

Running head:  
SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

“HOW SOCIAL CLASS FACTORS MAY INFLUENCE ENGLISH LEARNING IN SOME  
HIGH SCHOOLS IN PASTO”

By

Leny Estefania Aux Meneses

Lady Diana Colimba Narvaez

Thesis submitted to the School of Human Sciences in partial

Fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

B. A. Linguistics and Languages Department

English and French Program

University of Nariño

October 2013

SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

“HOW SOCIAL CLASS FACTORS MAY INFLUENCE ENGLISH LEARNING IN SOME  
HIGH SCHOOLS IN PASTO”

By

Leny Estefania Aux Meneses

Lady Diana Colimba Narvaez

Advisor:

Ph. D. Jesús Alirio Bastidas A.

School of Human Sciences

Linguistics and languages department

University of Nariño

October 2013

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

### **NOTA DE RESPONSABILIDAD**

“Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en este trabajo son de responsabilidad exclusiva del autor”

Artículo 1 del acuerdo No.324 de Octubre 11 de 1966 emanado del Honorable Consejo Directivo  
de la Universidad de Nariño

SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Nota de aceptación:

---

---

---

---

---

ASESOR

JURADO

JURADO

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

### *ACKNOWLEDGMENTS*

*We want to thank to:*

*The University of Nariño for giving us the necessary knowledge for serving our society.*

*To our advisor, Ph.D. Jesus Alirio Bastidas Arteaga, for his valuable help and constant support that motivated us for developing our study.*

*To the Committee Members, Dr. Helda Alicia Hidalgo and M.A Gabriel Vicente Obando who provided us with useful suggestions to improve our study.*

*To the directors, teachers and students of the two High Schools where this research took place.*

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

### DEDICATORY

*To God for giving me the strength and courage I need. To my mother Rosalba for teaching me to fight, never giving up and being the light of the darkest instants whereby I went through. To my two loved brothers Javier and Fernando for being my friends, my protectors and my inspiration for becoming a better person. To my three angels who have protected me from heaven and who surely are proud of me. Thanks for making me the person I am today. Finally, to my dear classmate and friend Diana, for the instants we share and her useful help to achieve this important goal.*

*Estefanía Aux Meneses*

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

### DEDICATORY

*This work is dedicated primarily to God, for giving me the life and allowing me have reached this important moment of my professional training. My mother Socorro, for being the most important pillar and show me always her unconditional love and support, no matter what our different opinions. In memory of my father José despite his physical distance, I feel he is with me always and although lacked of many things to live together, I know that this moment would have been so special to him as it is for me. To my brothers Fernando and Luis Carlos for enduring my bad times and for always giving me their support. My partner, Estefanía because without the team that we are, we would not have achieved this goal. Finally, I dedicate this effort to all those people who supported me to complete this win.*

*Diana Colimba*

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

### RESUMEN

Este estudio tiene como propósito analizar el impacto que la clase social puede tener en los resultados del aprendizaje del inglés en dos instituciones de nuestra ciudad.

La información fue recolectada en dos instituciones (una pública y una privada). Seis docentes fueron entrevistados en este estudio y un total de 140 estudiantes de las dos instituciones a quienes se les solicitó completar un cuestionario con preguntas claves para la investigación. Finalmente se realizaron algunas observaciones de clase.

Los diferentes resultados de esta investigación muestran algunas características importantes de la clase social (factor económico, social, familiar y académico). Estos aspectos proporcionan algunas ventajas y desventajas en el rendimiento académico de los estudiantes. Algunos estudiantes aprovechan esas ventajas con el fin de mejorar y tener éxito en el proceso de aprendizaje del inglés. Sin embargo, otros estudiantes no aprovechan esas ventajas para mejorar su idioma (inglés) porque no están interesados en aprenderlo.

Finalmente, se encontraron algunos estudiantes con recursos limitados. A pesar de estas limitaciones ellos hacen un esfuerzo por aprender inglés y tener éxito.



## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

### ABSTRACT

This study has the purpose of analyzing impact that social class might have on students' English learning outcomes of two High schools in our city.

The data were collected in two high schools (a private and a public one). Six teachers were interviewed in this research, and a total of 140 students from the two institutions were asked to fill in a questionnaire. Finally, some classes were observed.

The different results of this research show some relevant features of social class (economic, social, family and academic). These aspects provide some advantages and disadvantages on the academic achievement of students. Some students profit those advantages in order to improve and have success in the process of learning English. However other students do not take those advantages for improving their language (English) because they are not interested in learning it.

Finally, it was found students who have limited resources. In spite of these limitations they make an effort for learning English and getting success.

# SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	7
CHAPTER I: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM.....	12
Description of the problematic situation .....	12
Problem analysis.....	13
Problem formulation.....	15
Delimitations .....	15
Conceptual delimitations .....	15
Social class.....	15
Socio cultural factors .....	15
Learning .....	15
Academic achievement .....	16
Population.....	16
Geography .....	16
Objectives .....	16
General objective .....	16
Specific objectives .....	16
Justification.....	17
Limitations .....	17
CHAPTER II: THE TEORETHICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS THAT ARE INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH.....	19
Theory of Vygotsky: Socio-cultural Approach .....	20

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Vygotsky's method.....	20
Educational implications in the theory of Vygotsky .....	22
Stern's theory.....	25
Social class as an influential factor .....	31
Related researches .....	36
CHAPTER III: THE RESEARCH METHOD .....	39
Design.....	39
The research paradigm .....	39
Type of research .....	40
Research techniques.....	41
Population, setting and sample .....	41
Population .....	41
Setting .....	41
Sample .....	42
Ethical issues .....	43
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS .....	44
Economic factor.....	44
Social factor.....	45
Family factor .....	47
Academic factor.....	48
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	54
Conclusions .....	54
Recommendations .....	54
APPENDIX 1 .....	58

SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

APPENDIX 2 ..... 62

REFERENCES ..... 64

## CHAPTER I: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Learning English in contexts like our country needs to take into account many factors such as culture and society, which can produce positive or negative impact on its effectiveness.

Social class is a sociocultural factor that might have an importance when we learn a language. Therefore, the main purpose of the study was to analyze the impact that the social class might have on the academic achievement of English learning in some schools in the city of San Juan de Pasto.

In this chapter we are going to present the description of our research problem, the different variables, the main objectives, the delimitations of the problem, the evaluation and limitations that we found in our research.

### Description of the Problematic Situation

The problematic situation that might involve the academic achievement of English learning is a situation that needs to be studied because it has been detected a low quality of academic achievement of English learning along the time in many countries (Nullvalue, 2011). As students and future teachers of English, this is a problem that concerns us and requires a deep analysis and a study to identify the possible reasons of the low results that students obtain in a subject that is also taught in our country.

The students' low level of English achievement is a problem that has many causes. For example, some factors related to economic, social, academic and family concerns. Another influential factor could be the perception that students, parents and teachers have regarding the importance of learning a language. Next, according to some research we find that social class might be reflected in the academic achievement of the students because they move up in the social scale, the results and expectations might be better. Besides, this research shows that

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

students who belong to a high background present a better use of metacognitive strategies than those who belong to a low background (Marchesi and Martín, 2002). Also, the students who come from families of a high social class have more economical and cultural opportunities to learn English while students from low social classes present a disinterestedness and little support from parents for learning English. Finally, it could be important to analyze the factors mentioned above in order to identify the relationship between social class and the academic achievement of English in our context.

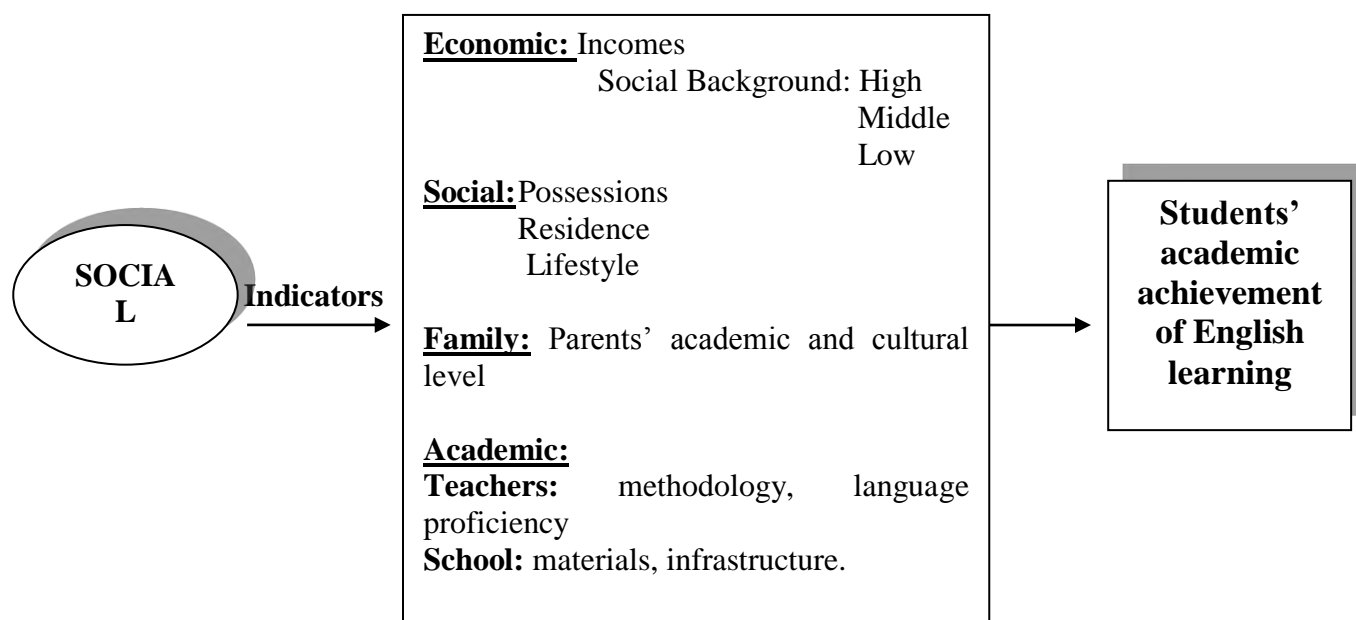
The effects and consequences of the previous situation might be continue affective the achievement of students in English, if the government, the institutions, and the academic community do not do anything to solve it.

