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# Where Motivation and Learning Meet:

## Bringing Key Concepts, Research Insights, and Effective Practices Together into the Language Classroom

- **Diego Ortega-Auquilla**
- **Sandy T. Soto**
- **Ligia Fernanda Espinosa-Cevallos**

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Editorial UTMACH

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## Acknowledgments

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**Kevin Rodrigo Suntaxi Auqui** was an English student approximately 5 years at Universidad Nacional de Educación in the English-teaching major. Currently, he teaches high-school students in a private school. He likes learning and teaching English. Therefore, he is always searching for opportunities to improve his teaching skills and English proficiency. Also, he is interested in research projects related to English Language Teaching (ELT) and English learning motivation, and is always on the lookout for resources to learn more about the subject. Moreover, he strongly believes that the integration of technological tools in the learning process is fundamental to provide students with meaningful knowledge.

**Verónica Marisol Ruiz Peñafiel** is a ninth semester English student at Universidad Nacional de Educación. She has always had an interest in learning English, and an inclination for the research field. She has attended three conferences about education. Furthermore, she has participated as a teacher in the ACCESS program and with teenagers in a high school. She also taught two consecutive semesters to students at the UNAE Language Centre. Additionally, she has written five Integrative Knowledge Projects. She considers that all these experiences helped her academic and personal development. Her research interests are related to teaching English as a foreign language, motivation in ELT, and pedagogical models.

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# Preface

*"My English students are not motivated enough"* is a widespread comment from English teachers worldwide, especially in higher-level education. I have even said that myself on many occasions. This concern has guided researchers, teachers, and specialists linked to English language teaching to research motivation in our field. The study of language learning motivation has a well-known history. As we can see in this work, it goes from Gardner in the early '60s to Dörnyei, Murray, and Gao in the mid-2000.

This book takes readers from the theoretical stands on motivation in English language teaching (ELT) with a reflective approach to the practical issues that will help teachers to promote motivation in the English language classroom. Conceptions, views, and implications on motivation from 14 collaborators are presented from a theoretical review, research results, and analytical takes on concepts like attitude, demotivation, and other key factors influencing the ELT field.

The variety and experiences of the writers of this book will give you several perspectives on how motivation is conceived and applied in the ELT classroom from the teacher's and the student's points of view. Seven professors, one computer science specialist, two students and four university graduates from different institutions of higher education of Ecuador actively participated in writing this piece of remarkable work. This book will guide all English language practitioners who would like to know more about the power of motivation and how they could promote it; and for students who want to be engaged in their English learning process.

I do believe that the theoretical discussions carried out in this book present thorough revisions of pertinent resources from the ELT field. The key terms are introduced to clarify the path to understanding motivation. The analysis of the different factors that motivate or demotivate language learners is up to date. The first three chapters are devoted to approaching the theoretical foundation of motivation. The reader will find a fascinating dynamic between teachers and students reflecting and collaborating to bring this book to light.

Although motivation is tackled throughout the chapters, there are some other concepts, such as self-esteem, attitude, and self-reflection, within the language learners that are highlighted in every chapter. Also, those concepts linked to motivation

are integrated with the English teaching method to demonstrate a natural path to enhancing motivation in the ELT classroom. It is important to say that most of the information here has been analyzed in the light of the educational university levels, which has a crucial relevance in the Ecuadorian context.

In different chapters, there are meaningful insights into effective teaching approaches, methods, strategies, and techniques to promote motivation in the EFL university classroom. I firmly believe that all of them will have significant impact on English teaching and learning in these post-pandemic times. The highlighted meaningful, effective practices will help to create motivation for successful language learning, which is of high importance among language teachers these days.

This book is unique because it begins with its reviews on motivation within the Ecuadorian English teaching-learning context. It seeks to acknowledge a recent remarkable growth of interest in motivation in the Ecuadorian English language teaching field. This interest is primarily shaped by local educational and pedagogical success rather than by the purely understanding of a motivational theory. It brings together writers' perspectives on motivation who are both practitioners and researchers. Finally, this work will determine that contextually grounded and locally produced insights, questions, and understandings about motivation can have a broader global meaning, and it can mirror the experiences and concerns of ELT practitioners around the world.

*By Mahly Jahzeel Martínez Jiménez, Ph.D.*

# Introduction

Motivation ignites learners' willingness to improve their abilities in areas of their interest, as it originates from a person's desires, needs, and inner drives. Therefore, it is a pivotal determinant when engaging in any learning process. Within the context of second or foreign language learning, fostering and maintaining motivation by means of internal or external factors will inspire learners to set in motion to accomplish their language learning goals.

At the classroom level, foreign language practitioners need to be aware of what factors are essential to promote student motivation towards effective language learning. In addition, it is imperative for practitioners or instructors to make informed decisions based on key theoretical factors and study results related to motivation in English language acquisition. In doing so, English language learners will be more likely to engage in meaningful learning experiences, which will help them to use the target language for different purposes, both in the classroom and more importantly in the world beyond the school's walls.

It is imperative to point out that this book has a threefold purpose, as it will be seen in the below descriptions of the five chapters. First and foremost, a review of the relevant literature on motivation in the field of education and, particularly, in foreign language learning is provided. Secondly, key study results of the project, entitled *Factors that motivate English learning of university students in Ecuador: Researching the perspectives of different educational stakeholders,* are disseminated, in conjunction with its adopted paradigm and research methodology. Thirdly, helpful techniques and strategies are put forward for an effective teaching of the English language, where motivation is the primary crosscutting point.

Chapter I lays the groundwork and key issues related to motivation. It defines what motivation means, as well as the key elements that have an impact on it, such as: the teacher, the teaching methods, the content, the learning environment, and the student himself. It also delves deeper into the sources of internal and external motivation and the benefits that each of them has on learning. This chapter also presents the characteristics that a learning environment must have to be motivating and exposes the importance of creating this type of environment for students.

Although the general concept of motivation works in a very similar way at different levels of education, there are certain particular aspects that need to be taken into account when teaching at higher levels (university students) due to the specific needs and goals present at this level; hence this chapter concludes by examining those aspects that are specifically relevant to motivation at this level of education.

Chapter II brings forward the different factors that are the base for motivation including cognitive elements associated with attention that predict university students' academic performance. The chapter also analyzes learners' attitudes towards a language and anything related to it that may have an impact on their motivation to learn that language. In this sense, based on previous studies, the information discussed in this chapter sheds light on how the learning of English as a foreign language in university students was influenced by the attitudes of the learners in foreign contexts such as Indonesia, Turkey, and China. Motivation is also addressed in depth as the central topic of the chapter. In this regard, the different types of motivation including intrinsic, extrinsic, social and transcendent motivation are explained, as well as the cognitive characteristics that underlie the relationship between brain's executive functions and motivation. The chapter closes with literature related to motivation in language learning and teaching, student motivation, and the significant role that motivation plays in foreign language learning in college.

Chapter III highlights key information concerning the development of a research project on student motivation in English learning within Ecuadorian higher education. In this sense, a brief account is first given pertaining to planning and conducting a small-scale survey study focused on the aforementioned topic at three universities only. The account provides critical details related to the small survey study, as it laid the foundation for a large-scale inter-university research project directed by mixed methods. The large-scale research project was conducted in over 20 Ecuadorian universities, and it aimed at determining the main factors that motivated undergraduate students to learn English while they pursue their studies. Secondly, the project further explored the quantitative results through a qualitative phase, consisting of focus group discussions (FGDs) and individual in-depth interviews. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods helped to gain an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the essential factors that affect English students' motivation at the university level. The research-based findings

could be helpful for different stakeholders to make effective, informed decisions that boost student motivation toward successful English learning at institutions of higher Education in Ecuador and beyond.

Chapter IV provides key information about innovative EFL learning and teaching approaches. The first part of the chapter puts forward some innovations in education and in the field of teaching foreign languages. Its second section outlines the postmethod as an important innovative pedagogy in the last few decades. Moreover, suggested macro and micro strategies are highlighted towards the end of the chapter. Consequently, foreign language instructors can be equipped with the necessary tools to design and deliver effective language instruction under the teaching principles of practicality, particularity, and possibility. This sought to help promote classroom instruction where innovation and motivation are at the center.

Finally, considering that foreign language teachers ought to create conditions to motivate learners to learn the target language, chapter V proposes a set of twenty one techniques and strategies that may be useful to foster effective language learning among English students inside and outside the classroom. The group of techniques and strategies suggested in this chapter have, in some cases, been examined in research studies while others have been selected considering the results obtained through their constant use in foreign language classes. More importantly, this chapter contains a methodological guide with the procedures on how to implement many different helpful didactic strategies and techniques to better promote student motivation towards English language learning.

# Chapter I

# Motivation in Education: The Road to Successful Learning

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# Introduction

In the current context of globalization and the rise of communication and information technologies, education requires new and better teaching strategies and teachers who become managers of the teaching-learning processes. It allows the integral development of students so that they are not only accumulators of knowledge but autonomous learners (Vásquez, 2010). For that reason, teaching professionals are in charge of various functions; the planning of teaching, the teaching of learning, and creating a favorable environment, with motivation being the main factor (Cáceres et al., 2021).

Motivation refers to those external and internal factors that influence or move a person to specific actions (Rosales, 2011). As Sánchez Franyuti (2000) stated, motivation is the behavior that originates from the relationship between needs - desires - stimuli. According to Núñez and Alonso (2014), motivation is based on three aspects: first, the intention to carry out the activity; second, having the physical or mental capacity to develop the action; and third, the will and effort that the person applies in the completion of the activity. Desire is a fundamental factor in the process since it is abstract and develops internally to create a favorable position to acquire new knowledge (Núñez & Alonso, 2014). In education, motivation involves the interest in improving the student's desire to learn (Cáceres et al., 2021). There are factors or events that act as stimuli and encourage the student to show interest

in what the teacher explains, participate actively in class, want to get involved in the subject, and investigate. All of this is a horizontal construction of knowledge between student and teacher.

The teachers play an essential role in the motivation process; their permanent contact with the students allows them to develop motivational strategies based on the relationships created with them by knowing their preferences, tastes, and the environment in which they operate. Thus, what the teacher needs to do is to ensure that motivation arises from themselves so that students can develop a taste for learning (Tünnermann, 2011). In this motivational framework, it is crucial to promote constructive and meaningful learning, in which the student is considered an active part of the teaching-learning process. Students can also be motivated by a horizontal and not vertical relationship, in which they feel free to contribute their knowledge regardless of whether it is right or wrong because they trust the teacher and the teacher shows a receptive attitude.

The educational relationship is a vital factor in motivation, starting from appreciating the students and understanding their existence and context, instead of seeing them as entities inside the classroom that need to be filled with repeated knowledge and without criteria. This way, the teaching-learning process is always carried out in an environment of respect and dialogue. To be effective, it is crucial that the teachers recognize students' efforts, congratulate their achievements, and motivate them to solve increasingly challenging activities, showing high expectations for them. This helps to build teacher-student trust, which translates into efficiency (García, 2016). Students who have learned to identify the causes of their achievements or failures, are able to create their path to success, which is undoubtedly one of the main objectives of education.

## Key elements of motivation

Several elements or components are required to motivate students, which are the following: student, teacher, content, method, and environment (D'Souza & Maheshwari, 2010). All these elements have a special impact on student motivation, which is explained below:

### Student

Students play a fundamental role in developing their motivation because they are the main protagonists of their educational transformation. Students have their learning styles, backgrounds, and interests; therefore, they also have a distinct motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2012; Wood, 2019). Learning motivation may depend on someone's life plan, including long-term goals, professional objectives, needs, habits, and what is perceived as success or well-being (Dresel & Hall, 2013). For that reason, students need to be exposed to learning processes that allow them to develop their instructional plan and various strategies and systems that work well for them individually, motivate them, and build their learning successfully.

### Teacher

The students tend to feel more motivated by teachers they like than by those they do not like (Hassan, 2014). This motivation is not based only on their personality or compatibility with students, but also on their knowledge of the subject, their teaching and assessment skills, and their teacher qualifications (D'Souza & Maheshwari, 2010). To truly motivate their students, teachers need to be empathetic and accessible, adopt the role of facilitator rather than authority, provide support for those students who need it, sincerely care about their students, promote student autonomy in the learning process, encourage collaboration among peers, and finally, create positive interactions with their students (Afzal et al. 2010).

### Content

This is also a fundamental element of motivation. The content needs to be relevant, useful, timely, attractive, and accurate to be effective. It succeeds in motivating students when it allows them to feel capable, competent, and in control of their learning process; encourages creativity and critical thinking; helps them feel connected and interested in the topic; develops their skills and abilities; and promotes their curiosity (Gibbens, 2019; Simmons & Page, 2010).

### Method / Process

How the content is presented in a class; that is, the strategies and the teaching process can be decisive in a student's motivation. The methodology for teaching and assessment needs to be innovative, interesting, flexible, and adaptable to the needs and circumstances of the students to ensure motivation. It needs to allow students to learn not only in a theoretical but also in an experiential way; promote a positive social interaction; guide and provide feedback; and evaluate the process and progress rather than the outcome (Dörnyei, & Ushioda, 2009; Filgona et al., 2020).

### Environment

A motivating environment will be the one in which the students feel safe and comfortable learning even from their mistakes without fear or shame. Students need to feel that the class is academically productive and challenging; structured and organized, but at the same time, flexible to give students options according to their needs and interests; encourages teamwork; fosters respect for others, encourages students to actively participate in class without hesitation, and promotes cohesion and genuine interest and concern for one another in the classroom (Daniels, 2010; Gibbens, 2019).

These five elements - students, teachers, content, methodology, and environment - are fundamental in developing motivation. Each must meet the criteria above to achieve a successful teaching-learning process.

# Sources of motivation

There are two sources of motivation depending on the goal a person wants to achieve: an internal or an external reward. If the motivation - reward or punishment - comes from outside the individual, the motivation is considered *extrinsic*. It usually occurs that, when this external incentive is no longer present, the motivation to learn will also disappear, and the person will stop doing that activity (Ghanea et al., 2011). There are also external reasons for a person to learn, such as: passing an exam, passing a

class, getting a job, enrolling in a university or institution, or meeting a requirement. An example of extrinsic motivation would be when a student participates in a project not because he enjoys it but because he wants to meet an external objective (receive a certificate). Nevertheless, when the motivation is only extrinsic, the person cannot internalize the importance of learning or develop an independent and continuous learning process (Tucker & Luu, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

On the other hand, *intrinsic* motivation comes from within the individual; the activity, not the reward, interests the student and provides satisfaction and curiosity. Therefore, intrinsic motivation can result in an inner desire to continue learning (Alresheedi, 2014; Harmer, 2002; Kim & Pekrun, 2014), as the case of a student who carries out a specific activity motivated by his desire and not because someone else requests him to do it.

Now, depending on where the motivation for a particular behavior originated, there may be internal or external sources of motivation. As Deckers (2010) explained, internal sources of motivation could be of biological or psychological origin, while external sources could refer to incentives or objectives that motivate specific behavior.

## Internal sources of motivation

Internal sources of motivation refer to all those biological, psychological, and other intrinsic aspects that motivate behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2012). There are several internal sources of motivation, that will be analyzed and discussed in depth below:

**Needs.** Activities that people carry out are motivated by the idea of satisfying a need they have. Needs can be primary (for survival), for example, the need for food or shelter, or they can also be secondary as an intellectual or spiritual needs (Adiele & Nath, 2013; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). People have a combination of needs developed over the years that have been influenced by education, occupation, among others.

**Attitudes.** They refer to the mental disposition that a person has towards something. People have positive attitudes towards things or activities they want or feel can help them satisfy a need. However, they tend to have a negative attitude towards things or activities that prevent them from achieving their goals

or needs. A person who has a positive attitude towards something, will likely be more motivated to do it and finish it until the final objective has been reached (Gardner, 1985; Williams & Williams, 2011). Applied to learning, specifically to English as a foreign language (EFL) learning, means, for example, that when a person has a positive attitude towards the L2 community, he/she will be more interested and motivated to learn that language (Pae, 2008; Svobodová, 2015).

