work as a researcher was to analyze this information and draw conclusions based on it.



## 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.2.1 For pedagogical purposes

- The Self-concept of a person is based on the experiences we have had through life and also on the opinions of the people we consider important. That is why teachers should be careful with the way they correct the students mistakes, if a person listens recurrently that he is not good to carry out a task it is likely that he starts to think alike and abandon the task. As Cai-Ren<sup>6</sup> states “teachers’ low expectations could well be a determining factor in students failure”.
- A Good tool to foster students’ interest in English is creativity. Creativity in the use of the materials the university has and in the development of different and interesting activities that some of the teachers use to include in their classes. Students like activities that involve interchange of opinions and group work, as immersion practices where they share with their partners and practice English. Since the University has VCRs and TV sets in each classroom the teacher could present movies to his students in the foreign language, make a forum about the movie and organize discussions about themes related to it.
- Comprehension of a language is something possible to be obtained only through hard work. I think English teachers should be more demanding and assign extra tasks according to the level of the students but more challenging each time. This is not only to improve comprehension, but also responsibility because there are students who need to be supervised.

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<sup>45</sup> CAI\_REN, Wang. Fostering Students’ self esteem in EFL Classroom. In: Forum. Vol 23. No, 2. (1985). P.33 -34

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 33-34.

### **5.2.2 For future research**

- The findings obtained in this work may not be general for all the population, so it is important that a reply is done to it using a more representative sample or a different measurement instrument as an oral interview.
- Through this work I have disclosed that criticism from the classmates has an influence on the level of anxiety for a student to participate in class. I think this is a good topic to research because of the importance it has for us, through it we could create strategies to deal with a possible problem that affects our labor at the university.

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# APPENDIX

**UNIVERSITY OF NARIÑO  
HUMAN SCIENCES FACULTY  
LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**

SEMESTER: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions:

Read carefully each one of the following statements and according to your personal opinion state your agreement or disagreement using the elements in the scale:

always	usually	sometimes	occasionally	never
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An example will be done in order to clarify the doubts you can have:

STATEMENT	always	usually	sometimes	occasionally	never
I like going to English class					
I feel my personality interferes with my work in English					

**OBSERVATIONS:**

- answer the following questions as sincerely as possible
- Your answers are not going to be qualified as right or wrong, our principal interest is to know your personal opinion
- This survey is not an exam, answer according to your opinion
- Your answers will be known only by the researcher
- Please answer all the questions
- If you do not understand a question feel free to state your doubts to the researcher

STATEMENT	always	usually	sometimes	occasionally	never
I consider myself a good English student					
My academic work is good					
I like going to English class					
The methodology used in my English class is motivating					
English is difficult for me					
Difficulties in learning English make me feel demotivated					
I am the only one responsible for my motivation to learn English					
I feel satisfied with my work in the English class					
English is the most important subject matter					
The teacher helps me to solve problems related to my English learning					
I feel demotivated when the teacher's mood is not good					
I feel demotivated when the English teacher					

STATEMENT	always	usually	sometimes	occasionally	never
does not use materials or visual aids in the class					
The English teacher makes me feel demotivated					
The English classes are motivating in all aspects					
My relationship with classmates interfere with my motivation to learn English					
The English teacher is patient when I do not understand a topic or exercise					
The English teacher develops activities that motivate students					
I think I am good in learning English					
The English teacher assigns difficult tasks that demotivates me					
Grades are my most important goal in the English class					
I always count on the teacher to solve my difficulties in English					
The English teacher gives praise when I do things right					
I feel my personality interferes with my work in English					
The physical conditions of the University have inference in my motivation to learn English					
The dynamism and creativity of my English teacher makes me feel motivated					
The relationship between the English teacher and I interfere in my motivation					
I think I will learn English very well					
I spend part of my free time studying or practicing English					
The criticism my classmates do in relation to my English demotivates me					
The way my English teacher corrects my mistakes makes me feel demotivated					
The demands the English teacher does to me in class motivate me to learn more					
English is useful to me					

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME AND COLLABORATION