This is a problem that requires special attention because the social class has a determining influence on the academic achievement of students (Willms, 2006; Willms & Somer, 2001; Backhoff & col., 2007). For this reason, we have conducted a study to analyze this problem in two schools of our city and to give some suggestions to possibly overcome some of the factors that affect the students' achievement in English.

### Problem Analysis

The most important variables of this study are the students' academic achievement in learning English and social class, which is composed of some indicators such as the economic, social, academic and family features.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR



English learning according to Piaget (1968) is a dynamic process comprising successive stages of adaptation to reality during which learners actively construct knowledge by creating and testing their own theories of the world. In this process we could observe a lot of variables which might affect this one. It could be important to know and identify the factors that interfere with this process and produce a low or high level of academic achievement of English learning.

In our study, it is necessary to identify those factors related to social class which might affect the academic achievement of English. The social class and its specific indicators involve economic, social, family and academic features.

When the students have some difficulties in English learning, the teachers should ask for the students' opinions and analyze the possible reasons they have order to look for possible solutions. Probably the teachers might find that students do not have the same economical resources in order to achieve the main objective since each one belongs to a social class such as high, middle and low.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

In other cases, they could find students who might suffer rejections from their classmates and their teachers because each one belongs to a different social class. Consequently, the student has some prejudices and could become an isolated person because of this. In addition his or her achievement might be affected.

If we know the reasons for the students' low academic achievement, we could propose some possible solutions to help students, get a better level of achievement in English.

### Problem Formulation

How might the social class affect the students' academic achievement of English who are in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades of two high schools: LICEO SAN JUAN (a private school) and LICEO SAN ANTONIO (a public school) from San Juan De Pasto?

### Delimitations

#### Conceptual Delimitation

**Social Class:** In accordance with Outhwaite, Bottomore et al (1994) Social class refers to large groups among which unequal distribution of economic goods and/or preferential division of political prerogatives and/or discriminatory differentiation of cultural values result from economic exploitation or political oppression.

**Socio-cultural Factors:** According to Vygotsky (1979) socio-cultural factors are some aspects of educational transmission and cultural customs which change from one society to another.

**Learning:** According to Bruner (1984) learning is an active process in which students discover or build new ideas or concepts that are based on past and present knowledge or on schemas or mental models(selection, transformation of information, construction of hypothesis, making decisions and organizing data) in order to go further.



## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

**Academic Achievement:** According to Requena (1998) academic achievement is a fruit of effort and the capability of students' work, hours of study, competence and training for concentration.

### Population

Students are organized in a mixed group of low, middle and upper class between 15 and 18 years. They are in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades.

### Geography

A public school and a private school from San Juan de Pasto Liceo San Juan and Colegio San Antonio. These institutions are located in different points of the city. The private institution is located in a strategic sector of the city but the public school is located south of the city.

## Objectives

### General Objective

To analyze the influence that social class might have on the students' academic achievement in English of eleventh and tenth grade from two high schools in San Juan de Pasto: a private and a public school.

### Specific Objectives

1. To determine how the economic factor have an influence on students' academic achievement of English.
2. To describe how the social factor affects the students' academic achievement of English.
3. To analyze how the family factor evidence on the academic achievement.
4. To verify how the academic factor have an impact on the students' academic achievement.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

### Justification

This study is relevant for the following reasons:

It might be essential to know how the social class affects the students' academic achievement because this factor affects not only the student but also the classmates, the teachers and the institutions.

This study differentiates from others because it mainly focuses on the influence of social class on the on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students' academic achievement of English. Other research focuses on general aspects of socio cultural factors which affect the academic achievement of students who study English.

This research has a theoretical importance since its explanations are supported by some experts with their theories about the role of the sociocultural factors and the results of the study have corroborated them.

Finally, it could be relevant for teachers and researchers because this research can help them to understand why some students have a high or low academic achievement, because of the influence of their social class, and they could be motivated to conduct additional research.

### Limitations

At the moment of doing the interviews to teachers they provided wrong information instead of what it is really happening in classrooms.

At the moment of doing the interviews to teachers they did not want to provide information because they were really busy.

At the moment of doing questionnaires, students demonstrated little interest for developing it. It caused the lack of information or wrong information.

Students did not read the questions and they answer the questionnaires in an unconscious way because they do not have any reading habit.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

In order to avoid these problems what we did is to generate confidence in teachers and students avoiding names. With this, they felt more comfortable. Also, we avoided extensive questionnaires in order to make the activity more interesting. These questionnaires contained punctual and simple questions for teachers and students. Finally, we informed the students that the questionnaires did not carry any consequence for them.

As a conclusion to the previously proposed, the previous chapter tries to explain clearly and widely the research problem and its implication such as the description of the problematic situation, the main objectives, delimitations, and limitations of the problem. In the next chapter we refer to the theoretical framework that supports the study.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

### CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The importance of knowing about the effects that the sociocultural factors have in the students of English leads us to research about an important problem. Social class has been a significant factor that needs to be taken into consideration during the learning and teaching process. It is necessary to analyze the effects and possible solutions for those problems with useful contributions of important authors that have worked in this area. In this way we support our study.

#### Sociocultural Factors that Are Involved in the Process of Teaching and Learning English

The theoretical framework of this research project is based some different theories and authors' like Vygotsky (1979), Stern (1983) and Brown (1980) who have contributed to understand to the teaching field, especially the process of teaching-learning a language such as English. Besides, we have selected social class as an influential factor on the above process.

The teaching-learning process of a second language is a complex process, since it depends on a number of conditions and contexts in which one learns. Also, it might involve certain factors that could make this process tedious and complicated when it is put into practice, for example, contextual factors. Depending on the context where one studies second language, we can find a difference between what we call learning a second language and learning a foreign language. A second language refers to the spoken language in the community where we plan to study it. On the other hand, the foreign language has no presence in the community where the learner studies it. Moreover, the second language is one that fulfills a social function in the linguistic community in which it is learned while a foreign language is one that is learned in a context that lacks social and institutional functions (Stern, 1983).

It could be important to note that language is a cultural phenomenon that should not be studied or taught in isolation from the culture itself. Moreover, we might say that language is one of the

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

most important elements in the transmission and acquisition of knowledge and culture. Thus, the study of a second language has become today a truly momentous part in the professional competencies to develop internationally. There could be many factors involved in the process of learning a foreign language, but we mainly focus on the socio-cultural factors involved in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language. For this reason, the socio-cultural theory of Vygotsky is a very important theory to support this study.

### Theory of Vygotsky: Socio-cultural Approach

Vygotsky (1979) makes a great contribution in education and in human psychology. The most important ideas of this theory refer to the genetic method, the origin of the psychological processes of human beings, to study the relationship between thought and language, to use of tools and signs as mediators for the understanding of social processes, the existence of actual developmental level and potential level of mental function as indicators that define the zone of proximal development. Finally, we identify the educational implications of the theory and some applications to educational practice.

Now, we address the most important aspects of Vygotsky socio-cultural theory.

### Vygotsky's Method

Vygotsky's method (1979), which is based on an evolutionary perspective, states that a behavior can only be understood if one examines its phases, changes, and history, arguing that the psychological processes of the human being can only be studied by the form and timing of their intervention during development. Thereby, he made a significant distinction between what is a genetic and comparative method and an experimental–evolutionary one. Taking into account the importance of Vygotsky's genetic method we should not ignore the four areas in which his method was applied:

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Phylogenetic: (development of the human species)focusing mainly on purely human psychological functions.

Historical Socio-cultural: in this field it generated an arbitrary complex artificial system that regulates social behavior.

Ontogenetic: it is the meeting point of the biological and the socio cultural evolution.

Microgenetic: it is the way to study the construction of a specific psychological process.

### Thought and Language

Regarding the relationship between thought and language, Vigotsky makes a clear difference between the pre intellectual and the pre- linguistic functions are: the first refers to the child's intellectual development while the second one refers to speech development. Chronologically, these are initially separated to some extent but then thought becomes verbal and speech becomes rational.

In addition, Vygotsky says that the mediator between rational and intentional transmission of the experience and thought to others is language. Finally, he argues that the verbal language unit is originated in meaning.

### Tools and Signs

Another relevant contribution of Vygotsky is related with the use of tools and signs for understanding the social process. Tools are really useful for man's activities in the world and they are oriented to generate changes. On the other part, signs are mental and they do not produce any changes of the real object because their results are internally oriented.

### Interaction between Learning and Development

In the interaction between learning and development Vygotsky describes two developmental levels. The actual developmental level refers to the mental functions of a child at a certain moment. The level of potential development refers to the solution of certain problems that

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

children can do with the help of others. The difference between the potential level of development and the actual developmental level is called the zone of proximal development.

According to Vygotsky (1979), there is a relationship between learning and development since each child has had experiences in his or her life before starting their first lessons. This author takes into account two evolutionary levels: the real evolutionary level and the potential developmental level. The former level is the developmental level of the child mental functions which refers to the activities that children can do by themselves and which indicates their mental capabilities. And the latter deals with the problems which are not solved by children themselves, as a result they might need help from others.