**Values.** They are moral or social norms that people respect, admire, and honor, which may have been instilled by society, the family, or developed by the same person. Values are important because they can motivate an individual to do something he believes should be done. Values play a crucial role in encouraging and achieving goals (Kohoutek, 2000; Svobodová, 2015).

**Interest.** This is another critical aspect of motivation. Interest causes one to pay attention to an activity, resulting from having developed a positive relationship with that activity over time. Someone who has a strong interest in a topic or activity, takes pleasure in learning it or being involved in it, so he performs it out of his own will (Goodman et al., 2011).

**Curiosity.** Human beings are curious to learn and explore the world. When a person has a doubt related to a topic he likes, this person will be curious to learn. When the topic is enjoyable, students will always be motivated to learn and will want to know more and more about this topic (Frith, 1997; Solak, 2012).

**Competences.** They refer to the sense of success that comes from doing an activity considered challenging. Competences can also be a source of intrinsic motivation. If a person believes he will not be able to achieve something, he will not feel motivated. Something similar happens if he thinks that something is too easy and does not represent any challenge for him (Frith, 1997; Shernoff et al., 2014).

**Enjoyment.** There is a strong correlation between the enjoyment of an activity and the level of motivation to complete it. Motivating someone goes beyond simple obligation; the individual must enjoy doing or participating in that activity. In the case of learning a language, the student who enjoys learning that L2 will join in the activities for the pure pleasure of learning and will

continue being a life-long learner not because he has to but because he wants to (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014; Wu, 2003).

**Ideal-Self.** It represents the person someone wants to become, which includes not only the job and the lifestyle he wants but also the qualities he wishes to have, for example, being an educated person with specific skills and knowledge (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014). The desire to become the type of person someone wants to be can become a source of motivation to learn something or do something to achieve that goal.

Internal sources of motivation are indispensable, but they are not the only ones since there are also external sources of motivation.

## External sources of motivation

External sources of motivation are those that do not come from the individual himself, but come from the environment that surrounds him and lead a student towards a specific goal; for example, the desire to please parents, to avoid punishment, to obtain a reward, and others (Deckers, 2010). External motivation works through incentives which are stimuli that have a motivational mechanism. They lead a person to do or not do something (Firdissa, 2017). Incentives can be positive or negative. Positive incentives could be a reward or a favorable result; for instance, when a teacher congratulates a student for his excellent work. Negative incentives can be, for example, a reprimand or a sanction to eliminate unwanted behavior (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). The following are some important sources of external motivation.

**Parents.** They can be the best source of motivation for their children, especially when they are young. Parents can set an excellent example for their children and create a positive image of themselves for the future; that motivates them to learn and set goals that they will reach later on (Simpkins et al., 2015). Parents are the first educators of their children. Although they are unaware of it, their attitude towards learning can influence their kids' perception of education (Gardner, 1895; Villiger et al., 2014). Regarding foreign languages, parents' attitude toward a language and what they think about the usefulness and importance of that language impact the interest that their child will develop in learning it.

According to Wigfield et al. (2016), there are four critical parental factors that influence the perspective that their children have about education and their motivation to learn; which are the following: 1) the characteristics of parents, family, and neighborhood (e.g., household income, parental education level, and occupation); 2) parental beliefs (e.g., parenting styles, the importance or value that parents place on school performance); 3) parental behaviors (e.g., parental involvement in the teaching-learning process of their children); and 4) parental perception of their children (e.g., expectations of their children's success and perception of their competences and skills). Parental expectations are fundamental since they can directly correlate with the students' level of motivation and achievement of goals, and can ultimately influence students' educational achievements. Consciously or unconsciously, a person will even study a particular career, subject, or language to meet the parental expectations (Goodman et al., 2011; Lazarides et al., 2015).

**Teachers**. They also play a fundamental role in motivating students to learn. Motivation is achieved when the teacher's methods and strategies meet the needs of each student and promote a positive attitude towards learning a specific topic or subject (Firdissa, 2017). Extrinsic motivation, initially promoted by the teacher, can become an intrinsic motivation. When the teaching-learning strategies employed are adequate, relevant, and enjoyable for students and the classroom climate is favorable and promotes the student's self-esteem, self-confidence, and sense of achievement, students can develop that internal curiosity and desire to learn that topic (Goodman et al., 2011; Mojavezi & Poodineh, 2012).

**Grades.** The primary objective with which institutions and society in general often use grades is to measure the progress and achievement of students and provide a space for feedback; however, grades can also have a crucial motivational effect on students, be it positive or negative (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014; Koenka et al., 2019). High grades can motivate students to persist in an activity or even encourage them to try harder, while getting low grades can either make students realize that they need to put more effort into their learning process or otherwise demotivate them to the point where they will be inclined to drop out of the class or give up (Chamberlin et al., 2018). Awareness of this reality is

essential to know how to use grades appropriately, using them to give feedback and timely help to students who need it, without letting grades become the main element used for measuring students' progress or achievements or the principal motivational tool used by the teacher.

**Peers.** They also play a significant role in students' motivation, especially in teenage years because, during this period, young people tend to be emotionally and physically further away from their parents and closer to their peers (Burroughs, 1989; Juvonen et al., 2012). During this stage, young people usually choose friends with similar personalities, values, behavior, expectations, and even similar academic performances. Peers can have an important influence on the student's opinion about the importance of study habits and of learning in general (King & Ganotice, 2014; Wang & Neihart, 2015).

In conclusion, there are several sources of motivation, both internal (specific to the individual) and external (from the surrounding environment). To achieve quality learning, the extrinsic and intrinsic stimuli must be balanced because both of them influence the persistence and determination that a student will put into his learning process.

# Characteristics of motivating learning environments

Some fundamental and general characteristics are required for the teaching-learning process to be motivating, among which are the following:

## Inspire interest

The teaching-learning process must awaken the students' interest (Weinstein, 2010). The teacher has to show enthusiasm for the class; stimulate students' curiosity to learn; use interesting and varied strategies, activities, and materials; promote the active participation of students; and even include a bit of humor in the class used in a respectful and timely manner (Christenson et al., 2012).

## Be relevant

Student's motivation depends on whether or not the education provided is considered valuable, meaningful, and relevant, and if it is closely related to the students' interests, needs, and short- and long-term goals. Teachers know the importance of what they teach, but it is impossible to assume that students do. Students need to recognize the immediate and future applicability or usefulness of what they learn (Frey & Fisher, 2010). Therefore, it is sometimes necessary for teachers to explicitly explain the benefits of the subject being taught and its relationship with their life and real needs. To achieve this, the learning process needs to be more experiential than theoretical, and the class needs to be functional and applicable.

## Develop an expectation of success

Motivating learning environments should promote a sense of achievement. Students are usually more motivated when they believe they control their learning process and success. Creating this sense of accomplishment requires that teachers have high expectations of their students and that they show confidence in their ability to achieve their goals (Celikoz, 2010). Self-confidence is also developed when the expectations established for students are achievable and reasonable (Redondo & Ortega-Martín, 2015). Expectation of success is essential because it gives students confidence and stimulates them to make an even greater effort.

## Create satisfaction

Reinforcing achievements with internal or external rewards can also help students develop the desire to continue learning (Murray, 2011). This involves, for example, sincerely praising students for their achievements or progress and avoiding embarrassing them or making them feel guilty (Urhahne, 2015). It is possible to correct students when necessary; nevertheless, it has to be done in a way that helps students realize their mistakes and be motivated to continue improving instead of feeling ashamed and unmotivated.

# Importance and benefits

One of the primary purposes of education is to keep students motivated (Naranjo, 2009; Valenzuela et al., 2015). Motivation can make the difference between appropriate or inappropriate academic progress since, if applied correctly, it would allow the development of the students' abilities and skills and gradually solve more complex problems or tasks. Learning does not occur where the motivation is lacking. Therefore, motivation plays a vital role in education since it can get students to show interest in learning, and it is directly related to good academic performance. The more motivated a student is, the better results he will obtain. The student who is motivated will know how to overcome his frustrations and will try again when he does not achieve the desired results at first (Tünnermann, 2011).

Motivation nurtured by teachers is also indispensable because it is connected to the expectation of success or failure. When a student does not expect success, frustration appears, triggering a predisposition on the part of the student towards failure because the student sees himself as someone who does not have enough intelligence or ability to improve his performance. The student may focus on achieving a goal only because it is essential to pass the school term; however, he lacks internal motivation to believe in his potential. Therefore, teachers need to find ways to motivate students so they are reassured that they can achieve their objectives (Castro-Carrasco et al., 2012).

Likewise, compelling motivation through constructive and meaningful learning will ensure that students keep their attention focused on the goals they propose and want to achieve. Through the methodology used, the teachers fulfill a role of great importance as they can generate motivation and also ensure that it is maintained in each of the students throughout the learning process (Naranjo, 2009; Wigfield & Cambria, 2010).

In general, among the benefits of motivation are the construction of self-efficacy, which is the probability of adequately performing a task and the effort applied to complete it; good school performance, which is closely related to the improvement of the cognitive ability and the knowledge acquired by the student; the correct development of skills and the increase of their initiative through meaningful

learning, which will be helpful for the student to function in society for the rest of his life; the enhancement of self-esteem, creating a positive self-image that can be high and stable; and the consolidation of interests, knowledge, and skills, which refers to how much the student cares about doing the task and the pleasure that this generates (Castro-Carrasco et al., 2012; Valenzuela et al., 2015).

## Motivating students to learn in higher education institutions

Higher education has always had a fundamental and essential role in developing a country and its society. Students who wish to study this level of education want to achieve personal and intellectual growth and acquire competencies and professional skills that will allow them to get a good job (Mendonça & Aragão, 2021). However, in recent years, it has been observed that the competitiveness to access the places offered by higher institutions and the challenges students face during their careers have become demotivating factors for many students (Marić, 2013). Motivation plays an indispensable role in the process, as it allows students to be loyal to their aspirations and dreams and not give up at the first stumble (Khan et al., 2019). Life is about falling several times but never losing faith and having the motivation to achieve the ideals set.

Making students feel motivated to study is the main focus of education because their success depends largely on motivation (Dörnyei, & Ushioda, 2009). Nevertheless, some barriers affect motivation in students, but some factors increase motivation in them (Sogunro, 2017), for example: "quality of instruction and curriculum, relevance, pragmatism, interactive classrooms, effective practices, progressive assessment, timely feedback, and self-direction" (Sogunro, 2015, p. 22). A study by Kew et al. (2018) indicated that teachers can increase students' motivation by providing them with better materials for their learning process. If there is motivation to learn, the learning potential will increase; causing learning and motivation to be called inseparable and establishing a reciprocal relationship between academic performance and motivation (Sogunro, 2015).

In addition, Sogunro (2017) mentioned that motivation has a significant characteristic because it is contagious and transmitted not only from teachers to

students but also vice versa, from students to teachers and classmates. If there is an interest on the students'part to learn, feel self-sufficient, succeed, and complete all tasks and assignments, teachers also feel motivated. Motivation can help everyone, and when it is about students, it helps them to achieve meaningful learning, to master contents and skills, and in general, to meet the expected learning objectives.

## Motivation in higher education: Importance of the teacher's attitude

Motivation is crucial to obtain great academic, emotional, and even social results in students. However, it is worth mentioning that there is an aspect of vital importance to awaken students' motivation and even increase it: the attitude of the teacher. Henry & Thorsen (2018) stated that creating a welcoming environment with successful interpersonal communication creates positive teacher-student relationships and, thus, greater motivation to learn and teach. It is easier to produce greater motivation when a teacher is aware of what can be achieved through proper teaching. Teachers who are motivating will lead students through their instruction and continuous support to be motivated as well (Lam et al., 2009).

According to a study, teachers must consider the following aspects or teaching techniques to achieve greater motivation in their students successfully: proper planning of classes, timely preparation of lessons, advice from other teachers, communication with their students to know their needs, adequate distribution of grades, promoting more active participation of students during classes, among others, to help students get motivated to learn (Tanveer et al., 2012). Thanks to the technological era, students can use various specialized tools during their academic training, especially in higher education where students are already much more responsible and aware of what they have and how to take advantage of them, so it is suggested that teachers should use technological tools to take full advantage of their benefits in terms of education (Schulz et al., 2015).

Tohidi & Jabbari (2012) mentioned that it is necessary that teachers, in addition to teaching, also become friends with their students because greater trust will be generated during the teaching-learning process. This will contribute to seeing teachers not as enemies but as agents or sources of knowledge for students and even as a means of inspiration to learn and improve themselves. Luján (1999) also stated that attitude will always be a factor that directly influences the students' motivation

since positive relationships will be formed from the environment and attitude among people, classmates, parents, teachers, and the general population. Therefore, there will be greater motivation to continue cultivating these relationships and reap great rewards in different areas.

Moreover, teachers having an empathetic attitude toward their group of students is significant to achieving the motivation that is needed and, at the same time, fighting against social exclusion among peers. The result will be that students will feel more emotionally comfortable, secure, and confident in achieving their goals, taking risks, creating emotional bonds, and learning with a livelier and more positive attitude (Arón & Milicic, 1999).

According to Dörnyei (2003), the teacher's motivation when putting their profession into practice is fundamental to fulfilling the purpose of education. If a teacher feels motivated and has a positive attitude, students will also be motivated, and that will be reflected in the learning achievements of each of the students. Hortigüela (2019) mentioned that there will be more individual and shared responsibility among the students with motivation, and that they will develop interpersonal and group skills, receive feedback in the best way, and applaud each other's achievements and efforts. Through this type of teaching, the classroom environment will improve and learning will be much more attractive, fun, and meaningful.

## Motivation in higher education: Importance of constructivism

Cetin (2015) stated that the constructivist learning environment has its origins in philosophical minds such as John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Howard Gardner. In general, these scholars expressed that constructivism is a social process of active construction of knowledge from pre-existing knowledge, experiences, and interactions. In this way, individuals cease to be passive learners and become the center and authors of their own knowledge. Furthermore, the more students construct or reconstruct their knowledge, the more they acquire intellectual growth. Experiences, without a doubt, play a fundamental role in the learning process by providing the student with facility, responsibility and commitment to interpret and incorporate new information into pre-existing schemas.

Based on the constructivist view, each learner is unique and has their own conception and understanding of the world around them. However, one thing in common that all learners develop when immersed in constructivist learning is a strong motivation to continue constructing their own knowledge (Williams & Burden, 1997). That is to say, learners are less likely to feel afraid, make mistakes and undergo failure, as they prefer to focus on learning. And this is where students use their interests, prior knowledge, purposes and goals to achieve meaningful learning. Therefore, each student will feel an increased self-efficacy to learn and create new knowledge. Moreover, the motivation generated within learners will help them increase the desire to continue building their own path to learning, so they can achieve their objectives or expected results with ease.

## Motivation in higher education: Current trends

Mainly, thanks to globalization, most higher education institutions have been transformed, changing the traditional to the modern, adopting a new teaching-learning approach that responds to the needs of students and motivates them to prepare to face this new updated world. As a result, new trends have arisen regarding education and motivation (Aydin, 2014). The role of teachers and students should now focus on having a correct teaching-learning process, where the management of learning strategies plays a fundamental role in successfully facing the academic requirements and the demands of society (García et al., 2015). Van (1984) said that to have a quality learning outcome, it is necessary to have a deeper focus and provide students with a constructivist conception of learning. Yew (2016) likewise expressed that it is required to have a pedagogical approach that allows students to engage in significant problems to achieve better learning actively. A collaborative environment contributes to creating mental models for learning, promotes social interaction for cognitive development, and forms self-directed learning habits through practice and reflection.

Similarly, another notable trend in education is to motivate students to engage in learning through optimal active learning environments with a constructivist vision. Activities that promote more complex thinking processes allow students to make decisions and solve problems based on authentic contexts and real situations (Grabinger & Dunlap, 1995). Using current news, online videos, modern didactic

tools, and techniques will foster dynamism and responsibility in students, and it will allow for increased student-student and teacher-student learning collaboration.

Also, a trend being applied in higher education institutions is to make students self-reflect and evaluate their learning more profoundly, thus fostering their metacognitive ability. Teachers can awaken this metacognitive ability in students by carrying out various activities where learners use their critical thinking and become more autonomous in their learning process (Nasution & Sinaga, 2017). This moves students to demonstrate greater responsibility and motivation, adopt a critical stance toward the world and develop their potential as learners (Nosratinia & Zaker, 2013).