### Educational Implications in the Theory of Vygotsky

Vygotsky also raises some important ideas in education such as: "Psychological development prospectively seen". It refers to the development of certain processes that have not been developed yet. Another idea is: "Learning processes put in place the development process". It means the child's psychological development is outside-in where the school has an important role in this development. The third idea claims "Intervention of other members of the social group as mediators between culture and individual." This idea engages inter-psychological processes being of great importance involving other members of the culture in that learning.

### In Terms of Teaching the L1 or L2

According to Moll (1993), Vygotsky argued that what is really important is not to share the knowledge of a subject but the essential thing is to use collaborative forms of measurement to create accessibility and communicate meaning. In other words, education should not primarily focus on strengthening or continuing with what the child knows or masters but rather to emphasize in what he does not know, does not perform or does not dominate.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

As for the second language teaching Vygotsky claims “The development of the child's spontaneous concepts proceeds in ascending order and his scientific concepts continue on descending order, toward a more elementary and concrete. A scientific concept involves, from the beginning, an attitude 'mediated' to the object.” (1995, p.148, quoted by Carballo and Maximilian, 2011). You could say that performance in relation to their learning of English is given in ascending order. Through verbal competition is how the student develops knowledge unconsciously making relationship between sound and concept. Moreover, the knowledge of downward is when the student analyzes and details the content in order to achieve understanding and learn it. A good example is the grammar rules. There is a difference between knowledge spontaneous development and the development of scientific knowledge since the former is acquired through every day experiences that the child is exposed while the latter is learned according to the level of prior knowledge that he or she has.

Vygotsky presents a major issue in relation to foreign language learning by saying that the influences of scientific concepts about the child's mental development is analogous to the effect of learning a foreign language, a conscious process and deliberate from the start. This means that learners will always relate the foreign language learning to their prior knowledge acquired in his or her first language. For example, learners always try to translate everything they learn in the foreign language to certain expressions of their first language. To avoid this, we should use visual and auditory aids for students to make connection between the object and the new linguistic knowledge.

We conclude that for Vygotsky, language is the medium of interaction by which the mind could be developed through forms or social functions because everything that is in the mind was first in the social field context.



## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

This process has some implications for the teaching of English. Due to the traditionalists and training concepts which focus on sentences, teachers leave out the educational needs of students in different social and cultural contexts. Subsequently, we found other socio cultural factors which are part of this process.

According to Colette there are some Socio- Cultural Factors that Affect the Process of Learning a Foreign Language.

Among the socio -cultural factors that affect learning a foreign language we can find gender. Some studies have shown that female gender is more efficient to learn a language when compared to males. This is because women are more interested in learning a language and have a more positive attitude to it and for this reason they do better in this area compared to men.

A second aspect to consider when learning a language is social class (Colette, 1984). This is important since in many cases it has shown that students from higher social classes are more engaged with the lessons and have a better performance in learning the language than those from lower social class. This is because in most cases, students who come from wealthier families receive more support when dealing with new knowledge and also because they have more opportunities to learn and travel abroad in contrast to those from lower classes.

A third aspect to consider is the individual's age. In the course of history, we have read several theories of language learning and many of them claim that the appropriate age for learning is no doubt childhood. Many authors dare to specify ages such as Penfield(1953), who argues that the optimal age is between 4 and 10 years old, but other authors such as Asher and Price(1967) who firmly believe that adults can learn a language as simply and effectively as children if they work under the right conditions for the process to be successful. One thing to mention is also the willingness of the learner when learning a language and this largely depends on age. In general, children are more interested in learning new things, including a language, which rarely occurs in

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

adolescents who are going through a time of change and hesitation that could refrain them from learning something new.

Moreover, the attitudes of the target language community could be a positive or negative influence in the process of learning the language. These attitudes might be good if it is perceived the support from the community and could be bad if these attitudes show rejection towards learning. In many cases the rejection might be perceived as "betrayal" of the current community and as a path to the "rise of social class". What we could do as teachers is to work on language learning in an open, natural and communicative way where you look enrichment foreign culture without forgetting the origins and customs from the apprentice is.

All these aspects could be of vital importance in seeing the success or failure of the process of learning a language because they might be the ones that determine that the students learn a new language and it also depends on whether these factors are satisfactory or not in this process.

### Stern's Theory

Now we refer to stern's framework (1983) to discuss the specific factors and the relationship between them, since he does an appropriate analysis of them. Below there is a diagram which clearly shows the factors involved in learning a second language:

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Factors involved in learning as a second language

### 2. INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS

- ❖ AGE
- ❖ COGNITIVE CHARACTERISTICS
- ❖ AFFECTIVE CHARACTERISTICS
- ❖ PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

### 1. SOCIAL CONTEXT

- ❖ SOCIO-LINGUISTIC FACTORS
- ❖ SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS
- ❖ SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

### 4. LEARNING PROCESS

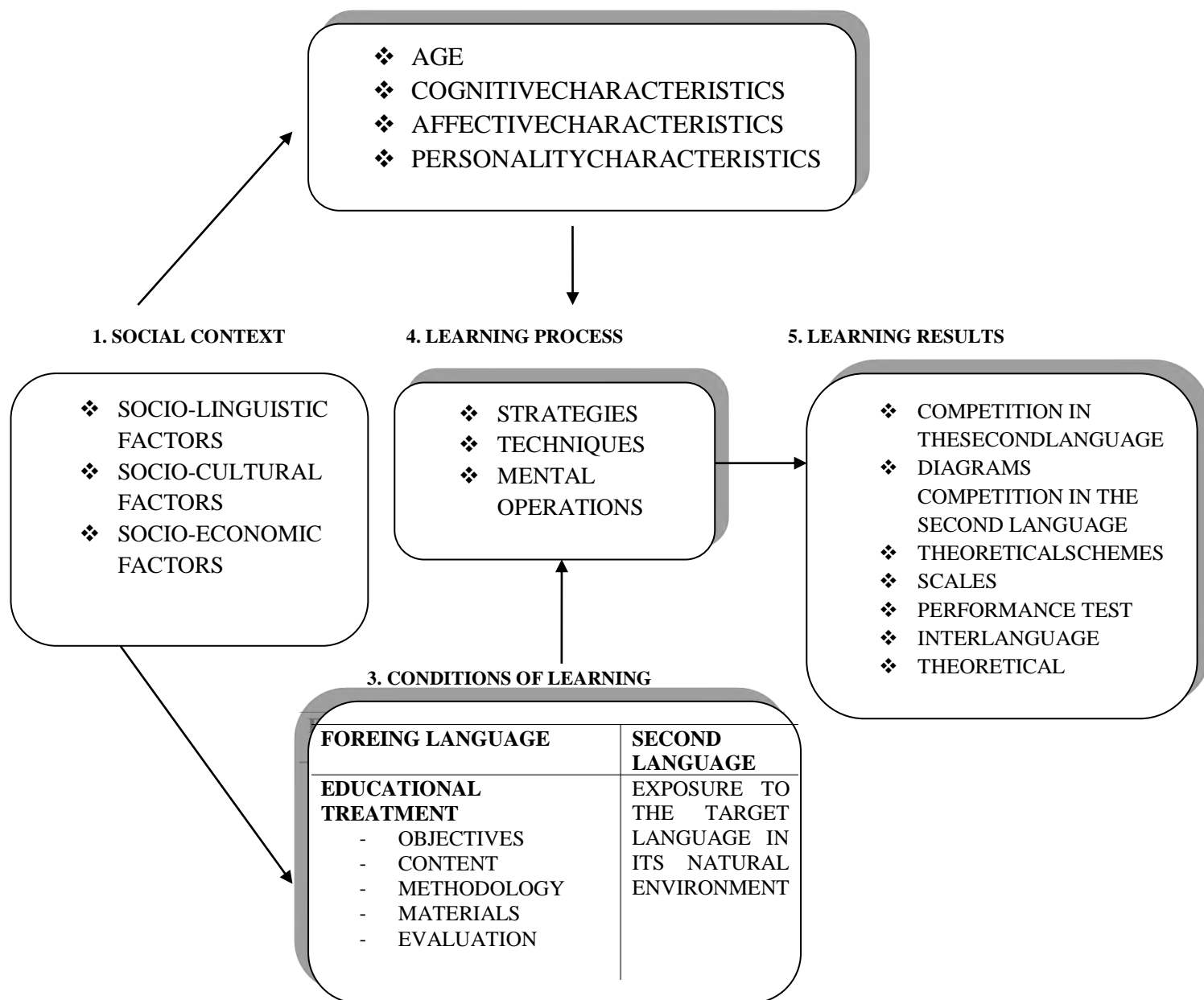
- ❖ STRATEGIES
- ❖ TECHNIQUES
- ❖ MENTAL OPERATIONS

### 5. LEARNING RESULTS

- ❖ COMPETITION IN THE SECOND LANGUAGE
- ❖ DIAGRAMS
- ❖ COMPETITION IN THE SECOND LANGUAGE
- ❖ THEORETICAL SCHEMES
- ❖ SCALES
- ❖ PERFORMANCE TEST
- ❖ INTERLANGUAGE
- ❖ THEORETICAL

### 3. CONDITIONS OF LEARNING

FOREING LANGUAGE	SECOND LANGUAGE
<b>EDUCATIONAL TREATMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OBJECTIVES</li> <li>- CONTENT</li> <li>- METHODOLOGY</li> <li>- MATERIALS</li> <li>- EVALUATION</li> </ul>	EXPOSURE TO THE TARGET LANGUAGE IN ITS NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

According to Stern (1983) the factors involved in the process of learning a second language are:

### Social Context

Stern (1983) speaks of a group of variables that refer to the social context that defines the individual characteristics and student learning. It can also be said that the social context is a big influence on a person's decision to learn or not a second language. Here there are several factors that can exert some control over the teaching-learning process such as sociolinguistic, socio-cultural and socioeconomic factors. So, we must consider the relationship between the first and second language because the linguistic and cultural distance between them involves a series of problems for learning. Thus, socioeconomic factors also have a large influence on the process of learning a second language, since the economic and social level of a person is of great importance for the success or failure of this learning. In other words, students of high socioeconomic status are more successful than the lower class. As students belonging to high socioeconomic status, they are more likely to be financially, morally and psychologically supported by their families, therefore; the members of this class have a level of study and high prestige. Hence, the advantages that they have can contribute to a better performance in the language learning and increase the motivation they need to succeed in the process of learning English which does not usually occur in low social class which generates a high level of demotivation in the students.