## Motivation in higher education: Common problems

Despite the new trends mentioned above, within the educational field, specifically in higher education institutions, some problems still negatively influence student learning and motivation, so it is important to analyze some difficulties or factors that may affect the motivation and thus students' interest to learn. Teaching techniques should be designed and implemented to counteract these problems and achieve more efficient learning results (Al, 2010).

The following are some problems or difficulties in the students' learning process that affect their motivation:

**Teaching quality.** It has been identified that one of the factors that negatively affect student motivation is teachers' lack of preparation or the lack of adequate teaching competence for the target group. As a result, the teaching strategies used do not obtain the students' expected learning results (Leiva, 2013). Songuro (2017) explained that the lower the quality of instruction, the more likely the student is to feel unmotivated to learn and uninterested in performing the tasks or having active class participation.

**Emotional contagion.** Negative moods will always influence the students' academic performance and motivation. This emotion can be transmitted to other students, affecting the group's performance (Sogunro, 2015). When the teacher asks the students to perform a task in pairs, if one of them has negative emotions, low spirits, and no interest in collaborating in the classwork

performance, this will cause his partner to be affected by his mood and emotions as well. In this case, the expected learning objective or results will not be achieved without the necessary motivation, good cooperation, and mutual collaboration among peers.

**Stress.** Long study hours, many classes, stress, and lessons with high degrees of difficulty can also decrease motivation and affect students' learning (Salagre & Serrano, 2003).

**Misuse of free time.** Intrinsic motivation arises from self-reflection, thoughts, needs, and experiences that help achieve independent learning and good academic results (Irgashev, 2019). Most students today do not take advantage of at least a part of their free time to have independent and autonomous learning outside of class; instead, they prefer to do other activities and leave aside the academic part, which decreases their motivation to learn and thus, affects their academic performance.

There are indeed some challenges, but it is important to take advantage of what is available and make the best of it (Crow, 2006). When motivation occurs, the benefits surpass any possible challenge.

## Motivation in higher education: Key advantages

Motivation is undoubtedly a determining factor for students to start their studies in a higher education institution, have an outstanding academic performance, have active participation, and persevere in achieving their goals (Siegle et al., 2014). Motivation will always bring significant advantages for students and therefore for education and society in general, such as:

**A desire for constant improvement.** Motivation provides the learner with the vital impetus to start learning; therefore, motivation must be ongoing so that the learner has the driving force to continue the long learning process (Ghaedi & Jam, 2014). Continuous motivation will also cause the learners' desire to excel academically to be constant. Each learner is different, but they all need the motivation to meet their expectations.

**Increased energy.** Villar (2018) explained that motivation is a unique source of energy that should be harnessed to the fullest at all times and that will give students the right encouragement, enthusiasm, and attitude to strive regardless of the difficulty. If students feel motivated, they are eager to fulfill their purposes (Filgona et al., 2020).

**Inspiration.** Teachers with a vocation and motivation to teach bring positive aspects to education. These kinds of teachers provide an appropriate and supportive learning environment for students to acquire and build positive relationships; students get motivated by the enthusiasm they receive from the teacher, which even helps to learn more efficiently. Teachers can foster satisfaction and student growth and therefore, are seen as guides or role models for other teachers who will want to adopt that stance to generate that kind of motivation and inspiration in their students (Siegle et al., 2014).

**Participatory education.** Knowledgeable and experienced teachers can devise more modern and effective teaching strategies to foster greater student motivation. When students receive a meaningful and challenging education, their participation, persistence, and effort is higher, and there is a more active collaboration and involvement between student-student and teacher-student, achieving a better learning environment (Khan et al., 2019).

**Better cognitive processing.** Motivation also plays a vital role in the cognitive processing of each student during learning since it influences how information is assimilated and processed in his mind. There will always be a difference between a motivated and unmotivated learner. Motivated students will pay more attention and will try to understand the material more profoundly and not only superficially (Filgona et al., 2020).

**Self-discovery and self-perception.** Learners' motivation within the educational environment has a strong relationship with self-discovery and self-perception. Motivation will help each learner to discover who they are and what they want, and to develop their learning capabilities and discover their strengths and weaknesses. Motivated students will also adopt a positive attitude towards the educational challenges along the way and will have greater self-confidence so that perception and confidence will be transmitted outwardly (Grum et al., 2004).

**Greater creativity.** Villar (2018) mentioned that motivation in students brings excellent advantages in terms of their creativity because it helps them explore their minds in search of new ideas, awakens their imagination, helps them think more consciously, and allows them to be more effective in solving a problem.

In short, motivation will always bring significant advantages for students who decide to continue their studies in higher education institutions and will help them make the long learning process more manageable, and therefore the students' lives will be emotionally and academically stable.

## Chapter reflections

The impact that motivation has on learning should make us reflect on to what extent we are managing to motivate our students and what to do to improve in this area. Motivation is essential for learning at all levels and for all subjects; unfortunately, it is often the case that students take courses and pass them to obtain a degree rather than to learn. This case often occurs in the context of university-level English teaching in Ecuador, where English tends to be seen only as a requirement that students must meet to graduate. In consequence, there is still much work to get students interested in learning the language, especially in cases where students do not see the relationship between English and their present life or future career.

It is essential to review fundamental aspects of motivation that are necessary to help students be more engaged in their process of learning this language. Throughout this chapter, it has been possible to analyze some fundamental elements that we must continue to take into account as teachers, such as helping students to have a sense of achievement, planning classes that are active, innovative, and dynamic, and creating learning environments where students feel safe and are not afraid to make mistakes and to keep trying. However, there are other factors that also have an impact on student motivation, for example, whether the content is relevant to students or not, or whether the topics have applicability or utility for their present or future life since that can inspire interest, encourage curiosity, and create satisfaction in students.

This situation makes us reflect on the direction that English language learning has in the country, being implemented only as an extra subject (English as a Foreign Language - EFL) external to the students' careers. This also makes us think about the possibility of taking new routes, such as: combining the learning of the English language with the learning of the students' careers through ESP classes (English for Specific Purposes, CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), or the implementation of classes purely in English, among other strategies that may allow integrating the learning of English with relevant and purposeful topics and objectives for students. All these decisions need to be analyzed, so this chapter gives teachers and all stakeholders some questions to think about to continue improving in this area to ensure that all students are truly motivated to learn English at university.

## Conclusions

With the advent of globalization and continuous technological progress, new changes, approaches, and ideas have been adopted to respond to the needs of today's world. Due to the fact that education is the key to investing and achieving actual development for the benefit of the community, the teaching-learning process requires the best strategies, methodologies, and above all, teachers and students committed to seeking and building a better future. Motivation plays a significant role in achieving the ideals and purposes proposed within the educational field. Whether internal or external, motivation can help the student have an integral, active, autonomous, constructivist, and meaningful academic development.

It is necessary to consider that there are different elements that will have an impact on motivation: student, teacher, content, method, and environment to achieve the required motivation in each student. There are multiple sources of motivation, both internal and external, but all are necessary and need to go hand in hand for students to be active and persevering learners; the key is to use both sources timely and wisely. Knowing and understanding these sources of motivation is essential to awaken students' interest in learning.

Motivation is valuable at all levels, including higher education. College students need to be motivated to start, continue, and finish their studies or careers successfully. In this regard, adopting a constructivist conception of learning, using authentic contexts, awakening self-reflection, and encouraging metacognition are current trends that are helping to motivate students. The teachers' attitude is also critical as it directly influences the students, so he needs to be a creator of positive relationships between teacher-student and student-student, to be a support, a friend, and a means of inspiration and improvement. If the teaching methodology is innovative, flexible, and adapted to the needs of the students, when the content encourages creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking, and when the education environment is accessible and empathetic, we achieve a motivating teaching-learning process that brings significant benefits to education.

In conclusion, education will always be a field that seeks constant improvement to provide more significant opportunities to its students where their attitudes and interest will be vital to achieving their ideals. Even though it is not always easy to create a motivating environment, it is worth the effort since it promotes constant improvement, more substantial energy, inspiration, a more participatory education, better cognitive processing, self-discovery and self-perception, and greater creativity. The students' success will depend on the motivation they feel to continue in the great struggle. If students are motivated, they will enjoy the learning process, and therefore, studying will be a privilege and not a sacrifice for them.

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# Chapter II

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# Attitude and motivation in language learning and teaching

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# Introduction

This chapter studies the impact of motivation in English language learners at the University level, the fact that it is a concept that has been recognized as a highly relevant learning asset in education, and convergence of other elements that influence students' motivation. The concourse of emotions and their connection with curricular content, classroom environment, learners' interests, and teachers' methodology and their influence on students' willingness to learn are a crucial part of the analysis that will lead to the understanding that motivation is not an isolated element. As a starting point in this chapter, it was considered necessary to conceptualize and describe language attitudes to support the subsequent discussion about the influence of different external and internal elements on students' attitudes towards English usage not only in the classroom but also in their daily life when using the English language is a need. These internal and external elements have a significant role in student motivation as they can contribute to the different environments students are involved in, resulting in a communicative value influencing the continuous Learning process (Purba, 2018). The resulting value which this chapter covers, is also one of the factors that is accentuated in the growth mindset, which is another aspect of great importance in students' motivation and allow students to set goals by enhancing the intrinsic value of motivation (Bai & Wang, 2020; Yeager et al., 2016).

Another point of interest that was also noted in the chapter was the cognitive functions related to motivation, as motivation incentives the cognitive control in adults and university students (Ferdinand & Czernochowski, 2018). Based on the concept of motivation presented in chapter one, it can be inferred that its benefits are countless in education. Motivated students may increase the probabilities of improvement in their tasks (Nemeth, 1998; Tohidi, 2011). The synchronicity between motivation and the English learning environment in a university setting can lead students to fully complete specific objectives and to encourage their initiative and persistence while doing learning activities.

## Language attitudes

On the one hand, language refers to a universal means of communication. It is used daily, in a wide range of situations, to communicate with others through social interactions. Language is also used to express and share feelings, ideas, and thoughts (Schoel et al., 2013). Language acquisition has an impact on cognitive development as it facilitates ideas, thought formation, and the interpretation of new information influenced by our previous experiences.

On the other hand, attitude is defined as "the way a person reacts to his surroundings" (Vishal, 2014, p.2). In other words, attitudes refer to interactions a person has with the different elements of the environment that cause a determined response. These responses are called reactions which are the result of evaluation processes related to specific objects of thought. These objects of thought can be tangible and abstract (Albarracin & Shavitt, 2018; Bohner & Dickel, 2011). Examples of objects of thought can range from appreciating a particular piece of art (e.g., a sculpture or painting) to more complex issues or topics such as fear, morals, ethics, and other abstract thoughts.

Based on the previous definitions, It can be said that language attitudes are the "evaluative reactions to language" (Dragojevic et al., 2020, p.4). The way language is evaluated relates to the different contexts and surroundings that people in general, and English language learners mainly, interact. Interactions and their determined

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reactions are shaped by the language choice and are also directly connected to the rules of language usage, which concludes on the fair usage of the language in the different contexts a learner gets involved in (Bou, 2016). Language attitude studies rely on analyzing the social interpretation learners give to the language and the people who use it. These studies have foundations in psychology and date over a century ago (Dragojevic et al., 2020).

These attitudes have an essential role in a student's learning process. As proposed by Zulfikar et al. (2019), a learner's attitude towards language affects his language learning performance. Students' lack of motivation for English language learning might involve a negative attitude towards the target language. According to Chew (2013), these attitudes can be fragmented into three essential dimensions. The first is the affective dimension which refers to feelings towards the object of thought. The second is the behavioral dimension, which shapes how attitudes influence our behavior; and finally, the third is the cognitive dimension, which refers to the specific knowledge about the object.

In the cognitive dimension, processes are influenced by social and individual relations. Each of these relations has its specific context, styles, linguistic varieties, expressions, and forms that lead to established assumptions about the characteristics of the individuals or the group, and these assumptions are called stereotypes. These stereotypes differentiate one group from another, giving them a specific function in their evaluations.

The affective dimension is the next critical component in language attitudes; it determines the attitude, excluding the cognitive component (Hamilton & Mackie, 1993). The clearest example of this is the different accents which, depending on individual understandings and context, could be perceived as pleasant or disgusting. The last dimension is behavior, which shapes how we act according to the complexity of their domains. The context and stereotypes influence the speaker's behavior in a determined situation. In other words, the speaker will identify and then adapt language according to the situation and beliefs. Although the speaker can use the same informal language while buying flowers or during a job interview, it could be more helpful to use formal language in the interview as it may be an expected behavior the person wants to adopt aimed to fulfill the purpose to get the job.

Each one of these dimensions plays an essential role in students' attitude towards language and each one gives some characteristics to language attitude. Although these attitudes are the most common and identifiable among speakers, what Garvin and Mathiot (1968) formulated about Positive Attitudes characteristics are language loyalty, language pride, and awareness of the norms. These characteristics are not purely positive, and they have their counterparts that are Negative Attitudes towards language: language disloyalty, language lack of pride, and unawareness of the norms. Both sets of attitudes, positive and negative, are influenced by the reactions speakers may have.

Language loyalty refers to the attitude that encourages speakers to use a specific language among others in their daily life. Besides the influences they may have to use another language, the speaker chooses to use the second language. On the other hand, Language disloyalty advocates for the disinterest of other languages (Garvin & Mathiot, 1968). Language pride is the speaker's satisfaction while using the language, making a symbol of their identity, and encouraging others to use it. The negative part of this characteristic is the Language's lack of pride, which, as the name suggests, is the discomfort while using the language (Garvin & Mathiot, 1968). Finally, the last characteristic is Norm Awareness, which refers to the careful use of the language norms, spelling, and expressions according to the context the language is being used. Students recognize and use the forms and functions of the language in an appropriate way (Garvin & Mathiot, 1968).

Another essential aspect to take care of in language attitudes is an attitude change, which refers to the "retrieval of stored evaluations and the consideration of new evaluative information to a varying extent" (Bohner & Dickel, 2011, p. 397). New experiences and interactions provide information that can replace and modify previous evaluative beliefs to expand their attitudes. Baker (1992) proposed that attitude change occurs only when they interact with personal and significant experiences that give the speaker a new meaning modifying their attitudes.

All these aspects are the essential components of language attitudes, and each one of them plays an important role in the way the speakers think, perceive, evaluate, and react to the language in the social interactions and communicative encounters they may experience in everyday life.

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# University students' attitudes toward foreign language learning

As was stated before, language attitudes have been objects of interest for many researchers throughout time which may vary according to each setting. Baker (1992) suggested that these attitudes cannot be directly noticeable, but they can manifest in actions that can be measured. In this section, three relevant articles related to the language attitudes of university students will be analyzed.

This first article, authored by Hidayani (2019) and conducted on Indonesian University students, found that positive language attitudes were predominant over negative attitudes. The mentioned study it is related to aspects such as language loyalty, norm awareness, and language pride which were explained in the previous section. Aside from this, other aspects, as part of the Indonesian context of the students, were considered. Hidayani also highlighted the importance of receiving and responding. Hidayani (2019) stated these two elements as the ability to pay attention and the interest in learning a language. These abilities are related to language attitudes as factors of learning; if students interact with a low-quality input, their attitudes tend to be negative which is not the case for Indonesian students. Hidayani stated that most of them understand the importance of learning English as a source of getting more opportunities in their life. Opportunities such as getting a job they are satisfied with, or gaining a better social position, were some of the reasons students felt eager to adopt positive language attitudes. Although many of the students had positive attitudes toward English in the level of language pride and awareness of the norms (68%), the other part of students had negative attitudes and experienced them at the level of perceiving and internalizing the value of learning English, making them not able to perceive the importance of learning English. Although it is not mentioned explicitly, the study stands out the aspects that can be improved to increase this rate of positive attitudes towards the language, which can be developed with the help of the teacher in the class, reminding the importance of learning English with the use of meaningful activities could help students to acquire new experiences and interactions that could help them improve these attitudes. In that way, students can internalize the benefits of learning English and its use in their immediate future.