### Individual Characteristics of Students

Thereafter, we talk about individual characteristics of students including some factors such as age, cognitive, emotional characteristics and personality traits. The age factor is something of great significance. Many educators such as Erasmus, Montaigne and Locke (1959) came to the conclusion that for learning a second language successfully it is necessary to start at an early age because children have a biological active period for linguistic development. While cognitive

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

characteristics relate to the ability that the student has to learn something in general and particularly for foreign language learning, the student must have a specific cognitive academic skill and cognitive and academic global skills as well as basic interpersonal communication required for using appropriate language. Finally, the emotional and personal characteristics also belong to what is the motivation and attitudes of students. On the other hand, these factors are related to authoritarianism, ethnocentrism, tolerance, prejudice, stereotypes, Machiavellianism, anonymity, empathy, introversion, extroversion, cultural shock and stress in the student. Thus, the affective component contributes to learn English, this means the driver key of the cognitive skills are operated in learning a language while there is no excess of them. It can be negative while its moderate presence is beneficial for learning.

### Learning Conditions

Other important variables that influence on the foreign language learning process are the learning conditions. It is important to take into account if these learning conditions make reference to the second language or to the foreign language. In the first one we can find factors such as the exposure to the target language in its natural environment while in the second one we can find factors such as objectives, content, methodology, materials and evaluation involved in the learning-teaching process. In other words, it is important to distinguish between foreign language learning and second language learning because in the first one the learner is not exposed to a natural context where the target language is spoken (Stern, 1983).

In the foreign language learning process teachers only focus their attention on some aspects such as grammar items without paying attention to the student's interaction that might help to develop a good command of the language, which could be really helpful because in foreign language settings there are not native speakers of the language for students to practice with. On the other hand, in the second language learning process it could be more likely to obtain better

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

results by the learners because they are exposed to the target language. Therefore, they can practice what they learn in the classroom with the native speakers they have around them.

### Learning Process

Subsequently, in the learning process we find factors such as strategies, techniques, and mental operations. This process is carried out in stages in which the main purpose is to master the language similar to the level of a native speaker, but the reality is very different because it is difficult to achieve this level of proficiency in English.

Within this process the learner uses some learning strategies which are divided in:

Active planning strategies: According to Stern (1992) the learner selects short- and long-term goals, recognizes the stages and sequences of the development and participates actively in the learning process.

Explicit and academic learning strategies: According to Stern (1992), the linguistic learning is a cognitive and perceptive activity and the good learners are ready for studying and practicing it. They consider the language as a formal system of signs composed by rules and relationships between them. Paying attention to these characteristics of the languages or comparing them with the language system of the mother tongue or in an independent way, they develop consciously the second language as a linguistic system.

Social learning strategies: Stern (1992) states that the learners accept that in a first phase they need help from others and while they advance in the learning process they become independent. The good learner looks for opportunities to communicate with the speakers of the second language and develop communicative strategies.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Affective strategies: Stern (1992) states that the learners face emotional problems and learning motivations about linguistic learning such as shock and linguistic and cultural stress. The good learners face the new learning with positive attitude, overcoming possible frustrations and persisting in the effort. These attitudes should be developed towards himself, toward the language itself and toward the learning in general. Also, toward the second language speakers and their culture.

### Learning Results

Finally, we find learning results within which we find some factors such as second language competence, theoretical schemata, scales, inter-language and starrng tests. It is important to take into account learning results because this informs us how the student's learning goes and also the progress that the learner has in the different results (good ones and bad ones) because not all of the students achieve the goals they have for the language learning process.

It is important to understand how results affect the motivation of the students that learn a foreign language. The dissatisfaction that the students can experience with the low results in the proposed goals can cause resentment with the language, the teacher or the scholar system. This feeling might cause a negative attitude towards the target language, their speakers and in general towards all the learning process.

### Socio-Cultural Factors

According to Brown (1980), it exists some other sociocultural factors which can affect the second language learning process which are: cultural stereotypes problems, attitudes, the second culture learning, sociopolitical considerations, and the relationship between language, thought, and culture.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Within the cultural stereotype problems we can say that teachers and students need to understand the cultural differences and also that every person is different to other in thought and customs which allow people to respect the differences in human beings.

The attitudes are an important and influential factor that can be divided in positive and negative attitudes. The positive ones help to generate some benefits in the learning process while the negative ones can generate certain degree of demotivation in the process mentioned above.

The second culture learning implies a cultural conflict which can cause rejection to the second culture. The process of learning about another culture implies the knowledge about the second culture identity and it is known as acculturation.

It is important to know that through culture and language we can create a relationship with the world. Thought is related with the way how we can learn a second language because it is necessary to think in the other language to learn it.

Now, it is time to talk about our specific factor that influence in the second language learning process.

### Social Class as an Influential Factor

After having revised the different sociocultural problems that affect the language learning process it is time to focus on one of the most important aspects. Social class might be important because it can affect the learning process in general and also the second or foreign language learning.

We can define social class as “large groups among which unequal distribution of economic goods and/or preferential division of political prerogatives and/or discriminatory differentiation of cultural values result from economic exploitation or political oppression” (Outhwaite, Bottomore et al 1994, p. 23). It is important to take into consideration that social class belongs to the individual and affects in a positive or negative way the life processes because it is the



## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

individual who should adapt himself to the society according to what his or her social class requires for them.

When we talk about low academic achievement in children, school materials and teachers usually tend to look the problem in the familiar environment and many times it is related with the problem the children has at home, especially in families with a low social class. Some studies have proven that in some special courses there are children that belong to families with low economic resources. They mention that 3 from 4 children belong to this type of families (Broman, Bien, and Schaugenessy, 1985) what could led us to analyze the problem that education faces when we refer to social class that exist in our setting.

The main problem of low social classes is the lack of opportunities needed for increasing children's knowledge. It is the result of the lack of money for education and parent's employment (Perez Serrano, 1981). Many families do not have money for paying the education of their children, others maybe have money for paying it but it is difficult for them to get the materials required for the second language learning process because most of the time English and other language texts are expensive and parents do not have the possibilities to acquire them. Thus, children can have problems in the process (they can learn just a little) due to the lack of materials.

Something important for pointing out is that children that grow in families with low economic resources have difficulties for developing their cognition. A clear example of this is the amount of people that we usually find in poor people's houses. This can cause stress in the learner and lack of concentration that prevents learning, obtaining as a result a low academic achievement even if parents and students want to learn something new.

It might be possible to find cases where parents do not support their children. There is a lack of compromise and dedication on the part of parents. This occurs because many times parents spend their time working for obtaining the resources they need for supporting their households.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Here, we find, in many occasions, single mothers that are in charge of their children and work very hard without spending time with their children.

On the other hand, we have middle and high social class families who do not have this kind of problem (Burstall, Jamieson, Cohen and Hargreaves, 1974). They do what is possible for spending time with their children (not always, but in most of the cases). This creates a relationship and an exchange of ideas, thoughts and also knowledge which affects in a positive way the academic achievement of children.

Something we cannot forget is the quality of education that children receive according to the social class they belong to. It could be possible that the high social classes have access to a better education than low social classes. This might occur because private schools have the necessary materials and conditions that the learner needs for the process of learning a second language while public schools not always have what this process requires (especially in Colombia) and daily public education faces many problems and inconveniences and the materials are not enough or sometimes misused.

In rural schools we can see clearly this kind of problems (Feito, 2005). Every day we watch the news and many times we see that the education in our country is deteriorated. For example, in many towns there are not the necessary conditions so that the learning process could be developed in the correct way. There are lack of materials and conditions for teaching our children. It is even more difficult when there is not energy or water in these places, some of those schools even do not have desks and the classrooms are deteriorated. Situations like these affect negatively second language learning. Many times might be also lack of teachers because it is difficult for them to access those places.

It could be also important to know what children and young people think about social class. What is the conception they have about this? Teachers should observe consciously what the

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

behaviors and attitudes in the students are regarding their social class. A relevant aspect could be to observe if the students make a clear difference between “poor and rich” people. If they discriminate this or if they think that all human beings are equal. These are aspects that can clearly affect the process of learning.

It might be important to consider the different indicators that support our research. The familiar indicator shows the influence that parents’ academic and cultural level has on the students’ academic achievement of English. According to The PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) Report (2003), students whose parents had higher qualifications performed significantly better in the language proficiency test administered to European school-age children. As well, Nikolov (2009) noticed a similar tendency which showed a strong link between parents’ level of education and students’ achievement in language learning in Hungary. Krashen (2005) claims that students whose parents are educated score higher on standardized tests than those whose parents were not educated. Socio-economic status, however, does not only affect final language learning outcomes but also has an influence on motivation to learn, self-regulation and students’ self-related beliefs (Fan, 2011).

The economic factors such as access to learning resources at home and at school can also have an impact on students’ learning (Benson, 2007). Many times, the quality of schools students attend is determined by the financial contribution the parents make to their children’s schooling. It depends on the students’ social background (high, middle, low). Some authors such as Eamon (2005) dare to claim that even adolescents who live in higher quality neighborhoods perform better at school than those who live in poorer neighborhoods (Residence). The educational condition in foreign language education is greatly based on the financial means of the students’ families (Muñoz, 2008). Thus, the economic factor might play an important role in students’ academic achievement.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

One important point could be the influence of physical school environment in the students' academic achievement. The review might focus on studying the relationship between building conditions of schools and teachers, and students' academic achievement.