Students, as they grow, face many challenges in their lives, and learning is no exception every day it passes by. Students acquire new knowledge that can be helpful for their future and can modify and influence their perceptions towards experiences, stimulus, and learning. Goktepe (2014) analyzed the language attitudes of Turkish university students towards English. According to the study, students' attitudes towards English were more polarized but positive. Although their language awareness is high, students also point out that some were learning due to obligations. Other aspects analyzed were related to the students' intended efforts for learning English. These aspects involved language loyalty and cultural interest. Some of the students expressed their interest in visiting other English-speaking countries as their reasons to learn the language, while most of the students expressed their interest in learning English as their tool of development which is called "instrumental promotion" (Goktepe, 2014).

Instrumental promotion refers to the opportunities of learning a language. Turkish students consider that learning English could give an essential improvement in life opportunities as they think that English language could help them get a better job, make more money, and increase their social status. In this context, community and family are essential to students' attitudes as expressed by the students; 60% of them feel comfortable with the general environment of the English classes, while the 30% have a moderate feeling towards it, and finally the remaining 10% did not like it (Goktepe, 2014). One of the most critical aspects of this study is the reliance on language loyalty and cultural interest. Also, the environment played a significant role in defining these attitudes. Goktepe (2014) also stood out for the role of the teacher in improving community integration as an important aspect of language attitudes.

Finally, in research conducted by Liu and Zhao (2011) about the Language Attitudes of Chinese university students, it was demonstrated that they had positive attitudes toward English. In this study, students valued their attitudes toward the association between English-speaking culture and people. Students also moderately thought that it is a good thing that English has a high status in China, and they also considered learning English was nice. They also expressed that they enjoy learning English even if it is not required for them, reading magazines, watching films, and talking with English-speaking students. They also showed interest in improving their learning (Liu & Zhao, 2011). Although students perceived English as a meaningful Language, students valued their mother tongue over English. 70% of them believed

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that Chinese was much more important than English. That study also mentioned the influence the environment has on what students think about English. They did not perceive English as a sign of education, or a mark that established someone was different if they were raised learning English (Liu & Zhao, 2011). In this specific context, culture and community support English, and this context influences how students perceive English. Students have positive thoughts about it, and the interaction with the different elements of the Language makes them more interested in it, especially with the elements that let them experience their culture.

After analyzing these three studies, it can be concluded that among other elements that are part of language attitudes, environment, and interaction can influence what students think about English. It can also shape students' own perceptions of the value of their mother tongue. Since most of these processes cannot be directly analyzed and evaluated, students were evaluated on their perceptions about the language. The most recognizable aspects of these studies were how they use the language and what the students considered learning English could be helpful in. While some of the students that were part of the mentioned research agree that learning English is a sign of high status, most of them expressed that the reasons for learning English were the increase of opportunities in their immediate work-life, which can result in better job positions. Those reasons are part of students' beliefs which are sometimes transformed into stereotypes that are accepted by students who are interacting with the language for the first time.

To sum up, the environment and the context where students learn shape and define the image learners have of a particular language. The interaction students experience also directs their general desire to learn a language. This desire affects the objectives for learning English, the use learners might give it for their future, and their willingness to learn each class. All these aspects combined affect the level of motivation students demonstrate in classes to achieve language acquisition. The level of motivation entails the desire of students to learn something. All of these aspects can be considered external factors that influence the motivation to learn, while the internal attitudes refer to the intrinsic factors students experience and express as their motivations to learn English. This motivation could influence how the learning experiences are perceived as successful by the learner and consequently on effective language acquisition.

Part of motivation are the different reasons or causes that influence people to act in a determined way. In the next section, motivation and its types will be defined along with its meaning in education.

## Factors associated with motivation

Many people can do a series of activities that they have learned during life. For example, a person can cook, play a musical instrument, clean the house, hang out with friends, write a work report, and drive a car. There are many things that people can learn how to do, however people are interested in some activities more than in others. For example, someone might find it more enjoyable to hang out with friends rather than to play an instrument, while someone else might prefer to play a musical instrument rather than to write a work report. Different kinds of actions awaken an internal state that arouses action, moves the individual in certain directions, and engages people in specific activities (Ormrod, 2018). Motivation prompts an emotional arousal that also encourages the person on what to learn and to what extent, especially if learning is voluntary and under one's control, in such case it influences not just on a decision to learn but also on continuing learning or improving something one already knows (Lang et al., 1998; Ormord, 2018).

It is crucial to consider that motivation does not always trigger a behavior. Motivation is generally linked to other elements from the environment such as the culture (e.g., values and religion), the situation (e.g., familiarity with the content and teaching styles), or the biological condition of the person (e.g., age and health) (Maslow, 2017). Additionally, behavior is not triggered by only one single motive or stimulus. Behavior should be understood as a response to multiple determinants; in other words, human behavior is multi-motivated (Maslow, 2017). For example, a person might start a relationship for several reasons: for love, to convince one's self to have a nice physical appearance, to feel protected, to go by the social pressure, or because a person is attracted by other's intelligence. Through this example, it can be analyzed how different kinds of motivation arouses certain conduct that, in each case, would satisfy different needs: physiological, love, esteem, safety, and self-actualization (Maslow, 2017).

Of course, motivation is not just related to people's relationships; there is also a similar situation in other contexts like education where motivation has a pivotal role. In a similar way to people's relationships, a student's behavior is also a response influenced by multiple stimuli. In the classroom, it is not enough if a student is motivated or with a predisposition to learn because it is necessary the joint of other individual elements like one's strategies to learn and also the confidence to learn (Hattie, 2012). An example of this is when a learner feels a strong epistemic curiosity towards the English language but does not know how to learn it and, therefore, the student might feel is not capable of doing it. Additional to these individual elements, motivation is only a part of external factors of the learning environment such as materials, activities, level of competition or cooperation between students, and how achievement and learning are assessed (Ormord, 2018).

## Types of motivation

Learning is different for each person as it depends on different factors such as prior knowledge, cultural background, and interest. All of that helps us to make sense of what we study. These differences are manifested in the reasons why a person learns. These could be external like getting a high score, earning money, or receiving recognition, and also other internal catalyzers like the satisfaction after learning or a seek of self-improvement.

There is a classic categorization of motivation, namely intrinsic and extrinsic. In regards to this common distinction, Reiss (2012) argued that motives cannot be divided into just two categories. For example, Reiss and Havercamp (1998) evidenced that human needs' satisfaction involves a multifaceted solution. On this basis, it is necessary to include social motivation, transcendent motivation, and their relation to education.

## Intrinsic motivation

It is present when a person does something because one feels the necessity to do it. In other words, the drive to take action comes from inside the person and not from external circumstances. Examples of this type of motivation can be found in a child's playing a favorite sport or game just because he feels it is fun or challenging (Ryan & Deci, 2000) without expecting a (external) reward (Reiss, 2012).

Intrinsic motivation involves some activities which did not include an external reinforcement or reward but are carried out "for the positive experiences associated with exercising and extending one's capacities" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 56). In humans, this type of motivation is of great significance as from the time infants are born, they enroll in many activities, games, and trial-and-error exercises. Due to this innate characteristic, people are able to learn and develop as functional members of society (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

In education, students' motivation is as important as the strategies used for teaching and learning (Moll-Khosrawi et al., 2021). In the education setting, the brain evaluates the stimulus, for example, the difficulty of the task, fear of failure, or avoidance of appearing incompetent in front of peers and teachers, and then it processes information associated with novel stimuli, which stimulate the novelty regions, the reward-processing and memory-encoding areas in the brain (Bunzeck et al., 2012). These areas are heavily populated by neurons that produce dopamine, a neurotransmitter that triggers people's action when a reward is expected. Knutson et al. (2001) scanned the brain's activity of several human participants who were told they were going to earn money if they could identify a specific symbol. When participants saw the symbol, the brain areas related to dopamine production were activated. Dopamine was not produced when participants received the money which led to the conclusion that its release is related to the event itself rather than the result of that event (reward). For instance, dopamine is related to curiosity and it is released when people face experiences that are perceived as "better than usual" (Bunzeck et al., 2012).

Dopamine release increases attention which in turn increases the chances to memorize and learn. Based on what was mentioned, teaching should include novelty and a creative variety of problem-solving activities to foster students' English

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learning. Moreover, teaching should connect students' interests and background and represent a challenge for them without causing frustration. A learning activity should be balanced. If it is too easy, the memory will identify it as already accomplished and will not be perceived as a novel experience; but if it is too hard, the risk of frustration by failing increases, and with it, the possible association with a negative feeling which might lead to avoidance and reluctance (Friedman et al., 2009). Finding balanced teaching activities that cause a desire to learn is possible when applying to the Zone of Proximal Development. As Hattie (2012) stated, as students are not constantly motivated, the key is to provide instruction sufficiently above the current student's level and aim to move the student '+1' in their learning progression. Consequently, the brain might turn its attention to learning if the chosen activity evokes feelings pleasant enough to promote dopamine production and thus the desire to learn. The pleasant sensation when learning under these conditions increases the probability that students feel motivated toward language acquisition.

> **Growth mindset.** Carol Dweck proposed a prevalent theory about mindsets. Dweck (2015) found that learners' mindsets—how they perceive their own abilities— have a pivotal role in their motivation and achievement. Moreover, if these mindsets changed (by the teacher's influence, for example), students could improve their achievement. Two relevant mindsets are the fixed mindset and the growth mindset. The fixed mindset involves students believing they cannot improve their abilities or intelligence. In the fixed mindset there is an absence of desire to learn because one's abilities are extremely sub-estimated. On the other hand, a growth mindset represents a high self-perception toward one's learning abilities. Students with a growth mindset have high expectations about themselves and a strong willingness to learn. Similarly to Bandura's reciprocal determinism theory, external factors could have an impact on students' change from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset and desire to learn. Willingness to learn is fostered when teachers, first of all, believe their students can learn and have high expectations towards their performance and provide challenging (no frustrating) activities. It is crucial to consider that a student's desire to learn is one of the elements that highly influence academic achievement according to Hattie's (2012) meta-analysis. Desire to learn has also an effect on avoiding feelings like fear, anger and depression during learning and increases the amount of language used in the classroom.

## Extrinsic motivation

As can be seen, intrinsic motivation is a vital component of human behavior and development. However, most activities that people do have a motive outside the person. Most people do almost everything because of external motivations, especially at the beginning of school years.

Ryan and Deci (2020) defined extrinsic motivation as the behaviors done for other reasons besides immanent satisfaction. It mainly refers to the external factors that influence the way people act in a specific way. Most of the time, these actions are done in expectation of an extrinsic reward (Dörnyei, 1994). A clear example is obtaining good grades or avoiding failing a course.

Extrinsic motivation has a considerable influence on intrinsic motivation as a factor that increases or decreases the desire to do something (Dörnyei, 1994). This level of influence is related to the stage of subtype of extrinsic motivation the learner is. In the work of the self-determinist theory, Deci and Ryan (1985) divided extrinsic motivation into four main types or stages with specific characteristics that influence students, from extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation:

**External regulation.** This subtype is considered the simplest form of extrinsic motivation; in this, the student behaves in a certain way to obtain or avoid immediate consequences. For example, a student will complete a task successfully to get a good grade. This regulation is developed during the first years of children, helping them to anticipate the consequences of actions; these consequences are established by an external agent, which in this case are teachers.

**Introjection.** This is the process of incorporating a previous regulation; in this, students regulate themselves by establishing an internal representation of the external consequences of a previous regulation. After that, learners autoregulate their actions. This autoregulation influences the management of impulses and needs of cognitive-affective support. This means that although external consequences are not entirely required in the introjection process, it can happen at an emotional level; this is called ego-involvement, where students modify their performance, anticipating praise about their abilities.

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**Identification.** In this process, the student accepts the regulation as part of themselves; for example, a student does well on a test not because good students should get good grades or their parents praise them, but a student does well on a test because he likes to learn. In this stage praise or other types of cognitive-affective support are less required, as the student experiences more flexibility and less pressure doing activities.

**Integration.** This is the last stage of extrinsic motivation and refers to the process of establishing a hierarchy model between regulations, coherently integrating them. This is the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation, and this self-regulation is self-determined; there is no need to consider external consequences.

Each one of these subtypes are an important component of the extrinsic motivation, although this applies to the internalization process. Besides this component which is student-related, there are also components related to teachers, a vital agent of extrinsic motivation (Dörnyei, 1994).

One of the extrinsic aspects related to the teacher is the teacher affiliate drive. Ausubel (1968) defined it as the need to praise or please teachers or other figures such as parents, this component is identifiable as an extrinsic motive in the external regulation and introjection categories, being the praise (or punishment) the consequence set by an external agent. Another teacher-related motivational aspect is the teacher's authority which can be considered as the ability to control and support autonomously, meaning that although the teacher guides and controls learning, students are more independent in determining how and why they behave in a certain way.

Finally, another essential aspect of extrinsic motivation regarding teachers is the socialization of student motivation, which refers to teacher stimuli of motivation in students; this can improve on introjection and identification stage, helping students to assimilate incorporation and identification of external regulations.

## Social Motivation

Since being born, humans have always wanted to make connections with other peers. Socializing and sharing thoughts with others have been an inherent aspect of human behavior, and this could be easily observed in young learners. Billig et al. (1991) defined social motivations as the behaviors students have based on a social influence. This social influence has its roots in the social learning theory. According to Bandura, some of the elements of the self-efficacy theory rely on learning through others' experience and social persuasion. To achieve this, students usually acquire knowledge or behavioral traits by learning through direct experiences observing others. This observation process has an informative function where the students analyze the different consequences of their actions. As mentioned by Bandura (1971), this modelling process have some critical components related to it:

**Attentional processes.** This component refers to the analysis of the essential features of a model's behavior. In this component, associational experiences are highlighted as the main factor in the attentional process. The groups with which students associate the most will be the most observed and repeated.

**Retention processes.** This component refers to the long-term retention of behaviors that have been modeled. The first aspect in the retention process is the sensory input. In this dimension students observe and create a retrievable set of sequences of behavior. After the observation of a model and the identification of essential characteristics, the student will create a sequence of behavior that sets of the model, helping students to reproduce that particular behavior.

**Motoric reproduction processes.** The third component of modelling refers to the integration of skills and processes, resulting in an exhibition of the acquired component skills through previously modeled patterns. If these components are successfully integrated, the student will produce or re-produce new patterns of behavior more efficiently.

**Reinforcement processes.** This last component refers to the different incentives given in class to increase action. Learning cannot be converted into performance if it is negatively endorsed. These reinforcement processes are the last step in modeling and these influence motivation.

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**The modeling process** is essential in social motivation, nevertheless group interaction has also a significant role in social motivation. Dörnyei (1994) stood out several aspects related to group interaction that can influence social motivation. These aspects are:

» **Goal-Orientedness.** This group aspect of social motivation refers to the extent of the desire to complete the group's goal. For example, although the goal of the class is to learn a specific grammar structure topic, the class would not have that goal as their priority, but instead, their main goal is to have fun.

» **Group Cohesion.** This aspect of group interaction is defined as the firmness of the relationship between the members of the class. How unified the class is can influence on students' performance during learning activities.

» **Classroom goal structures.** This last aspect of group interaction that influences social motivation refers to the structure the class will follow to achieve a specific goal. This structure can be divided into three main models: the first one is competitive, in which students compete with each other, and the best are rewarded. The second type is cooperative, and, in this structure, students work in groups and divide the responsibility. Finally, the individualistic structure refers to solo work.

As can be seen, interaction is a crucial component of social motivation being modeling and class group the main components of it. Through these components, students identify, retain, and reproduce aspects of behaviors that finally are included in their motives to act in a certain way.

## Transcendent motivation

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is about the external or internal influences learners receive that drive their behavior. In both cases, motivation is centered on the learner. Whether it is internal or external, is commonly self-centered. Nevertheless, it cannot be assumed that all human motivations are always self-centered and, based on that, transcendent motivation proposes a different understanding of motivation. From

the transcendent perspective, people do not just receive external or internal drivers of behaviors. The person also pursues to give, which is a part of our humanity, and consequently a universal driver that lets people be aware of the impact of their actions on others and not just on themselves (Guillén, 2020). An example of transcendent motivation is the teachers' expectations of student's performance which, in turn, has a high impact on students' academic achievement (Hattie, 2012). For educators, it is a part of daily life to think about how they can improve their students' psychosocial and cognitive growth. Teachers are conscious of the impact of their actions on students' reality and society development, and in turn, students prefer teachers and lessons that care about them. These thoughts go beyond the extrinsic motivation a teacher could receive, such as the salary, or the intrinsic motivation, like the desire for professional development (Guillén, 2020).