This aspect was not relevant in the middle of the twentieth century when architects initiated to experiment with some design concepts as the round and compact schools and such educational concepts as the open scale plan and team teaching. Schools were not perceived as facilities revolving around sound educational programs until as late as the 1970s (Castaldi, 1987). Modern schools have to have certain minimum standards like size, acoustics, lighting, and heating in order to have a productive environment, when the learning and teaching process could proceed normally (Connors, 1982). This is because the physical environment and the learning cannot be separated and are considered to be an integral part of each other (Taylor & Gousie, 1988). Christopher (1988) asserted that the purpose of the designed environment is to provide a climate conducive to both teaching and learning.

As a result, we can say that the school factors such as structure, composition and climate might affect students' achievement. According to Crosnoe, Johnson and Elder (2004), school sectors like private or public and size class are essential structural components of schools. Private schools tend to have both better funding and smaller class size than public schools (Crosnoe et al 2004). The funding of private school leads to better academic achievement and access to resources such as computers, labs, interactive classrooms and so on that has been shown to improve academic achievement (Crosnoe et al 2004, Eamon 2005). Smaller class sizes create more intimate settings and therefore increase teacher-student attachment which has also been shown to have a positive effect on student success (Crosnoe et al 2004). On the other hand, students who are from socioeconomic backgrounds attending to schools which have limited resources do not perform as well as students from higher social class (Eamon 2005).

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Another aspect is climate school which is defined by Crosnoe et al 2004 as “the general atmosphere of a school”. (2004, p. 60-81). Climate schools refer to the interpersonal relationship between students and teachers. If teachers create a safe and reliable environment, students would have success (Crosnoe et al 2004).

Besides, it could be taken into account some aspects related to teacher’s methodology and methods since learning a foreign language could be a complex process and language is not just an act of putting meaningful words together. It needs a physical, intellectual and emotional response if we have to send or receive messages. Learning a foreign language involves a new culture and a new way of thinking, feeling and acting. The learner has to be fluent, accurate and meaningful (Graff, 1985). These reasons show that teachers should select good methods in order to accomplish students’ success in a proficient way.

In conclusion, it could be essential to recognize that social class plays one of the most important roles in the process of learning due to the poor possibilities that children from low social class have and the different problems they face every day which interfere with their learning process. On the other hand, children from mid and high social class come from families with the sufficient resources for educating them. Besides, children are motivated and interested in learning a language which might be a positive aspect because this motivation might help them to achieve a good academic performance in classrooms.

### Related Research

Chavez, C., and Jimenez M., (2009) worked in a research called “Factores sociales dentro del aula que inciden en el rendimiento academico de los educandos de bachillerato en el area de inglés” which focuses principally in how sociocultural factors affect the academic achievement of the students of English. This research focuses mainly on how the social relationships inside

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

classrooms affect this process. Also, they mention the response that teachers have in the learning process and how classmates influence in the academic achievement of the learner.

The authors decided to carry out this investigation making some interviews and surveys to teachers and students (around 11-18 years-old). With these instruments they revealed the results obtained in their project. The studies showed that the learners' low academic achievement in English not always is a consequence of the lack of study by students but a consequence of the interference of some factors such as the negative attitude by teachers and classmates. Also, the use of inadequate methods or approaches by teachers because many times they are not interested in reading about actual methods and theories. Finally, the pressure toward students is an important factor that many times it is not taken into account and obviously affects English learning process.

Morales in 2001 in her work "Influencia del factor socioeconómico y cultural en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje" claims that it is important to know how the socioeconomic factor and culture interfere in the process of learning. She worked with instruments such as observations and surveys for teachers and students. The students were in fourth grade and the research was developed in three institutions in San Juan de Pasto city. The students were between 9 to 11 years of age.

The results of this study show that the socioeconomic factor has a negative impact on the process mentioned above because the social context that involves students and teachers affects the normal development and reduces the academic and labor opportunities.

In conclusion, this chapter makes reference to the theoretical framework that is used for the development of this research. Here we can find the different theories that support this study and the different contributions that many authors such as Vigotsky, Stern, and Brown have given to the field of education, especially in the field of learning and teaching languages. Also, we define

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

social class as the principal influential factor in this research which has a huge impact in the learning-teaching process.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

### CHAPTER III: THE RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter presents the method which was implemented in order to do this research taking into account some factors such as context, population, variables, data which were collected, procedure, and ethical issues.

#### Design

##### The Research Paradigm

According to the anthropologists Levi-Strauss and Malinowski (1958), qualitative research refers to the essential properties of the social phenomena or the attributes and values of people that differentiates the social from individual and reflect their own culture.

Qualitative research may be defined as the study of social and human phenomena which take its starting point the meaning of the actors in order to achieve their comprehension, interpretation and transformation. Qualitative research uses a methodology which facilitates systematic collection of the data with rigorous, detailed and contextual description of the facts, in order to achieve the highest inter-subjectivity in its analysis and interpretation.

On the other hand, according to Gloria Serrano (1994), the main characteristics of the qualitative research are:

The theory constitutes a reflection and has as a starting point the practice.

The qualitative research tries to understand the reality.

It describes the facts which develop the event.

It deepens into the different reasons of the facts

The individual is an interactive and communicative subject who shares meanings with others.

The validation of the qualitative research focuses mainly on the reality and the relation of the theoretical interpretation with the author's theoretical interpretation. This research does not



## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

pretend the generalization of the results as criteria of validity but it focuses on understanding social reality as the only phenomenon which is dependent and unique in its respective context.

This research was selected because it helped us to understand the reality in which individuals work since the information was shared between students and teachers.

### Type of Research

The type of research which was applied in order to develop this project was the ethnographic research. According to Tezanos, (1998); Hammersley y Atkinson, (1994); Goetz and Lecompte (1998), ethnography is a detailed way to describe and interpret what a social group does. This description includes as much the learned behavior and the customs as the life style which is practiced by that social group. Furthermore, this kind of qualitative research helps the detailed description of a social group which has to fulfill such the requirements such as daily observation and the interaction with members of a social group.

The main objective of ethnography is to study the meaning of some things like behavior, language, interaction and cognition of a particular culture group.

The main characteristics of ethnography are:

The data are collected from the direct contact with members of a cultural group.

The observation is participant because the researcher lives with the members who are studied in order to collect information which is really reliable.

Ethnography uses a variety of questions which can be formulated both explicitly and implicitly.

Finally, ethnography was the most suitable kind of research to develop this project, since it permitted us to live with the individuals to perceive their points of views, perceptions and

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

actions. So, this research was selected because it helped us to live together with members of a social group in order to obtain reliable information.

### Research Techniques

This research was developed through two important techniques of data collection.

Interviews: According to Patton (1980), the purpose of interview is to know as much the perspective as the frame of reference from the individuals and the communities in which they organize their environment and decide their behavior.

Observation: it develops in the real context where the events occur. Its main elements are an observer, things which are observed, the instruments which are used in order to observe and the frameworks which guide the observation.

These two techniques have been selected because these are the most suitable in order to collect information in this kind of research. First of all, interviews are suitable because they permit us to obtain trustable information since this information is recorded on a cassette. Finally, observation is an excellent way to collect information since it permits us to live together with the individuals to be studied.

### Population, Setting and Sample

#### Population

The selected students were younger men and women between 14 to 17 years of age who are in tenth and eleventh grade. They belong to different socio-economical contexts.

#### Setting

The research took place in one public institution named LICEO SAN JUAN where we found students who belong to low and middle social class and one private institution

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

denominated COLEGIO SAN ANTONIO where the students will belong to a mid and high social class. They are located in different sectors of San Juan de Pasto city.

### Sample

The students were selected in this way:

45 students of tenth grade from the two institutions mentioned above.

45 students of eleventh grade from the two institutions.

The students were volunteers for developing the questionnaires. It took place during the free time that students had.

Students that present a high and low level of English without any type of discrimination were selected.

3 English teachers that belong to the public institution

3 English teachers that belong to the private institution

The procedure that will be applied in this research is as follows:

First, it asked for the necessary permission to the different institutions where the research took place. Also, we talked to the different authorities in the institutions for the development of this project.

Some class observations were done in each grade without previous knowledge on the part of teachers about students' academic achievement. We were present in many classes.

Some interviews to teachers were done. It took 20 minutes for each interview approximately.

Later, we returned to classrooms for doing some other observations and for analyzing additional information. The observation was done without previous knowledge on the part of teachers.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

A questionnaire was given to students of high and low academic achievement in the subject of English in each institution. It took 30 minutes for each student but it depended on the students' ability for answering the questions.

At the end of the study, we analyzed the results in order to determine how social class affects the academic achievement of the students of English.

### Ethical Issues

For the development of this research we took into account some ethical issues as:

It made the necessary reconnaissance of copyrights and avoiding plagiarism.

We asked for the necessary permissions to the different authorities of the institutions: director, teachers, parents and students.

The names of the teachers, students, and institutions were not mention in this research for guarantying confidentiality.

This research did not produce any consequence or damage to the participants of the study.

The participation of teachers and students were voluntary.

The results of this research presented and commented with the teachers that participated in the project.

In conclusion, this chapter referred to the different research methods that we applied in this project for its development. Moreover, we referred to the population, setting and sample that made part of this research. Also, we mentioned the variables and the different data collection techniques that we used in the procedure of this research. Finally, we presented the different ethical issues that we took into account for the development of this kind of research.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

### CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The analysis of results was done in a qualitative way because people did surveys and interviews about social class as an influent factor in the English learning process. For this reason this research study is expressed through their own language.

#### Economic factor in the English learning process

The first specific objective of our study was economical factor because data collection showed that the economical factor impact English learning process because teachers of both institutions (public and private) agree that Students' achievement success of English depends on some factors such as social background and income: students' high background in the private school since they have many opportunities to learn not only English but also many things like singing, playing sports, playing instruments among others. These aspects help some students to motivate for increasing their knowledge. However, few students take advantage of this resources and great chances. In the other case, students' success of those belong to a low background depends on their own motivation for getting ahead and being a better person in the future.

Another factor is money. The results showed that students who belong to high and middle background have a lot of advantages in terms of money. Every day parents provide their children with big amounts of pocket money. For example, students said "*Mis papas me dan 3 mil o 5 mil pesos para el descanso.*" This evidence shows that economical factor helps them to have all the resources they require in order to supply their basic and scholar needs. On the other hand, students who belong to a low social background do not almost have economical resources. These families only have the necessary money for surviving every day. For example, one student said "*Casi todos los días mis papás no me dan para el recreo, y otras veces, cuando ellos tienen plata me dan 500 o 1000.*" That is, students belonging to low social backgrounds struggle every day for getting ahead with the limited resources they have.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Our observations supported both results mentioned previously. We observed how money played an important role in the English learning process because the private school students had money for getting all the material they needed, and this helped their learning process. On the other hand, students of the public school did not have money neither for buying snacks nor for getting materials. Eamon (2005) claims that students who live in higher quality of life perform better at school than those who live in poorer conditions.

### Social factor

The second specific objective of the study was social factor. The results showed that the social factor plays an important role in the English learning achievement. In the private schools it was found many positive and negative answers about learning English.

This research showed the optimistic attitude of students, teachers and parents because they belong to a high background and have excellent life conditions. For example one student affirmed: *“Es importante aprender inglés porque dentro de mis planes esta viajar y conocer muchos lugares en el mundo, tambien porque me parece muy importante culturizarme con otro tipo de idiomas y en la carrera que sea que vaya a estudiar es necesario tener aprendizaje y conocimiento de otro idioma para desarrollarse en otros medios.”* Besides, learners have all economic, cultural, technologic and human resources which permit students access to interactive materials, and audiovisual tools and extra classes in outstanding academies. All of these things support students to improve their foreign language. Those students look English as a necessity since they depend on this language for getting their goals and desires in their life. As well, they have lots of reasons for using English. For instance, to go abroad, to visit their families who live outside the country, to follow their parents’ desires related to the importance of learning English. They exert pressure on students to learn it. As a result, they have a lot of motivation for learning English, and they can obtain good students’ outcomes. Despite some students have favorable

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

attitudes we can find other ideas as these students expressed: *“No me llama la atencion aprender este idioma ya que a mi parecer es un idioma con cierto grado de dificultad en cuanto a su aprendizaje”* or *“No me gusta debido a que es preferible hablar español”*. The results evidence this fact. There are other students who think English is not important in their lives despite having the facilities and enough resources to practice and learn it. For example: *“Me gustan otros idiomas, además me gustaría viajar a países donde no hablen inglés”* A second student express: *“Yo considero que el inglés no es tan llamativo, sino un idioma comercial y creo que lo aprendo por necesidad y no porque realmente me guste.”*

The results obtained in the public school are also negative and positive. On the negative side, lots of students lack economic, cultural, institutional and social opportunities which do not help to motivate them to learn English. There is a big difference between students of private schools and students of public schools because they have never gone abroad and they have limited aspirations in order to travel to another country or study abroad. Those limitations do not help students to find English as a necessity as a working tool which can help them in the future.

However, other students have some aspirations to go abroad or study abroad, but they do not have any resources for that. For this reason, English is not essential for them and they do not pay attention to learning it since all of their aspirations and desires are only dreams which are almost impossible to accomplish. These results indicate that the students' motivation is very poor; as a result they have an unenthusiastic attitude towards English. All of these aspects can be the consequence of the students' low background which is a strong disadvantage for them.

However, there is a group of students who are really interested in learning English for obtaining all of their purposes; although, these are really difficult to achieve. One student said: *“todo se puede si se tiene ganas”*. Another one said: *“Es importante el inglés porque esto nos va a servir para nuestro futuro y presente porque si nosotros nos queremos especializar tenemos*

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

*que saber manejar el idioma donde nos vamos a especializar.” Third student’s answer: “El inglés es importante ya que este idioma abre oportunidades de trabajo y también para interactuar con otras personas.”*

The teachers’ view about the social factor confirms its effect on the English learning achievement in their schools. In general terms, teachers agree that the social factor plays an important role in the English learning and teaching process because if the students have excellent resources and great opportunities, like going abroad, studying abroad and settling in another country, they will corroborate the importance of learning English as a teacher expressed: *“Las ventajas que tienen los estudiantes de salir del país son grandes oportunidades para mejorar el inglés, lo cual incrementa la motivación de los estudiantes.”* The results showed that students’ attitude about learning English is both positive and negative. Lots of students are not interested in learning English because they think English is not necessary in life, it is a common subject and that is all. But some students think English is a need for their success. According to Benson (2007) the students’ quality of life is determined by the financial contributions the parents make to their children.

### Family factor

The third specific objective of the study was family factor. This factor has a great influence on the students’ English learning achievement. Learners who belong to high and middle background are supported by their families and their institution, so they have high motivation towards English, because some of them have participated in exchange trips, tourism or family visits. Some students’ opinions are: student one said: *“La opinión de mi familia es muy buena ya que piensan que el inglés es una facilidad para conseguir trabajo y una ayuda para conseguir éxito”*, student two said: *“ Toda mi familia opina que es conveniente aprenderlo, para así poder conocer horizontes nuevos en la vida.”* On the contrary, we found families that did not support their



## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

children because they thought English is not important. Some students said: student one: *“Mi mamá y hermanos creen que es muy importante para los trabajos y empleos y mi papa cree que es algo casi inutil y estudiarlo no sirve porque pagan poco.”* Student two: *“Mi familia no muestra gran interés hacia este idioma.”*

Referring to students of low social background who attend public schools, we found that they are not supported by anybody. Their main concern is to get the bachelor's degree in order to work in a similar job like their parents. Some opinions that support these ideas are: student one: *“No es importante porque mi carrera es militar, osea la que voy a estudiar y a hacer y es probable que no use eso.”* Student two: *“no me gusta porque es aburrida.”*

Teachers agree that parent's cultural and academic level is an important part for growing up their children. One teacher said: *“Si los padres son profesionales son un ejemplo y a la vez motivan a sus hijos para que ellos quieran superarse.”* The result demonstrate that parents' education, chances of traveling abroad, expectation of studying abroad and other reasons of higher social classes can influence the students' English learning achievement since if they have parents with a high level of education, their children will have an open mind about the world and they will understand the importance of learning this language. According to Krashen (2005), students whose parents are educated scored higher on standardized tests than those whose parents were not educated.

### Academic factor

The fourth specific objective of the study was academic factor. This study evidences that teachers' proficiency, their methodology, materials and infrastructure take part in the English learning achievement of their students.

First of all, we found two kinds of teachers in the schools. In the private school, teachers are specialized in their subject; they have a good command of the foreign language and show good

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

knowledge of teaching. Most of them have traveled abroad in order to improve their English. On the contrary, in public schools teachers are not experts, they know grammar but they do not show the use of English for communication. They have not traveled abroad. As a result, students get bored in their English classes. Authors like Nunan & Lam (1998) suggest that “entre los requisitos que debe reunir el profesorado de la lengua dos se destacan: el conocimiento de la lengua objeto, el conocimiento de aspectos metodológicos incluyendo la creación de materiales didácticos, la evolución y utilización de tecnologías nuevas, además de estar motivados y ser muy buenos comunicadores.” We did not realize that the teachers in public school had the previous background.

According to some teachers of public schools, social class is an aspect really essential to learn a foreign language in this case English. Teachers said that the learning and teaching process of English in public schools is really poor because there are a lot of problems such as intension time, excessive number of students per classroom, limited material, and low students' motivation. Besides, students do not have any life projects. On the other hand, teachers of private schools said that the teaching and learning process of English in these institutions has improved. Today, there are many resources which help students to learn English in an interactive way and the students' motivation and needs are relevant factors for learning a foreign language. However, some teachers think that there are still many things to be changed, for example, teachers' thought about the importance of learning a foreign language, teachers' attitude and teachers' methodology.

Other important problem found in this research is related to the length of English classes and number of students per classroom. There is a difference between a public and a private school.

The results show that public schools devote three hours per week to English classes while private schools teach five hours per week. In addition the students of these institutions attend

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

extra classes of English in prestigious academies. In relation to this a student said: *“Mi hermano y yo tenemos clases personalizadas de inglés por las proyecciones que tenemos a futuro.”* All of these aspects are related to the social factor since private schools have many interactive materials and excellent tools. These have been gotten with the contribution of family's resources who pay a part of money. On the other side, public schools have limited resources since the education depends on the reduced budget given by the government every year to the schools.

Another aspect is the number of students per classroom. Public schools have overcrowded rooms, since there are 35 or 40 students per classroom. Although, in the private school, there are 40 students per classroom, they have a good organization and specialized classrooms to teach English. In this school, directors have divided the students into basic and high levels. Students who have a basic level are located in different classrooms from those students who have a high level. As a result they learn in an exceptional way according to the teachers.

We also found some problems related to materials for learning English. Many public schools have limited resources like video room, few computers, tape recorders and some old books. Also, the results showed that the low social class impacts students because they cannot buy any books for helping their academy achievement in English. In addition, in many public schools it is prohibited to ask students to buy books. In other words students who belong to a low background, they do not have any chance to get excellent materials; they only have the materials provided by their teachers, and they are photocopies of textbooks. These things make students feel bored and with no desire to learn English.