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Human beings are different from other species in the ability to acquire a vast amount of knowledge and modify our behavior accordingly. This learning process involves time, goal-directed behavior, feedback, practice, and reinforcement through which people change their mental conceptions as a result of the experience (Hattie & Yates, 2013; Ormrod, 2018). Even when humans have instinctive patterns of behavior, experiencing helps in the learning process, giving the people the capacity to adapt to an ever-evolving environment (Ormrod, 2018). That constitutes a process that lets humans acquire or modify knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and emotional reactions (Ormrod, 2018).

Nevertheless, in the educational context, given the importance paid to the practice of consolidating knowledge, especially in second language teaching, Yule (2020) established a differentiation between learning and acquisition. This author gives the first concept, learning, the characteristic of being a conscious process of knowledge accumulation (e.g. grammar and vocabulary). On the other hand, he gives the second concept, acquisition, the characteristic of being a progressive development over time of the ability to master a language "by using it naturally in communicative situations" (Yule, 2020, p. 220).

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Regarding a second language, the connectedness of the academic setting to the given concept of learning is evident, based on the fact that it is at the school where standard grammar is studied. Also, there is a connection between acquisition and school because it is where, in many cases, the use of a second language occurs and generally consists of a guided practice that includes feedback from teachers or peers.

Based on Yule's conceptualization, it can be understood that inside the classroom, both learning and acquisition involve a collaborative process. The teacher has crucial importance in the creation of the classroom environment, which in turn has an impact on learning and acquisition. For example, literature about classroom management suggests that teacher-student relationships that operate based on the principles of closeness, warmth, and absence of conflict increase learners' performance in the classroom (Hattie & Yates, 2013). There is a mutual benefit regarding effective instruction and academic performance when teachers attempt to see learning through the learners' eyes (Hattie, 2012). Nevertheless, what does it imply to "see through the learner's eyes"? Scrivener (2011) pointed out that the way students feel while receiving a class or while being in front of their teacher may create a particular environment where the lesson is memorable and enjoyable instead of having an atmosphere where people are defensive and anxious. Consequently, the importance of the learners' goals, interests, and expectations influences how students feel. Another essential factor is the way these interests are included in the lesson as assets to increase students' desire to learn (Reeve & Shin, 2020). In this collaborative process of learning and acquisition, the teacher-student relationship that is based on students' interests fosters the creation of opportunities where the student can practice the second language through topics that call their interest and, in this way, enhance the association between the content and the previous knowledge mediated by the emotions that learner-centered topics may create (e.g. Students working in groups about a hip-hop artist biography).

Rapport is another of the elements of classroom management that nurture the collaborative learning and acquisition process to enhance students' disposition to learn. The term rapport describes a friendly relationship a teacher creates with students (Scrivener, 2011). However, even when this rapport may be challenging to measure because of the individual differences among students, the American psychologist Carl Rogers (as cited in Scrivener, 2011) mentions three elements

as the catalyzers of an effective learning environment. One of them is related to the inclusion of students' interests, opinions, and emotions allowing teachers to understand the learning and acquisition process (going back to Yule's differentiation) from the learner's perspective.

Another vital element is to avoid prejudice, and label no one in the classroom, including the teacher, and not judge based on opinions and mistakes as these are natural steps in the learning process. Teachers that avoid adopting a role based on academic titles and positions that impede showing them how they are; promote empathy, respect, and authenticity to create an effective collaborative environment between them and students (Scrivener, 2011).

## Student motivation

Gardner (2000) contributed four categories influencing motivation toward learning a second language. These are Integrativeness, Learning Situation, Instrumental orientation, and Classroom Anxiety. Integrativeness is defined as the learners' interest in the community and the learners' attitude toward speakers of the targeted language; in other words, is the willingness to identify themselves with a group. The Learning Situation is related to the learner's attitude toward the language learning context, including the general school environment, materials, the language course, and the language instructor (teacher). Instrumental Orientation involves the practical use of the language to obtain a better-salaried position, have more friends, extend a professional network, understand one's favorite singer, or any other advantage the student could identify. The learning situation is also linked with the idea that learning is indeed part of our well-being as it increases the chances of obtaining a better social condition (Blanden, 2020). The last one, Classroom Anxiety, occurs when learners experience a lack of support or when the worriedness about committing a mistake impedes students' use of the language. Integrativeness, Learning Situation, Instrumental orientation, and Classroom Anxiety impact students' motivation and desire to learn and, consequently, the way students find the act of learning as an enjoyable and rewarding process (Gardner, 2000).

# Cognitive functions related to motivation

Before analyzing second language acquisition at the university level, it is necessary to discuss the cognitive functions related to motivation. Even though the general level of intelligence is a good predictor of academic achievement, some researchers argue that there is a separate contribution of other high-level cognitive abilities to the IQ score (Miyake et al., 2000; Pluck et al., 2016). These high-level cognitive functions are called Executive Functions (hereafter EFs), which correlate more with academic achievement than IQ (Pluck et al., 2023). Diamond (2013) proposed three EFs: cognitive flexibility, working memory, and response inhibition. Working memory is a central system of limited capacity that is used to keep and process information that will be needed to perform activities of different complexity (Daneman, 1991). It has an impact on long-term learning. In the English learning process, students use their working memory to keep the information of a paragraph to connect it to the following ones and make sense of a reading piece (Pluck et al., 2023). Working memory is also used when a teacher gives an instruction or any kind of information the student has to keep in mind to complete a classroom activity. For example, the student might listen to the teacher explain grammar and then be asked to write a sentence.

The second executive function we are going to analyze is response inhibition. It is related to the capacity to suppress a dominant response or impulse originated by a stimulus (St Clair-Thompson & Gathercole, 2006). This is a crucial EF because it prevents people from acting irrationally, and it allows them to control their attention, behavior, thoughts, and emotions, and inhibit a robust internal predisposition or external temptation and, instead, do what is more necessary or appropriate (Diamond, 2013). In the educational setting, students use their response inhibition to avoid getting distracted by the noise outside the classroom and instead pay attention to the teacher. Also, it is used when students avoid cheating in a test or decide to spend time studying instead of watching television the whole afternoon. Students need their response inhibition to succeed in their academic activities because it is related

to the discipline, as it was demonstrated in a study carried out with more than 100 students from a state-run school in the Ecuadorian context (Villagomez et al., 2017). The importance of executive functions in analyzing the effect of motivation in English learners at the university level is that response inhibition is more correlated to academic achievement in university students than IQ or working memory (Pluck et al., 2016). This correlation is because academic success depends a lot on students' discipline and responsibility. University professors generally do not complain to parents about students' performance as students are primarily responsible for their performance. Motivation is vital for foreign/second language acquisition at the university level because it impacts response inhibition. Students' motivation could be professional recognition, obtaining a job, getting economic stability, self-recognition, and others. Any type of motivation students may have, influences their decision to go to university every day and complete each assignment by avoiding internal (thoughts) and external distractions, having in mind the goal that motivates them.

As stated before, motivation is related to the desire to learn, and whether students consider going to classes a rewarding process or not (Gardner, 2000). To consciously use response inhibition to avoid distractions and have discipline, students must have a desire to act in that way. This willingness to learn also improves attention and the time students decide to spend on learning activities. Similar to what has been noted about response inhibition, it has a close impact on attention because this involves the ability to voluntarily select a specific stimulus and focus on it while ignoring others (VanPatten & Benati, 2015).

As it was discussed, having the motivation or desire to learn is not a guarantee of learning on its own. Willingness needs a friendly environment and also a good teacher-student relationship. Bandura's (1983) theory of reciprocal determinism stated that three factors influence each other and have an impact on behavior, learning, and development. Those three factors are: personal, environmental, and behavioral. The personal factor includes thoughts, feelings, self-beliefs, cognition (e.g. Executive functions), cultural heritage, curiosity and creativity, goals, aspirations, self-esteem, knowledge, and others. The environmental factors include vicarious experience (modeling), social and verbal persuasions, family and social support and expectations, teacher beliefs, curricular practices and policies, learning environment, assessment, evaluative feedback, classroom structures, grouping practices, school climates, and so

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forth. The third factor, behavioral, are mastery experience (academic achievement and school performance), selection of academic tasks and activities, extracurricular involvement, class participation, homework completion, classroom conduct, effort and engagement, persistence, self-regulatory skills (response inhibition), risk-taking behaviors, selections of courses majors, and careers (Bandura, 1983; Pajares & Usher, 2008).

An example of the interaction of the previous three factors is when a timid student is part of a class where the teacher is not interested in encouraging his class participation and does not make him feel comfortable and safe to take risks. Also, his classmates do not include him in the classwork, either. In this example, the student's shyness is the personal factor, the teacher and classmates' behavior are part of the environmental factor, and the student's decision to keep silent and avoid participation is part of the behavioral factor. It is clear that the environment reinforces the student's behavior, while the student's shyness (personal factor) also influences his avoidance of participating (behavior), and his behavior makes him being excluded from classwork. Now, let's suppose the next school year, this timid student finds a teacher who encourages his participation and creates a friendly environment where he feels he can take risks. Also, the student finds that his teacher's expectations about his performance are high. According to the reciprocal determinism theory, the environment the teacher creates influences the student's self-esteem (personal factor), and consequently, the student would become more active in class participation (behavioral factor).

Based on the same theory, motivation is essential for foreign/second language acquisition at the university level because it could be influenced externally by others' personal factors like teachers' and classmates attitudes, and it could be an intrinsic factor that influences the classroom environment and behavior, like  student own personality and desire to learn. This influence is because "human functioning is the product of the dynamic interplay of personal, behavioral, and environmental influences" (Pajares & Usher, 2008, p. 392).

## Reflections: Importance of motivation on foreign/second language acquisition at the university level

Early in this chapter, some theories and approaches to motivation have been presented and analyzed. Certainly, there is a relation between concepts that underlie motivation. For example, dopamine release when people are about to have a learning experience perceived better than usual has a strong relationship with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. In other words, there is an internal stimulus of learning when a situation is challenging. This balanced learning stimulus is in the middle of one that may be perceived as too easy or boring and another that might be too difficult or frustrating, which is, consequently, connected to an i+1 scaffolding.

Nevertheless, a novel learning situation might be related to peers' or the teacher's level of support. This social motivation also connects with Vygotsky's social constructivism, as knowledge is a construct based on one's prior knowledge and mediated by oral interaction during collaborative learning processes. This social support for learning influences the creation of a growth mindset, a positive expectation of one's learning abilities and potential, which is a pivotal element in students' willingness to learn and their language attitude. Additionally, social motivation influences one of the elements of reciprocal determinism, the environment, which impacts on personality and behavior. Therefore, it is correct to affirm that extrinsic motivation has a considerable influence on intrinsic motivation, and it is a factor that increases or decreases the desire to do something. It is worth considering the connection among all the elements analyzed before to maximize the motivation effect on learning, including response inhibition which is associated with attention and discipline and is a better predictor of academic achievement in university students rather than their general intelligence level (IQ). Regarding university students, there could be different important reasons to motivate them to learn a foreign language. Even though they might vary for each student based on personal factors, for example, those related to Bandura's (1983) reciprocal determinism theory, some reasons could be general for all English language learners at the university level. The first reason to motivate university students to learn English is using the language to satisfy personal needs. Language and, consequently, communication has a pivotal role in the ability to adapt to the environment. This is because through language, people can express

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needs and ideas, and it contributes to satisfying physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization needs (Maslow, 2017). Indeed, the ability to communicate increases the chances of adaptability and survival as it is a transversal axis to help to satisfy all the basic human needs.

The second reason to motivate university students to learn English is that language is associated with developing cognitive abilities like the brain's executive functions-EFs (Pluck et al., 2023). EFs allow learners to "mentally play with ideas; taking the time to think before acting; meeting novel, unanticipated challenges; resisting temptations; and staying focused" (Diamond, 2013, p. 135). For example, English learners should use their cognitive flexibility to plan and distribute their physical and cognitive effort to complete successfully different activities (homework from several subjects, paying attention to the teacher and taking important notes, reading an article, and using the important ideas to write an essay, creatively thinking "outside the box," seeing anything from different perspectives, and quickly and flexibly adapting to changed circumstance) (Diamond, 2013, p. 135). Repeated practice through the language learning process exercises executive functions and improves cognitive abilities (Diamond, 2013).

The third reason is linked to the improvement of cognitive abilities. The Learning process should help students to identify their learning styles or students' learning preferences. Identifying them is important because, in that way, students could realize and reflect on their own learning; in other words, they will develop their metacognitive skills (Luttrell et al., 2013). Once students identify the learning activities that are more effective for them, they can become independent learners. Teacher guidance is essential  even when students have started to improve their metacognitive skills because, sometimes, students get fixed in only one method of learning. For example, they may identify visuals as one of their preferred learning activities and avoid having other kinds of input as it might be considered, a priori, not practical. Teachers should consider the brain's ability to learn to allow students to see that even when identifying a preferred learning input, it is worth trying others. Metacognition can impact learning habits that could be extrapolated to any other learning desires and consequently contributes to students' personal growth. Becoming better and independent learners makes it possible to feel more comfortable in the academic setting, and it has an impact on students' self-perception towards

their learning capacity (adopt a growth mindset) and also on their willingness to learn (Luttrell et al., 2013), which is an essential element of motivation. The last reason is based on the idea that language, and specifically English, lets people exchange ideas and share knowledge. In this way, one can learn about another's culture and share his own.

## Conclusions

Language attitudes are conceived as the perceptions of the language. This involves behaviors, valuations, and feelings. In this chapter, language attitudes were analyzed along with the essential components related to it, which are also related to the integrativeness elements of motivation in second language learning stated by Gardner.

Some crucial components of language attitudes were the use of language and the careful use of the norms while using it. It also explained what attitudes university students have. Most of them identified they had positive attitudes toward English as they expressed interest in learning English and understanding the culture attached to the language. In all these cases, context and surroundings played a pivotal role in developing these language attitudes, which can lead to the attitude change in the interaction with meaningful experiences. These experiences can modify how learners act, think, and value a language, concluding with the motivation that students must act or learn in a determined way. Language attitudes and motivation are two critical features in language learning. With attitudes, students have a perception of the language. Positive perceptions toward the English language can lead to the motivation students need to learn the language, making students realize the reasons, objectives, and benefits of learning English. Since most of the time, these types of processes are developed in class, the context in which they are developed plays an essential influence on how these attitudes and motivation direct students in their learning.

Considering that experience is a determinant factor of learning, the influence of the classroom environment was analyzed. Educators have a crucial role in creating an environment that promotes the collaboration required in language learning and

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acquisition. This vital educator's role connects with Bandura's reciprocal determinism theory, which shows the effect of behavioral, personal, and environmental factors on humans' conduct in general and specifically in the educational setting. The effect on the classroom environment also contributes to the understanding of motivation as one critical element in classroom performance when it has a connection with other elements like those mentioned in Bandura's theory.

When studying the effect of motivation on second language acquisition in university students, the difference between working memory and response inhibition was noted. This distinction is relevant because response inhibition is the brain's executive function that correlates more with classroom performance in university students even more than IQ. In turn, response inhibition is a cognitive ability that allows learners to be focused, maintain and improve attention. Another analysis was the components related to students' motivation and the importance these components have in the academic setting. Different types of motivation were detailed in the last section of this chapter, along with the most critical aspects related to them. For example, intrinsic motivation includes the dopamine release in novelty and challenging learning situations related to the Zone of Proximal Development. Another element in intrinsic motivation was the growth mindset, related to how learners perceive their abilities. The extrinsic motivation was mainly analyzed from the self-determinism theory. The social motivation included the theories of modelling and group interaction. The transcendent motivation was analyzed as a need to go beyond self-centered intrinsic and extrinsic motivation elements and include, for example, others' development and well-being, which is a characteristic of transformative educators. To conclude, it can be said that teachers' direct influence on classroom environment, content and methodology will also impact the students' attitudes toward English language, students' desire to learn and motivation (Intrinsic, Extrinsic, Social, Transcendent).