On the other hand, private schools have different spaces and materials like specialized English classrooms, books with interactive CD's, video rooms and computer rooms, interactive board and so on. These tools help students to learn English because they can learn it in an interactive way.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Also it does not make them feel bored and they can come out from the routine of using boring books.

According to some teachers, specialized material is really relevant to learn a language since if students listen to native speakers of English or practice dialogues in English, they could learn easier. Students need to have access to interactive material since it makes them feel active and learn in a practical way. Also, this is the way to approach a real context and to try to develop the students' four skills. In relation to this, Cenoz (1991) who says that “en cuanto a las condiciones físicas del aula y la disponibilidad de medios, hay que tener en cuenta el espacio y la distribución del mobiliario, por la influencia que puede tener en la cantidad y calidad de la interacción en el aula. Además, las condiciones físicas del aula y los recursos con que cuenta el profesorado son muy importantes para el estudio de las lenguas extranjeras como el inglés, puesto que los estudiantes no tienen la posibilidad de completar la instrucción formal con la exposición natural.” (p. 86)

Finally, the general objective of the study was social class taking into account its features such as: economic, social, family and academic. Aida Walqui (2007) “a learner counts on a suitable environment in which all of his/her needs are met; he/she will set higher goals that may require the use of a foreign language. The opposite may occur when the learner cannot meet the fulfillment of his/her needs.” (p.5)

Also, we can say that the social class is a factor which affects in a damaging and a constructive manner because it produces different stuffs like opportunities such as study abroad, travel abroad, living in a another country which helps learners to be motivated and needs like lack of openings of traveling to some parts of the world, study abroad, money for buying excellent materials which touch students' stimulus for learning English.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

The results of the research show that the social class affects in a positive and negative way both public and private schools. These results prove that students who belong to private schools have a high and middle background. In this social context, teachers promote the importance of learning English from an early age, helping students' intellectual and cultural development. However, students who belong to public schools have a low background; they live in a poor environment which has a lot of limitations like interactive material, few hours per week, a lot of students per classroom and reduced facilities. All of these things limit students to face a foreign language such as "English" which takes over more and more of the mass media, music, art, medicine, technology, recreation, job and academic positions among others. These results evidence that social class carry weight students' learning of English because they need a great milieu and good resources for exploiting their aptitudes.

Data obtained through class observation demonstrate that students of public schools are sufferers of the circumstances surrounding their context because it has been prevented to students to know or dream something different from what their parents do. Classroom observations show that some teachers do not involve with their students because they belong to poor families. As a result teachers underestimate students' capacities and abilities for learning English and other type of knowledge. Moreover, those teachers are not interested in students' success since they do their job only for making money.

However classroom observations of private schools corroborate students know the necessity of learning English since they are going to study abroad, go on vacations to other countries, and settle in foreign countries. Besides, their social status helps them to have many life projects and desires for going ahead in the future. Also, taking into account the facilities in the private schools, students learn in an excellent way a language such as "English" since there are a lot of

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

interactive materials and a great organization of students taking into account their previous knowledge about English.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Conclusions

In this chapter we are going to state the conclusions we have obtained along the study. Besides we are going to establish some recommendations in order to improve the students' English learning achievement which is affected by social class (economical, social, family and academic)

First, social class affects directly motivation for studying English. Students who belong to high social classes (4 and 5) tend to have high levels of motivation since for them it is important to learn a second language in order to improve their quality of life. For example, most of the students have planned to travel abroad for developing studies, working, living, and knowing new cultures. For this reason, it is important for them to learn an important language such as English.

Second, students who belong to low social classes (3, 2, and 1) have less motivation for learning English. Some of them have aspirations to travel abroad despite they have less resources than those from high social classes, but some of them do not have any interest or aspiration that involve another language learning because they are interested in getting a job and making money.

Third, most of the students (regardless their social class) like English despite it is a difficult and sometimes an incomprehensible subject. The main reason for this is that some teachers make English a bored subject. They do not apply appropriate methodologies that facilitate learning process.

Fourth, all the students (in both public and private institutions) are conscious about the importance of learning a foreign language nowadays. They think it brings them better opportunities in life. For most of the students the most important language worldwide is English, there are some others that think languages such as Chinese, French and German can achieve a wide importance in society in the next years.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

Then, most of students (from high and low social classes) also think it is important to perfect English because it brings many opportunities such as living and working in another country, accessing to scholarships, traveling, having a better future, and knowing new cultures. It also improves people's labor experience and gives more job opportunities.

Fifth, it is important to establish that for the majority of the students (in both public and private institutions) it is not necessary to belong to an advantageous social class in order to learn English. It depends on the student's desires for learning certain knowledge. On the other hand, there are some students who think it is important to belong to an advantageous social class since it helps them to access to specialized institutions and travel to other countries in order to learn and improve English.

Sixth, families play an important role and influences students to learn a specific subject. Students who belong to high social class have families that support them. Parents help student with the essential resources for improving their learning. For example, they have facilities to pay extra courses in specialized institutions, hire particular English teachers, buy expensive books and material, and pay services such as internet and so on. In another way, student who belong to low social class do not have (most of the time) family support. Parents are not interested in their children's learning process and less in supporting their English learning. Most of the time, it happens because those families do not have the facilities for giving their children the necessary material in order to improve this subject and some parents have a low educational and cultural level which prevent them to have an open mind and recognize the importance of English.

Seventh, having limited resources is not an obstacle for learning English according to most of the students in both institutions. What is really important is person's attitude and motivation towards the language, but there are some others who think that having limited resources affects



## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

directly this process because it is necessary to have a good preparation, extra courses, material and trips in order to learn and improve English.

Finally, it is essential the support that students can find in their own institutions. Students from private institutions have access to different materials in order to develop classes of English. For example: Internet, music, videos, books, dictionaries, photocopies, audiovisual rooms, video beam, games, songs, movies, TV's, DVD's, computers, audio files, tape recorders. Besides, they have specialized classrooms only for developing English classes. They are equipped with excellent material and they are in excellent conditions. Students from private institutions also said it is easy to have access to those resources which makes easy the development and improvement of English as a second language.

On the other hand, students from public institutions have access to limited material such as photocopies, games, books, CD's, and some videos. Moreover, they claim it is not very easy to access to this materials because they only have 1 video room and some teachers only use the board and a marker.

Social class is an important factor that needs to be taken into consideration by the government in order to improve the quality of English learning and teaching in the different contexts (private and public schools) in our country.

### Recommendations

After analyzing the results obtained in this research, we can establish that social class is a factor that really affects English learning achievement in different contexts (public and private schools). We suggest some recommendations taking into account economic, social, family and academic features of social class.

First, teachers should propose that for helping students to recognize the importance of learning a language, it has to start by modifying many institutional aspects. First, show the importance of

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

learning English in order to motivate students, train teachers, increase interactive resources like labs and control the number of students per classroom. Another essential need is to open mind not only teacher but also students that English is not only grammar, it is a door which opens new opportunities showing the importance of English as an excellent tool for getting great chances in the social life.

Second, it is considerable that teachers and students generate a good environment for developing the English learning process in a good way. It is necessary to go beyond a board and a marker in each class. Creativity plays an important role in those cases. Besides, teachers have an important role in the English learning process. It is important that they realize about the necessity of improving and adapting appropriate methodologies in order to obtain better results. Moreover, it is necessary that they change their point of view about the importance of English in the world and the importance of educating people for communicate in our changing world.

Third, motivation is important in this process. Most of the time it does not depend on the student's capability to access to specialized material but in the interest that students have for learning a second language. Teachers and parents' job motivate students. They acquire a perspective according to what they listen and see around them.

Finally, as we mentioned previously, parents and family have a great role in the English learning process. If some of them did not have the opportunity to learn beyond, it is time to support their children and inspire them to always get better and look for opportunities which improves their lives.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

## APPENDIX 1

## Questionnaire

Social Class as an Influent Factor in the English Learning Process of the Students in Two High Schools in San Juan de Pasto

Grado: \_\_\_\_\_

Institución: \_\_\_\_\_

1- Su familia está conformada por:

- a. Padre y madre
- b. Solo madre
- c. Solo padre

2- El nivel educativo de su padre es:

- a. Primaria
- b. Secundaria
- c. Universitario
- d. Ninguno

3- El nivel educativo de su madre es:

- a. Primaria
- b. Secundaria
- c. Universitario
- d. Ninguno

4- El estrato socioeconómico al cual pertenece es:

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4
- e. 5

5- En su casa ud. cuenta con recursos educativos como:

- a. Computador, internet e impresora
- b. Libros
- c. Solo sus útiles escolares
- d. Ninguna de las anteriores

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

6- El número de hermanos que tiene sin incluirse ud es:

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. Más de 4

7- Cuantas horas semanales tiene usted de Ingles

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4
- e. 5 o mas

8- Tomas o asistes a algún curso extra clase de Ingles

- a. Si
- b. NO

1- ¿Te gusta el Inglés? SI\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_ Justifique su respuesta

---

---

---

---

2- ¿Cree usted que aprender un idioma extranjero es importante? Sí\_\_\_ No \_\_\_ ¿Por qué?

---

---

---

---

3- ¿Cuál cree usted que es el idioma extranjero el más importante? Justifique su respuesta

---

---

---

4- ¿Cree usted que dominar el inglés como segunda lengua le abre la puerta a nuevas oportunidades? Si \_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_¿Cómo cuáles?

---

---

---

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

---

---

5- ¿Cree que el pertenecer a un nivel socioeconómico favorable es necesario para poder hablar un segundo idioma? ¿Por qué?

---

---

---

---

6- ¿Tienes expectativas de salir del país (viajar al extranjero) en el futuro? SI\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_

¿A dónde? \_\_\_\_\_

7- ¿Cree que necesitará saber inglés? Si- No ¿Por qué?