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# Chapter III

# English language learning motivation in higher education: Research-related experiences, methodology, and study findings

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# Introduction

In the previous chapters, critical theoretical concepts were analyzed, including internal and external sources of motivation; importance, characteristics, and benefits of motivating learning environments; motivating students to learn in higher education institutions; several different aspects of motivation in higher education, such as the importance of the teacher's attitude, current trends, common problems and key advantages; university students' attitudes toward foreign language learning; factors associated with motivation; types of motivation; motivation in language learning and teaching; student motivation; cognitive functions related to motivation; importance of motivation on foreign language acquisition at the university level; and many more. With this in mind, all the topics examined in chapters 1 and 2 provide an essential conceptual, theoretical basis that better prepare the readers for chapter 3, as the present chapter is mainly concerned with disseminating and discussing key study results drawn out of a research project on student motivation in English learning at the university level within the Ecuadorian context of higher education.

To begin with, an outline is given regarding the planning and conducting a small-scale survey study focused on motivation in English language learning at the following three Ecuadorian public universities: Universidad Nacional de Educación

(UNAE), Universidad de las Fuerzas Armadas ESPE, and Universidad Técnica de Ambato (UTA). This account provides critical details related to the small study that laid the foundation for a two-year full-scale research project conducted at the nationwide level. This means that the readers are walked from a small-scale investigation to a mixed-methods large-scale research project, as the latter was conducted in over 20 Ecuadorian universities located in different regions, namely the Amazon, the Pacific Coast, and the Highlands.

First of all, the large-scale research project was aimed to determine quantitatively the main factors that motivated undergraduate students to learn English while they undertake higher education studies. Secondly, it further explored the quantitative results through a qualitative phase, which consisted of focus group discussions (FGDs) and individual in-depth interviews. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods helped to gain deep insights, detailed explanations, and thorough reasons about the essential motivational factors determined after the completion of questionnaires by university teachers of English and EFL undergraduate students.

As a result, the data sets gathered through the administered questionnaires, FGDs, and individual interviews permitted us to gain an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of motivation in the teaching-learning process of English among university students. The research-based findings included in the present chapter could be helpful for different stakeholders to make effective, informed decisions that boost student motivation toward successful English learning at institutions of higher education. Consequently, meaningful educational implications could be derived from the presented study results that could help maximize student language learning by creating the best instructional practices that genuinely respond to university students' needs, motivations, interests, and goals in today's world.

# Student motivation in English learning at Ecuadorian universities: From a small-scale survey study to a full-scale inter-university research project

In 2018, a small-scale survey study was planned and conducted collaboratively by university instructors in English education from three universities in the Highlands region of Ecuador. This survey study investigated what factors motivated English learning among undergraduate students enrolled in the three public universities the instructors worked for. The survey study can be viewed as a research initiative that helped EFL instructors from the three investigated universities make research-based decisions at the classroom level. The primary study findings, in which 422 undergraduate students of English took part by completing an online questionnaire, showed that many students felt motivated to learn the language to achieve short-term goals, such as travelling and communicating in the target language. As indicated by the surveyed students, the attainment of long-term goals, including graduate degrees and better job opportunities, impacted their motivation in English language learning. It was also found that the role of teachers and a practical language teaching methodology were critical components of students' motivation and attitudes toward successful foreign language learning (Ortega et al., 2019). In December of the same year, 2018, a call for the submission of research projects was opened under the name of "Convocatoria a Proyectos de Investigación 2018-2019: Por una Transformación Educativa" by the Research Office of the Universidad Nacional de Educación (UNAE). The proposal of a full-scale inter-university research project, consisting of quantitative and qualitative phases, was submitted to the call mentioned above, and such a research proposal was grounded in the small survey study described previously.

It should be noted that the small-scale study paved the way or provided the basis for the full-scale mixed-methods research proposal, as the former study afforded important baseline research and even an instrument, namely a questionnaire that was then expanded in the quantitative phase to investigate more variables on motivation in English learning within the nationwide context of Ecuadorian higher education. The main objective of the full-scale research project proposal was to shed more light on the topic of motivational factors in English language learning among

Ecuadorian university students through the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods. In doing so, numerical and nonnumerical data from different stakeholders, namely students, EFL instructors, university language center directors, and experts, were gathered and analyzed to understand the research topic in a more in-depth manner. The proposal of the full-scale study titled *Factors that Motivate English Learning of University Students in Ecuador: Researching the Perspectives of Different Educational Stakeholders* was approved in February 2020, and the research study was carried out within a period of two years (2020-2022) by instructors of these five Ecuadorian universities with the collaboration of UNAE undergraduate students: Universidad Nacional de Educación (UNAE), Universidad Regional Amazónica (URA) Ikiam, Universidad Técnica de Machala (UTMACH), Universidad de Cuenca (UdeCuenca) and Universidad Nacional de Loja (UNL).

## Overall research methodology, study design, and philosophical underpinnings

As indicated, a mixed-methods approach directed the full-scale or large-scale research project, and an explanatory sequential design was utilized. According to Creswell (2015), "combining both forms of data provide a better understanding of a research problem than quantitative or quantitative data alone" (p. 22). The main quantitative results were investigated more thoroughly through these selected qualitative research techniques: FGDs and individual interviews. In this regard, the research project employed a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design, and according to Creswell (2014), a study is considered "explanatory because the initial quantitative data results are explained further with the qualitative data. It is considered sequential because the initial quantitative phase is followed by the qualitative phase" (pp.15-16). It should also be pointed out that the gathering of qualitative data had particular emphasis in the full-scale research project; therefore, these kinds of data were extensively gathered. The main reason for this decision was that qualitative data were not collected during the small-scale study described earlier. It means that priority or increased weight was given to qualitative data over quantitative data (Quan → QUAL), and there was also a sequential gathering of quantitative and qualitative information. This means that quantitative data were secondary to qualitative data within the context of the full-scale research project.

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It should be noted that pragmatism as a research paradigm has its basis in the philosophical work of pragmatism and, as a consequence, favors the use of multiple methods (of data collection). The beginning of pragmatism resulted from a joint agreement among scholars reluctant to accept traditional beliefs about how reality, knowledge, and inquiry were viewed and constructed. With this in mind, pragmatists rejected the view that the complexity of reality can be understood by social science research that employs one scientific method only (Maxcy, 2003). Further, it has been observed that pragmatism is associated with "mixed-methods or multiple-methods research, and as such, it is a philosophical underpinning for mixed methods studies" (Creswell, 2014, p.10). Indeed, a research study directed by this paradigm thoroughly examines a research problem through pluralistic approaches, allowing for a better understanding of a studied problem in social science research (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019).

Now, it will briefly be highlighted how the worldview of pragmatism influenced the choice of mixed-methods research employed within the full-scale inter-university project. In the first place, the research topic of motivation in foreign language learning suggested a pragmatic claim of knowledge; such a claim is grounded in the results of various research studies and crucial theoretical concepts examined during the project's planning phase. The reviewed literature highlighted the central role of motivation in learning foreign languages, especially English. Furthermore, from an epistemological standpoint, the researchers of the inter-university project shared the view that reality may be both objective and subjective, and these views mainly had an impact on the methodological choices of the phases and subphases of the project where quantitative and qualitative data were gathered.

Concerning ontology, facts, and truths were generated through the gathering and analysis of numerical or quantitative data, which emerged as a result of the study findings gained from different statistical tests. In addition, meaningful, solid findings were yielded by giving voice to different groups of key stakeholders, namely students, teachers, language center directors, national experts, and international experts. In this regard, their viewpoints, opinions, and experiences, that is, their detailed responses were of great importance within the context of the present research project. As a result of conducting the FGDs and in-depth interviews, detailed explanations, reasons, and further details were unfolded to a great extent, and these data provided

a more thorough understanding of the quantitative data gathered during the project's first phase. All in all, the systematic utilization of multiple quantitative and qualitative research methods was essential, as such employment of methods was in line with the notions advocated by the philosophical worldview of pragmatism.

## Participants and data collection

As highlighted previously, the large-scale inter-university research project employed mixed methods that consisted of two interrelated phases, one quantitative phase in which 2077 English students from nine Ecuadorian universities took part by voluntarily completing a comprehensive questionnaire in an online modality. In the same phase, EFL instructors from twenty-two Ecuadorian universities filled out an online questionnaire. Out of the one hundred nine respondents, ninety-four were Ecuadorian teachers, and fifteen teachers were from the following countries: Venezuela, the United States, Great Britain, Cuba, Canada, and Nicaragua. The construction of the non-experimental questionnaires went through the stages of planning, validating, piloting, revising, and coming up with final versions. The questionnaires administered to the students and teachers had different sections, attempting to find out critical sociodemographic and academic-related information, as well as to determine the essential factors that motivate English language learning while students undertake their university studies, as perceived by these two groups of respondents: students and English instructors. The questionnaires, applied to these two groups of respondents, had also sections that were aimed at gathering data concerning the main pedagogical and didactic factors that impact student motivation in English university classrooms. It is imperative to note that these two groups of respondents were asked for their consent electronically at the beginning of the questionnaires before they went on to complete them.

Next, a qualitative phase followed, which consisted of conducting eight focus group discussions (FGDs) with students from the five participating universities (UNAE, URA Ikiam, UTMACH, UdeCuenca, and UNL) of the research project under examination. First, five FGDs were carried out with students only from each

of the universities mentioned above. Additionally, three more FGDs were conducted, in which students from the five universities were mixed. It is important to note that Informed Consent letters were signed by the students before they participated in the focus group sessions. Ecuadorian students enrolled in English courses offered by their home universities took part in the focus groups, whose age range was 17-24 years old in low and medium socioeconomic levels. The eight FGDs were conducted with 5 to 9 undergraduate students through the use of the Zoom video conferencing platform.

The last component of the qualitative stage was concerned with carrying out in-depth individual interviews with three key groups of participants. The first group of key informants was composed of eight EFL teachers, the second group consisted of eight university language center directors, and the third group of nine experts of EFL higher education (six Ecuadorian experts and three international experts); these twenty-five participants also agreed to be interviewed by signing Informed Consent letters. The twenty-five interviews lasted between 30 and 40 minutes and were conducted through Zoom.

The developed interview guides, used in the FGDs and in-depth interviews, were comprised of essential questions that were aimed at better understanding and further exploring key results drawn out of the quantitative phase. Thus, the selected qualitative data collection methods allowed us to gain detailed explanations, thorough reasons and unrevealed insights about key findings that arose after the administration of the questionnaires to the 2077 students and 109 teachers. Both guides, employed in the qualitative phase, were reviewed by experts in English language education and educational research, whose input and feedback were used to make crucial enhancements before their final versions were drafted.

## Data analysis

As a sequential explanatory mixed methods design was adopted in the study, quantitative and qualitative data sets were analyzed, and both of them enabled an in-depth interpretation of the phenomenon under investigation. Descriptive statistics were used for analyzing the quantitative data with the support of the software R.

Specifically, parametric tests were applied to examine the data and a comparative analysis of two independent samples, namely undergraduate students of English and EFL teachers. In order to analyze the qualitative data, an inductive approach to data analysis was implemented with the support of the NVivo software version 12. Thomas (2016) asserted that inductive analysis is first developed by reading raw data in a careful manner. It should be noted that before the process of data analysis began, the transcripts of the eight FGDs were anonymized. To start with, the researchers gained an in-depth, solid understanding by reading the raw data multiple times. Consequently, concepts and topics began to emerge based on a careful interpretation. In addition, patterns and similarities in ideas and issues arose after examining the participants' viewpoints concerning the questions posed during the FGDs and interviews. Secondly, segments of the raw data were analyzed qualitatively in an inductive manner to search for recurring patterns. Thus, this process involved identifying and coding patterns through in vivo coding. The generated in vivo codes based on the participants' views were later refined and classified into sub-themes. This type of data analysis revealed different sub-themes that were further grouped into general themes, as shown in tables 9 and 10.

## Research findings at a glance: Key quantitative and qualitative results

The study results concerning intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in foreign language learning are first disseminated in the present chapter. The questions, which comprised the category pertaining to these two types of motivations that impact English learning, were measured through a Likert-scale system ranging from totally disagree to totally agree. Thus, Table 1 shows the thirteen most influential factors that impact learner motivation in English learning according to the perceptions of the 2077 surveyed students and the 109 surveyed teachers. In this regard, 2077 undergraduate students from nine Ecuadorian universities voluntarily completed an online questionnaire. Also, the questionnaire was administered to 109 EFL university instructors teaching English in twenty-two institutions of higher education located in the regions of Pacific Coast, Amazon, and Highlands.

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**Table 1.** Essential factors that impact motivation toward English learning, as recognized by students and teachers in Ecuador.

| Learning English as a motivating factor to | Partici-pant type | N | Mean score | SD | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| meet and build relationships with people around the world. | Students | 2077 | 4,42 | 0,855 | 0,181 | 0,857 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 4,40 | 0,883 | | |
| travel to countries with English as the official language. | Students | 2077 | 4,35 | 0,906 | 4,357 | 0,000 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 3,96 | 0,912 | | |
| study abroad at universities where English is the medium of instruction. | Students | 2077 | 4,34 | 0,896 | -0,170 | 0,865 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 4,36 | 0,967 | | |
| gain knowledge about a wide range of topics. | Students | 2077 | 4,34 | 0,874 | 0,772 | 0,440 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 4,28 | 0,951 | | |
| access to more reading resources related to programs of study and professional careers. | Students | 2077 | 4,33 | 0,891 | -0,898 | 0,369 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 4,41 | 0,905 | | |
| grow into a more knowledgeable person. | Students | 2077 | 4,29 | 0,895 | 3,189 | 0,001 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 4,01 | 0,918 | | |
| understand materials for English language enjoyment, such as reading texts, music, and films. | Students | 2077 | 4,28 | 0,895 | 2,937 | 0,003 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 4,02 | 0,962 | | |
| develop communication skills to talk to anglophones. | Students | 2077 | 4,25 | 0,911 | 1,986 | 0,047 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 4,07 | 0,879 | | |
| attain high-income jobs. | Students | 2077 | 4,16 | 0,942 | -0,407 | 0,684 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 4,19 | 0,918 | | |
| better enjoy literary and art works from the English-speaking world. | Students | 2077 | 4,13 | 0,936 | 9,130 | 0,000 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 3,28 | 1,046 | | |
| meet the established foreign language graduation requirement. | Students | 2077 | 4,09 | 0,987 | -3,011 | 0,003 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 4,39 | 0,902 | | |
| have more job advantages in the future. | Students | 2077 | 4,08 | 1,010 | -2,515 | 0,012 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 4,33 | 0,872 | | |
| learn about socio-cultural topics from English-speaking countries and their people. | Students | 2077 | 3,90 | 0,965 | 2,856 | 0,004 |
| | Teachers | 109 | 3,62 | 0,989 | | |
| | Teachers | 109 | 3,49 | 0,996 | | |

As indicated before, the survey data refer to the main intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that influence students' English language learning at the university level based on the ranked importance given by both students and teachers in the Ecuadorian system of higher education. The top-rated factor by the 2077 surveyed students across the nine universities in Ecuador was that they felt motivated to learn English because they want to meet and build relationships with people around the world (mean score = 4,42). This factor also had high importance among the 109 surveyed teachers from the 22 Ecuadorian universities (mean score = 4,40). With regard to the surveyed teachers, the most critical factor impacting student motivation toward English language learning was as follows: English facilitates access to more reading resources related to programs of study and professional careers (mean score =4,41), and this was the fifth most important factor that motivates English learning among the surveyed students (mean score = 4,33).

Besides the general table described above, the seven major factors that influence students' motivation from different Ecuadorian universities are presented in several individual tables (from table 2 to table 8). These tables contain data extracted from the questionnaires that were applied to two groups of participants in a disaggregated way. Before analyzing each of the main seven factors, it is essential to highlight that the percentages included in the fourth column in the following tables show the total percentages from the second and third columns. That means the two columns corresponding to agree and totally agree were grouped because both show similar levels of concordance but in slightly different levels. The combined percentages in both measurement levels in the seven tables can help us better understand the essential factors that affect meaningfully the motivation regarding English learning among students in the Ecuadorian higher education system.