---

---

---

---

8- ¿Qué opinión tiene tu familia de esta asignatura?

---

---

---

---

9- ¿En tu ambiente familiar con que medios cuenta para estimular su aprendizaje del Ingles?

---

---

---

---

10- En su opinión ¿cree que el tener recursos limitados afecta el aprender un segundo idioma?

---

---

---

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

---

---

11- ¿Qué ayudas audiovisuales y didácticas se utilizan durante el desarrollo de la clase de Inglés? ¿Es fácil acceder a estos medios?

---

---

12- En su opinión ¿Cuáles son los recursos materiales y humanos que necesita para aprender Inglés?

---

---

---

---

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

## APPENDIX 2

## Entrevista docentes

Objetivo: Determinar cómo influye la clase social en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje del inglés.

Muestra:

El número de estudiantes que se necesitara será la cuarta parte de la población entre grados decimos y onces de la institución. A ellos se les aplicara unas encuestas las cuales serán entre repuestas múltiples y respuestas en las cuales tendrán que darnos a conocer sus opiniones.

El número de profesores que se necesita para el desarrollo de esta investigación será de 3 a los cuales se les realizaran cortas entrevistas. Finalmente se necesitara realizar algunas observaciones de clases para recolectar información extra que ayude al desarrollo del proyecto.

Preguntas:

- ¿Cuál es su opinión sobre la forma de cómo se ha venido desarrollando el proceso de enseñanza – aprendizaje del inglés en los colegios públicos y privados de Colombia?
- ¿Qué cree que hace falta en las instituciones educativas públicas y privadas para mejorar el proceso de aprendizaje y enseñanza del inglés?
- ¿Cuál cree usted que es el papel de la clase social en el aprendizaje del inglés?
- ¿Cómo ve usted la actitud de los estudiantes hacia el aprendizaje del inglés en su institución? ¿Por qué cree que los estudiantes tienen esa actitud? ¿En dicha actitud juega un papel importante la clase social? ¿Por qué?
- ¿cree usted que los individuos que pertenecen a una clase social alta tienen mayor éxito a nivel educativo? ¿Por qué?
- ¿Cree usted que hay una estrecha relación entre clase social y aprendizaje de un idioma extranjero en este caso el inglés?

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

- ¿Qué aspectos cree usted que son los más influyentes dentro de las clases sociales para el aprendizaje de un idioma?
- ¿Cree usted que la desigualdad de bienes y servicios afecta el aprendizaje del inglés?
- ¿Según su apreciación es importante para un mejor aprendizaje del inglés que los estudiantes tengan acceso a material especializado? ¿Por qué?
- ¿Dentro de su institución cuenta con material especializado como laboratorios, medios audiovisuales, libros, cd's et para la enseñanza de su materia? SI-NO De qué manera estos ayudan al proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje del ingles
- Crees usted que las oportunidades que los padres pueden brindar a sus hijos afecta el aprendizaje del inglés?



## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

## REFERENCES

- Backhoff, E., Bouzas, A., Hernández, E. & García, M. (2007). Factores escolares y aprendizaje en México. El caso de la educación básica. México, D.F.: INEE
- Benson, P. (2007). Autonomy in language teaching and learning. *Language Teaching*, 40, 21-40.
- Broman, S., Bien, E. & Shaugenessy, P.(1985). Low achieving children. The first seven years. Hillsdale, M.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bruner, J. (1984). Concepciones de la infancia: Freud, Piaget y Vygotsk, en Jerome Bruner. Acción, pensamiento y lenguaje, Compilación de José Luis Linaza, Alianza Psicología, Madrid.
- Burstall, C., M. Jamieson, S. Cohen & M. Hargreaves (1974).Primary French in the balance. Slough, England.:NFER.
- Castaldi, B. (1987). Educational Facilities: Planning, modernized, and management. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Cenoz, J. (1991). Enseñanza- Aprendizaje del inglés como L3. Lejona, Universidad del País Vasco
- Chavez, C., and Jimenez M. (2009). Factores sociales dentro del aula que inciden en el rendimiento académico de los educandos de bachillerato en el área de inglés. Universidad de Nariño. Pasto, Nariño.
- Christopher, G. (1988). Does the quality of the school environment affect the quality of our children's education? CEFPI's Educational Facility Planner, 26 (4), 21-22.
- Colete, A. (1984) .Sociolingüística y dialectología inglesas en V.A.Plan de Estudios y Programa de las Asignaturas.Especialidad de Ingles. Murcia, Facultad de Letras
- Connors, D. (1982). The school's designed environment implications for understanding stress. CEFPI's Educational Facility Planner, 20 (1), 4-6

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

- Crosnoe, R., Monica, K., & Glen, H., Elder, Jr. (2004). Intergenerational bonding in school. The behavioral and contextual correlates student-teacher relationship. *Sociology of Education*, 77(1), 60-81.
- Crosnoe, R., Monica, K., & Glen, H., Elder, Jr. (2004). School size and interpersonal side of education. An examination of Race/Ethnicity and organizational context. *Social Science Quarterly*, 85(5), 1259-1274.
- Denis, L. (1975). *Class, culture and the curriculum*. Londres: Routledge & Kegan.
- Eamon, M. (2005). Social-demographic, school, neighborhood and parenting influences on academic achievement of Latino young adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 34(2), 163-175.
- Fan, W. (2011). Social influences, school motivation and gender differences: An application of the expectancy-value theory. *Educational Psychology Review*, 31, 157–175.
- Feito, R. (2005). Aula de Innovacion Educativa. Retrieved from <http://aula.grao.com/revistas/aula/146-las-aulas-de-acogida--la-formacion-online/clase-social-y-fracaso-escolar>
- Graff, W. (1985). *Language and Learning Principles*. Longmans Green and Co LTD. London, UK.
- Jadue, G. (1997). Factores ambietales que afectan el rendimiento escolar de los niños provenientes de familias de bajo nivel socioeconomico y cultural.
- Krashen, S. (2005). The hard work hypothesis: Is doing your homework enough to overcome the effects of poverty? *Multicultural Education*, 12(4), 16-19.
- Llorente, M. (1990). *Fracaso escolar y origen social*. Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

- Machesi, A. & Martin, E. (2002). Evaluación de la educación secundaria. Fotografía de una etapa polémica. Instituto IDEA, Madrid.
- Madrid, D. (2010). El contexto social del alumnado y su relacion con el rendimiento en lengua extranjera. Editorial Universidad de Granada.
- Morales, D. (2001). Influencia del factor socioeconómico y cultural en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje. Universidad de Nariño. Pasto, Nariño.
- Muñoz, C. (2008). Symmetries and asymmetries of age effects in naturalistic and instructed L2 learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 29, 578-96.
- N, N. (1985). Sociolinguistica y enseñanza del ingles. Retrieved from:  
[http://dialnet.uniroja.es/servlet/fichero\\_articulo?codigo=2470886&orden=0](http://dialnet.uniroja.es/servlet/fichero_articulo?codigo=2470886&orden=0).
- Nikolov, M. (2009). Early modern foreign language programmes and outcomes: Factors contributing to Hungarian learners' proficiency. In M. Nikolov (Ed.), *Early learning of modern foreign languages* (pp. 90-107). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Nullvalue, V. (2011). Vida de Hoy, Educacion. El Tiempo.
- Nunan, D. & Lam, A. (1998). Teacher education for multilingual context: models and issues, and J. Cenoz & F. Genesee (eds.), *Beyond Bilingualism, Multilingualism and Multilingual Education*, Clevedon, Multilingual Matters.
- Outhwaite, W., Bottomore, T., et al (1994). *The Blackwell dictionary of twentieth-century social thought*. Oxford, England & Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell Reference.
- Pérez Serrano, G. (1981). *Origen Social y Rendimiento Escolar*. Madrid.: C.I.S.
- Piaget, J. (1968). *Six Psychological Studies*. New York: Vintage Books.
- PISA (2003). *Learning for tomorrow's world - First results from Pisa 2003*. OECD Publishing.

## SOCIAL CLASS AS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTOR

- Press, E. (2008). *Los problemas sociales afectan al nivel de enseñanza*. Madrid: Europa Press.
- Ramsay, P. (2004). *Teaching and learning in a diverse world*. New York: Teachers College Press. Columbia University.
- Requena, F. (1998). *Genero, Redes de Amistad y Rendimiento Académico*. Universidad de Santiago de Compostela. Departamento de Sociología. Santiago de Compostela. España
- Stern, W. (s.f.). Factores que intervienen en el aprendizaje y adquisicion de una lengua. Retrieved from: <http://digibug.ugr.es/astream/10481/4569/8/08cap%c3%adtulo%203.pdf>.
- Taylor, A. & Gousie, G. (1988). The ecology of the learning environment for children. CEFPI's Educational Facility Planner, 26 (4), 23-28.
- Vigotsky, L. (2001). *Enfoque Sociocultural*. Retrieved from: [redalyc.uaemex.mx/pdf/356/35601309.pdf](http://redalyc.uaemex.mx/pdf/356/35601309.pdf).
- Walqui, A. (2007). Contextual Factors in Second Language Acquisition. ERIC Digest  
Reproduction Service ED444381.  
<[http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs1/content\\_storage\\_01/0000019b/80/16/67/3a.pdf](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs1/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/16/67/3a.pdf)>
- Willms, J. & Somers, M. (2001). Family, classroom, and school effects on children's educational outcomes in Latin America. *International Journal of School Effectiveness and Improvement*, 12 (4), 409-445.
- Willms, J.D. (2006). *Learning Divides: Ten Policy Questions about the Performance and Equity of Schools and Schooling Systems*. Report prepared for UNESCO Institute for Statistics.