Table 2.
Table 3.

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Table 2. Meet and build relationships with people around the world.

| Research participants | Agree (A) | Totally agree (TA) | A+TA |
|---|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate students of English | 738 | 1174 | 1912 |
| | 35,5% | 56,5% | 92,1% |
| EFL university teachers | 34 | 63 | 97 |
| | 31,2% | 57,8% | 89,0% |
| Total amount of students + teachers | | | 2.009 |

The results presented in Table 2 show that the factor of *meeting and building relationships with people around the world*, from the 2077 surveyed students, 1912 (92.1%) agreed with this factor as the most important one to learn English at the university level. In the same way, 97 (89.0%) out of 109 surveyed teachers demonstrated a high level of agreement in relation to the same factor.

Table 3. Travel to countries with English as the official language.

| Research participants | Agree (A) | Totally agree (TA) | A+TA |
|---|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate students of English | 745 | 1113 | 1858 |
| | 35,9% | 53,6% | 89,5% |
| EFL university teachers | 53 | 31 | 84 |
| | 48,6% | 28,4% | 77,1% |
| Total amount of students + teachers | | | 1.942 |

The results presented in table 3 show that 1858 surveyed students (89.5%) agreed with the following statement: *traveling to countries with English as the official language*, and they classified it as the second most important factor. In the same way, 84 surveyed teachers (77.1%) showed a high agreement level in relation to this particular factor.

**Table 4.** Study abroad at universities where English is the medium of instruction

| Research participants | Agree (A) | Totally agree (TA) | A+TA |
|---|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate students of English | 756 | 1093 | 1849 |
| | 36,4% | 52,6% | 89,0% |
| EFL university teachers | 28 | 65 | 93 |
| | 25,7% | 59,6% | 85,3% |
| Total amount of students + teachers | | | 1942 |

The presented results in table 4 indicate that *studying abroad at universities where English is the medium of instruction* was the third most important factor among the survey respondents, that is, 1849 students (89.0%) and 93 teachers (85.3%) agreed with this statement.

**Table 5**. Gain knowledge about a wide range of topics.

| Research participants | Agree (A) | Totally agree (TA) | A+TA |
|---|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate students of English | 825 | 1056 | 1881 |
| | 39,7% | 50,8% | 90,6% |
| EFL university teachers | 36 | 56 | 92 |
| | 33,0% | 51,4% | 84,4% |
| Total amount of students + teachers | | | 1973 |

The results presented in table 5 indicate that the fourth most important motivational factor among the surveyed students and teachers was that English allows individuals to *gain knowledge about a wide range of topics*. In this sense, 1881 students (90.6%) and 92 teachers (84.4%) demonstrated their agreement to this claim.

Table 6.
Table 7.
Table 8.

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Table 6. Access to more reading resources related to programs of study and professional careers.

| Research participants | Agree (A) | Totally agree (TA) | A+TA |
|---|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate students of English | 801 | 1064 | 1865 |
| | 38,6% | 51,2% | 89,8% |
| EFL university teachers | 32 | 65 | 97 |
| | 29,4% | 59,6% | 89,0% |
| Total amount of students + teachers | | | 1962 |

The presented results in table 6 display that the fifth most important motivational factor to learn English was concerned with *accessing more reading resources related to programs of study and professional careers.* This means that 1895 surveyed students (89.8%) and 97 surveyed teachers (89.0%) agreed with this factor.

Table 7. Grow into a more knowledgeable person.

| Research participants | Agree (A) | Totally agree (TA) | A+TA |
|---|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate students of English | 824 | 1004 | 1828 |
| | 39,7% | 48,3% | 88,0% |
| EFL university teachers | 46 | 36 | 82 |
| | 42,2% | 33,0% | 75,2% |
| Total amount of students + teachers | | | 1910 |

The results in table 7 show that 1828 students (88,0%) and 82 teachers (75,2%) agreed that English helps to *grow into a more knowledgeable person.*

Table 8. Understand materials for English language enjoyment, such as reading texts, music, and films.

| Research participants | Agree (A) | Totally agree (TA) | A+TA |
|---|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate students of English | 883 | 969 | 1852 |
| | 42,5% | 46,7% | 89,2% |
| EFL university teachers | 43 | 39 | 82 |
| | 39,4% | 35,8% | 75,2% |
| Total amount of students + teachers | | | 1934 |

The results in table 8 indicate that 1852 students (89,2%) and 82 teachers (72,2%) agreed with the statement pertaining to *understanding materials for English language enjoyment, such as reading texts, music, and films*, which was also a motivational factor among the surveyed educational stakeholders within the Ecuadorian university context.

In addition to the administration of questionnaires, a qualitative study phase followed in which eight FGDs were first carried out in a virtual modality due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Students of English from different universities located in the Pacific Coast, the Highlands, and the Amazon regions of Ecuador took part in the FGDs, so a variety of viewpoints, opinions, and thoughts were explored and identified. In the table below, the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis process are presented to disseminate key findings from the conducted FGDs.

**Table 9.** Themes and sub-themes emerged out of the FGDs data analysis

| Themes | Sub-Themes |
|---|---|
| Traveling opportunities | Being able to understand English in other countries. |
| Opportunities to express themselves | Sharing what they think and what they know with others. |
| Self-improvement | Interest in learning by themselves through watching series and using apps. Ongoing interest since childhood. English as a way to improve today's society. |
| Cultural integration | English as a tool to understand and be part of different cultures. Expanding one's own culture. Coexisting with other cultures. Integration at the international level. |
| Requirement for graduation | Being able to pass mandatory English courses. Beliefs that not studying English means falling behind. Necessary to make progress in an undergraduate program. |
| Future studies | Longing to study for masters and Ph.D. programs. Desire to study major-related courses abroad. Desire to study online courses. |
| Job opportunities | English as a requirement in some jobs. Possibility of getting a better job. English as a way to expand to different career areas. |
| Impact of English on research-related activities | Most of the articles are published in English. Publishing articles and books in English are far-reaching. Internet-based tools are not always accurate for research endeavors. |

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As presented in the above table, the themes and sub-themes show that the primary motivations for students were traveling opportunities, opportunities to express themselves, self-improvement, cultural integration, English as a requirement for graduation, future studies, job opportunities, and the impact of English on research-related activities. Therefore, the information in this table outlines a summary of what motivates the interviewed students to learn English at the university level. It can be observed that students do not have only instrumental motivation but also reasons related to integrative motivation to learn the target language while pursuing their university careers. In other words, these results inform us about the crucial factors and their associated reasons that influence undergraduate students' motivation towards English learning in terms of instrumental and integrative motivation. In this sense, students consider the language as an essential instrument to achieve personal and professional goals as well as to integrate themselves into the culture of English-speaking countries in today's globalized world.

Furthermore, the FGDs data yielded that students were interested in learning by themselves through different recreational activities and materials while they are exposed to English in an informal and implicit manner. It was then essential for the interviewed students to enjoy recreational activities, such as using applications, watching movies, watching TV series and/or programs, listening to music, enjoying music in English, and even dancing. In general, the interviewed students agreed with the overarching idea that English is a global language, and it is everywhere at all times. Therefore, they can learn it through different non-academic and authentic materials, such as the above-mentioned ones. It was also found that many of the interviewed students have been naturally interested in authentic English materials since childhood. In this regard, in the FGDs, students explained that a key motivation to learn English was to understand not only academic materials but also non-academic materials, as these latter types of materials along with entertaining, recreational activities have a positive impact that keep students motivated towards learning English genuinely. For instance, the following quote captures the majority of the interviewed students' general views who took part in the FGDs regarding enjoying spare time activities and non-academic materials:

> We can see that the cultural burden of English-speaking communities is quite strong. A person may be motivated generally by academic development and career advancement, but an individual can also be

> motivated by music and the arts. These are particular interests that boost
> motivation among people these days, regardless of the fact whether they
> are university students or not . . . (FGD # 4)

Overall, the first themes in the table 9 refer to the integrative motivation theory
because of their close relationship to students' positive feelings and viewpoints
towards English learning, which seem to play an essential role in their lives. In
this regard, the interviewed students mentioned to feel motivated while thinking
of being understood, being integrated into a foreign community, and using English
for personal growth. The FGDs results highlighted that English allows students to
meet people from different cultures and interact with native speakers of this foreign
language with ease. In general, students believed it is a good idea to try to generate
relationships with native speakers, as this would allow them to practice the target
language in a genuine way. Therefore, it is helpful to know that not everything
for the interviewed students is about completing a mandatory course towards
graduation but attempting to master English to establish meaningful connections
with English-speaking cultures and beyond, too. Moreover, it should also be noted
that an interesting finding concerning the integrative motivation from the FGDs was
traveling opportunities, which also stood out in the results from the administered
questionnaire presented in this chapter previously. This confirms that traveling is a
big motivation for EFL students in the Ecuadorian higher education context. General
beliefs expressed by the interviewed students are captured in the below quotes:

> ... it would also be great to do some tourism and to travel to foreign
> countries, I do not know. It would be great to get there, get around the
> new places, and be able to interact with people who speak this language
> easily and fluently . . . (FGD # 7)

> One of my biggest dreams is to be able to travel the world, so I guess
> the English language is essential. My other motivation is to meet people
> because I like talking to people. (FGD # 1)

In addition, the themes from the table 9 are centered on instrumental motivation,
and these themes include critical notions about English learning in relation to the
achievement of different types of short-term and long-term goals. In this case, from
the interviewed students' perspective, English is considered a tool that can be used
to fulfill professional and educational purposes. Also, it should be stressed that

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students prefer taking English courses to fulfill one of their graduation requirements. Therefore, English is the most preferred foreign language among university students while undertaking their higher-education studies. That is to say, the students prefer to complete required English courses, as they view it as the primary foreign language and the language of universal communication. In the FGDs, students also expressed that English knowledge facilitates to develop better assignments during their college studies, and it helps them to gain a greater variety of insights that can be used in their future professional careers.

Additionally, the interviewed university students considered English is something indispensable in order to further their education and be able to study for a master's program, a doctoral program, and even different training courses outside Ecuador. This means that the FGDs data showed that English is essential because university students have the motivation to study abroad in the future to earn different types of graduate degrees and be able to undertake specialized postgraduate courses related to their areas of specialization. In fact, this is closely related to the idea of becoming more prepared to have better job opportunities in the future. Concerning instrumental motivation, learning English for future studies was a factor highlighted both in the FGDs and in the questionnaires, and it is essential to note that this is the third most important motivational factor in learning English among the surveyed research participants. One interviewed EFL university student discussed the importance of the English language for graduate studies in the following terms:

> . . . and if I graduate in a few years and want to study for a master's degree or anything else, so I will travel to another country where English is spoken. And I must know English well. (FGD # 8)

Moreover, students believed that the English language has such an essential role in the research field in general these days as well as in their university assignments, and they could better work on different tasks by using their English knowledge. In this sense, the FGD findings showed that English learning helps students have more advantages over those who do not use their English to carry out real-world research tasks and learning activities centered on their areas of study. The results also indicated that students consider that most of the best articles are published in English, as publishing in English is far-reaching. Overall, FGD data showed that students hold in high esteem papers in English due to the fact that these kinds of

papers help them to better complete their assignments for their different university courses. This is mainly because it allows them to access different sources of up-to-date information to enrich their research-related assignments. It is evident that the interviewed students prefer reading sources in English for the aforementioned reasons, as observed by an EFL university student in the following quote:

> . . . sooner or later, most students will be willing to study English. It will be necessary rather than a choice since most articles with the best information are usually in English. Therefore, understanding English is something basic for us. (FGD # 5)

As pointed out earlier, the qualitative data of the present research study were also gathered by means of in-depth interviews conducted to key informants individually, namely EFL university teachers, directors of higher education language centers, national experts, and international experts. The individual interviews were conducted in order to further explore relevant, key quantitative findings drawn out of the administered questionnaires, and the interviews provided thorough, detailed explanations from the research participants' own views, thoughts, and perspectives. The table below shows the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the inductive thematic analysis with the support of the NVivo software.

**Table 10**. Themes and sub-themes emerged out of the in-depth interview data analysis

| Themes | Sub-Themes |
|---|---|
| Raising awareness of the importance of English learning | Implementation of initiatives to raise awareness among university students. Importance of learning English for meaningful and practical purposes. |
| English as a way to get better job opportunities | The need to practice authentic oral communication for work-related tasks. English knowledge allows students to perform well in different job positions. Alignment between English lessons and professional careers for practical purposes. |
| Motivating classroom environment | Students' ideas and recommendations help to make the classroom more pleasant. Encouraging students to self-express in the classroom boosts their motivation. A pleasant learning environment where mutual learning takes place. |

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| English language courses within the curriculum of majors | Concerns about the omission of English from undergraduate programs' curriculum. Self-contradiction about English language requirement towards graduation. Positive views of the inclusion of general English and ESP into each university major. |
|---|---|
| The impact of technology on learner motivation | Visual-audio technologies for the English university classrooms. Positive impact of technological resources on motivation. Free online interactive teaching-learning material. |
| Internalization of higher education as a large-scale step that motivates English learning | Benefits of internationalization at higher education institutions. Necessity of creating and strengthening agreements with foreign universities. Opportunities for students to further their education through internalization initiatives. |

The results of the one-on-one interviews suggested that several aspects should be taken into account to motivate students to learn English within the classrooms of institutions of higher education. In this sense, although teachers, the classroom environment, the resources, the materials, among others play a fundamental role in learner motivation, these are not the only crucial elements. It is also paramount the attitudes and predispositions that students have in the teaching-learning process of a foreign language. According to the interviewed participants, some students view English as a requirement for their degrees, and others see little relevance of this language because they consider that it does not have applicability or usefulness in their immediate daily life or their future professional careers. Therefore, the individual interview results revealed the need for institutions at the tertiary level to implement initiatives that raise awareness among the college student population about the importance of learning English for meaningful and practical purposes in the near future. The general views concerning these issues are conveyed in the following quotes from the interviews with an Ecuadorian expert and a language director center:

> . . . higher education institutions need to train students in a critical way, letting them know about the role of English as a language that dominates the world, and when they use English, they know what benefits they could have. . . (In-depth interview # 11)

> First of all, we would talk about workshops and conferences, and authorities should promote them, and their focus on the importance of learning

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> English. I think these would significantly engage students, because, I repeat it is different to say that this foreign language is a requirement and that is it, but instead we can have different academic events where we can raise awareness of the importance of English learning. . . (In-depth interview # 17)

As discussed previously in the FGD results, it was revealed that students believe that the English language is an essential requirement in today's job market, and this foreign language would give them the possibility of getting a better job and expanding to different career areas. These results were corroborated in the individual interviews, as university English teachers commented that students, who are about to graduate, are often already employed and have foreigners among their clients, so they need to practice authentic oral communication to perform well in their jobs. The interview data showed that hoping to get good jobs is a primary motivation to learn English among university students, and a mastery of English will allow them to be able to function well in their areas of knowledge and in different job positions, as well. With regard to this, an international expert pointed out critical guidelines on the use of English in the university classroom, which could help students achieve their job aspirations:

> . . . there must be an alignment between what students are required to learn in the English class with their current college careers because one of the most critical aspects of the widely used communicative approach is that students can use English for something practical and that something must be related to their university studies . . . (In-depth interview # 3)

Moreover, the in-depth interview results indicated that teachers need to consider their students' ideas and recommendations to make classroom instruction more effective, and this should be seen as an essential part of motivating students to learn English. When teachers take into consideration students' input, a motivating classroom environment is more likely to be built. Additionally, the interview results emphasized that allowing students to express themselves and considering what they would like to learn are meaningful ways to spark their motivation in the English classroom. Overall, the interviewed participants provided meaningful insights into the importance of creating a pleasant learning environment where students can learn not only from their teachers but also from their classmates. According to the

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interviewees, it is essential to be open to incorporating EFL university students' ideas and suggestions into the English classes, which can be done through both informal and formal pedagogical practices. Thus, an EFL teacher discussed some key views in the following terms:

> . . . teachers should be open and be aware that students can suggest things. For instance, we have a curriculum that is not a straitjacket. For example, at the beginning of the semester, small surveys could be applied to know what students want to study, and then the findings can be taken into account for planning purposes . . . (In-depth interview # 7)

Furthermore, the in-depth interview data stressed that students are conscious of the importance of studying English to meet graduation requirements without much difficulty. Thus, teachers and language center directors are worried that the English language could either be part of the curriculum of each university career or not. Therefore, even if students have instrumental motivation for learning English to graduate, the interviewed participants consider that the non-compulsory incorporation of English into the curriculum is a self-contradictory issue. Moreover, the interview results emphasized that English must be returned to each major's curriculum under general English or English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction because this policy has more advantages than disadvantages for student learning. The following quotes from a language center director and an international expert encapsulate the issue being described:

> Self-contradictory as it may sound, English language learning did not need to be part of undergraduate programs' curriculum any longer when mastering a foreign language became a graduation requirement for students. However, how logical is that kind of decision? Now, in order to meet such requirements, students could either study a foreign language at their own university language centers or at private institutions, too, and this means as they wish. (In-depth interview # 6)

> English programs must be turned from simple general English, happening now, to something more professional-oriented with an academic vision of English. Academic English could help students find the tools to develop more professionally and academically. (In-depth interview # 5)

Additionally, the interview results indicated that using technological resources for educational purposes helps promote student motivation toward language learning more authentically and naturally. More and more often, visual and audio technologies are commonly used in English university classrooms; these are mainly used as aids in teaching and learning the target language so that students better understand the learning content. It should be noted that the most cited materials were Ted Talks, podcasts, and YouTube videos among the interviewees. Further, the participants admitted that virtual learning environments, apps, game-based tasks, online activities, and interactive platforms impact motivation positively toward learning the target language. It was highlighted that authentic, and up-to-date materials are what students like the most, and this type of material is available for all language skills. For instance, there is free, authentic and interactive material for developing students' reading and listening skills. This type of material can be employed within class periods and the world beyond the classroom, that is, within students' daily lives for meaningful purposes. One of the interviewed language center directors reaffirmed this in the following way:

> For example, Ted talks are materials that students enjoy because they learn vocabulary and new things and because it is happening now. It's very up-to-date material . . . (In-depth interview # 8)

Lastly, the interview results highlighted the importance of the internationalization of Ecuadorian higher education institutions as a large-scale initiative that could significantly increase motivation among English language learners. The benefits generated by the internationalization of higher education have become a topic of government agenda and an essential topic that has attracted the attention of many sectors worldwide, according to the participants. More importantly, the results stressed that the benefits and advantages behind this internationalization would have a central role in the motivation towards English learning among Ecuadorian undergraduate students. In this sense, the most cited benefits of internationalization were pointed out as follows: student mobility or exchanges with Anglo-Saxon universities where English is used as the medium of instruction. The findings confirmed a general perception that the authorities must establish and strengthen international agreements for exchanges to take place more often, and in turn, this will motivate students to a greater extent. Consequently, they can have more opportunities to go to a foreign

country for several different educational purposes, and they will be highly motivated to learn more, acquire new knowledge, and enhance their education overseas. Two of the interviewed Ecuadorian experts explained their viewpoints in the following words:

> . . . internationalization is like a condition that our universities require (. . .), this internationalization motivates students to study abroad, especially in foreign institutions where English is the medium or vehicle of knowledge transmission and it helps them access to more knowledge. Therefore, English becomes an instrument – a fundamental instrument for learning more, indeed . . . (In-depth interview # 1)

> More types of exchanges with other universities should be implemented, possibly with universities not only from the United States but also Canada and the United Kingdom. It is a little complicated, as many economic resources are required. But it is for me one of the best ways to motivate students, and they will be in contact with English on a daily basis . . . (In-depth interview # 20)

## Discussion

The study results put forward that students have a solid extrinsic motivation derived from their present and future needs; in this case, the intellectual, educational, and labor goals that they wish to achieve, which coincide with the results obtained in previous studies (Adiele & Nath, 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Precisely, the students who were part of the study felt motivated to learn the language because of the benefits that this language provides them for their current and future life, such as being able to read and understand the information in English related to their careers, access to study programs and scholarships abroad, access better jobs thanks to their knowledge of the language, or even less formal things, such as being able to interact with people from other countries. These results are in line with what was presented by the study of Ghanea, Pisheh, and Ghanea Ghanea (2011). Furthermore, as Frey and Fisher's (2010) study explained, students' motivation depends on how meaningful, relevant, and valuable the learning is to their short- and long-term needs. These results are closely related to what was revealed in the present study since most students are

motivated to learn English because of the usefulness of English for their future studies and upcoming professional careers.

According to the research participants, it is also imperative to highlight that travelling abroad is one of the most important factors in terms of intrinsic motivation. This is in line with the findings of Carreira (2011), Carreira (2012) and Sun and Gao (2020) who affirmed that interest in foreign countries and the concept of being able to socialize naturally with foreigners influence students' motivation to learn English as a foreign language. In this context, it is relevant for university English teachers to create scenarios in which students practice real-life situations, such as field trips, conversations with native speakers, and other meaningful tasks in which students can use the target language authentically. Mainly, these aspects focus on instrumental motivation and have been highlighted in previous studies conducted by Kyriacou and Kobori (1998), Kormos and Kiddle (2013), and Yu (2019).

Further, the results obtained have revealed that the use of technology can encourage creativity, student participation, improve content explanation, and enhance motivation in general towards English learning. These insights are consistent with the findings in Lee and Hsieh's study (2019). Likewise, as evidenced in the present study results, it is essential to employ diverse technological resources to motivate English learning among today's generation of students. Therefore, using a diversity of technological resources and devices provides meaningful and practical alternatives to boost learner motivation in the digital age, both inside and outside the classroom. As pointed out by results of several studies, it is critical in today's language learning classrooms the use of mobile devices (Chung et al. 2019), online games (Dehghanzadeh et al., 2021 & Bado, 2022), and other digital resources for educational purposes (Wang & Chen, 2020; Bailey et al., 2021; Yang, Chen & Hung, 2022).

Further outstanding results of the present study are related to the internationalization of Ecuadorian universities. In this sense, the interview results emphasized that the changes, challenges, and advantages that internationalization brings to the educational system has become an important topic because it has a central role on student motivation in English learning. There are several studies that support these findings; for example, the study results by Law (2016) indicate that different aspects of internationalization must be taken into account, such as the association between institutions, transnational education, increasing number of

individuals who move from one country to another to study (e.g., outgoing and incoming student mobility). It can be added the results of the study by Altbach and Knight (2007), who showed that internationalization brings many advantages, including commercial assets, knowledge, language acquisition, curricular improvement based on international perspectives, etc. Likewise, it is crucial to consider the results of the Top Global University Project conducted by the Japanese Ministry of Education to internationalize Japan's higher education by creating globally oriented universities. In this project, effective, meaningful foreign language teaching and learning play a crucial role, which helps universities to be more global (Rose & McKinley, 2018). These results are consistent with what has been observed in previous studies, where the instruction of English language subjects has been fundamental in universities in China, Japan, and the Netherlands, which has attracted lots of international students, promoted internationalization of the curriculum, and executed an upgrade of quality standards (Huang, 2006).

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Motivation plays an essential role in any educational setting, and consequently, teachers need to be aware of what motivates their students positively. This chapter has highlighted different intrinsic and extrinsic factors through the dissemination of key results, which have shown that both are present among university students at the moment of learning English. Extrinsic factors, which are related to awards and outside factors, are referred to as graduation requirements and hopes for future higher incomes. Intrinsic factors, which are related to students' own desire to learn, have also been presented, and they include cultural integration, desire to build relationships, desire to travel and study abroad, among others.

When Ecuadorian teachers consider the essential factors related to extrinsic and intrinsic motivations included in this chapter, they will have critical contextualized research-based information to better design and deliver lessons that respond to students' motivations towards English language learning at the university level. For instance, within the Ecuadorian educational context, it has been commonly believed that most undergraduate students want to learn English to meet a graduation

requirement. However, the results of the present study show that their top priority for English language learning differs from what has been generally believed thus far. Most students feel motivated to learn English because they are interested in meeting, interacting, and socializing with people worldwide. This closely connects with the status of English as a universal language or the language of international communication in today's globalized world. That is to say, if EFL teachers know what factors positively influence student language learning, they will be more likely to make informed decisions at the classroom level. Their decisions can indeed enhance teaching and maximize student learning.

Furthermore, it is paramount that each teacher determines their own students' motivations toward English language learning before a program of study begins. This can be done systematically by applying validated research instruments to gather robust data. In this regard, validated research instruments that could be used are the questionnaires employed during the quantitative phase of the study at hand. These questionnaires may be simplified or adapted to determine students' perceptions about what motivates them the most to learn English within EFL university classrooms in Ecuador and overseas. Consequently, data-driven instructional activities based on undergraduate students' motivations, needs, interests, and desires will make English language instruction more effective. Therefore, teachers play a crucial role in successful student language learning and should constantly apply innovative teaching methods in the classroom. Moreover, teachers must encourage students to keep practicing the target language outside the classroom during everyday situations. In doing so, language learners will make authentic, genuine use of the skills and knowledge acquired. As a result, they may become even more motivated to engage in lifelong learning opportunities that will help them achieve their goals.

Lastly, conducting small-scale and large-scale research studies will add more research-based evidence to the existing body of knowledge. This could help language teachers make more effective decisions to foster student motivation and maximize student language learning in the EFL university classroom. However, research initiatives related to student motivation in English learning should be carried out not only at institutions of higher education but also at elementary and secondary schools. With this in mind, research-driven instructional practices should be at the center of every single educational level in Ecuador to motivate English learners as they progress from one level to another and in the world beyond the classroom.

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# Chapter IV

# Innovation in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning: The Key for Student Motivation

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# Introduction

This chapter aims to present some innovations in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) which can overcome the issues of the traditional methods that have blocked learners' motivation to keep them engaged in doing their best to learn English effectively. Thus, the chapter is organized into two sections. The first one is a brief systematic review presented by some recent investigations about some innovations in education and in teaching foreign languages. The second section describes Kumaravadivelu's (1994) *postmethod* as an innovative pedagogy that meets the criteria of Keller's (1987, as cited in Briggs et al. 1992) motivational model of instruction ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction). The whole chapter attempts to answer the following research questions:

- How do foreign language teaching and learning innovate education?
- What is the role of technology in innovation and in students' motivation?
- Which teaching methods are the most suitable to integrate technology in TEFL?
- How does the *postmethod* guarantee effective English language teaching and learning?

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# Innovations in Education and in Teaching Foreign Languages

This section presents a brief systematic review from recent investigations on innovations in education and foreign language teaching and learning. Although the literature covers diverse innovations in education, this review will focus on two major themes: 1) Educational innovations through technology in foreign language teaching and learning; and 2) Technology in EFL teaching and learning as its effects on learners' motivation.

Educational innovation in foreign languages must seek new ways and foster the use of teaching and learning strategies, which embrace and focus on the necessary skills for the 21st century. Due to the continuous and growing globalization in everyday life, it is necessary to use a lingua franca that facilitates communication, and develops social, linguistic, and cultural skills among people.

Much of the current literature on TEFL educational innovations pays particular attention to the correlation between innovation and technology, and technology and EFL learners' motivation. That is why these terms together with the acronyms EFL and TEFL were the key words or the criteria to search for current information. Google Scholar, Eric Institute of Education Sciences, and Google Search were the main sources of data. In this first section, the researchers seek to answer the three first questions mentioned at the beginning of this chapter: How do foreign language teaching and learning innovate education? What is the role of technology in innovation and in students' motivation? Which teaching methods are the most suitable to integrate technology in TEFL?

## Educational Innovations Through Technology in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

It is essential to innovate the educational system as a basic mechanism of bilingualism or multilingualism (Berenguer et al., 2016). In particular, globalization demands the change and expansion of innovative methodologies that offer an attractive,

stimulating, and active teaching of foreign language languages, which not only aims to teach a second language but also to awaken motivation for its learning.

Innovative strategies promote motivation, creativity, and students' interaction through real experiences that are significant for learners' life and learning. Quintero et al. (2020) defended that taking advantage of experience as a stage for practice, and taking it in expressions in a natural, experiential, and contextualized way helps to improve the learning process of foreign languages. Therefore, it is required to promote understanding and expression in a foreign language from a comprehensive view of the language as an instrument of communication and interpretation of curricular content, which also promotes bilingualism and multilingualism as a vital tool of higher education (Araujo, 2013).

Furthermore, as global citizens, we need to improve our skills by learning a foreign language with technological tools, which can eventually enhance individuals' critical thinking. Rubena and Fernandez (2015) stated that critical thinking allows students to observe, feel and reflect on a particular situation or action. It also promotes the metacognitive ability to learn how to learn autonomously, which ultimately will strengthen their level of education, their job opportunities, and international relations and mobility.

Foreign language teaching has been described in terms of a set of methods or techniques, which affect student learning. In particular, the processes of teaching and learning a foreign language are articulated in new scenarios and forms, which underlie communicative competence according to each culture. For this reason, communication recognizes foreign languages as the means of expression to satisfy needs based on the basic characteristics of each culture. Furthermore, the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (2016) mentioned that using innovative technologies in foreign language learning retains the opportunity to enter into communicative and pedagogical development using multilingual elements.

It is not only a question of new technology uses but also of new forms and methods of teaching and a new approach to the training process. As stated by Ortega, et al. (2020), the teacher must take into account the different learning styles in order to personalize students' learning, which favors motivation as a viable aspect of comprehensive education. The main objective of foreign language training is the

development of the communicative culture of students by training them in the practical use of a foreign language. Consequently, teachers' task is to create the conditions for the practical use of the language for their students, choosing the most effective teaching methods that allow them to show skill, creativity, and communicative mastery (Pavlova et al., 2019).

Therefore, teachers become facilitators and guides, as they understand the possibilities offered by curricular content, which implies a constant search for rethinking their teaching practice and incorporating new technologies and knowledge. Santos (2018) highlighted that since teachers have started to inquire into action schemes critically, they can face problems or didactic deficits; consequently, they will be able to raise solutions based on a strategic exploration of resources. As a result, this provides more opportunities for feedback, reflection, review, and especially, to expand the personal interactions through exchange opportunities with other people (Oskina et al., 2021).

Technology in education has been arranged as the set of tools and the means of real interaction. For this reason, learning a foreign language takes into account multiple components. The teaching and learning processes will facilitate foreign language acquisition through a technological path that offers online conversations, online grammar and vocabulary exercises. According to Izquierdo et al. (2017), achieving mastery of a second language requires guided learning that encourages the active participation of students with the mediation of interactive resources. Therefore, technology represents a   great utility since it promotes students' interaction and motivation when they use their voice, listen to authentic conversations, correct pronunciation, and increase vocabulary, phraseology, and grammar, among others (Basterra, 2020).

Information facilitates communication contexts for a global linguistic exchange, opening the possibility of being responsive to the cultural diversity through a universal foreign language. Callister and Barbules (as cited in Díaz and Jansson, 2011) added that a technological way offers multiple informative, interactive and educational experiences; through stories, comics, music, real scenes, cinema, music, etc.

The strategies within the process of foreign language learning are linked to the use of new information and communication technologies (ICTs), as they help

students' personal development and training, taking into account their abilities and particularities. Furthermore, proper management persists in supporting the development of writing skills, vocabulary, and grammar, among others. As highlighted by Ramírez and Casallas (2017), on a large scale, ICTs allow foreign language teachers the possibility to flourish in new learning alternatives since they offer an approach to other realities in a direct way, deepening in basic aspects of learning a new language. It is possible to highlight that internet is a global network that expands the opportunities for students to participate in different spaces for developing cognitive and language learning. Their participation is essential for the benefit of meaningful, realistic, interesting and achievable experiences and activities, aimed at the students' motivation.

ICTs allow interaction, creation, and communication, which facilitate improvements in pronunciation, strengthen auditory learning, and even expand content creation. Therefore, learning a foreign language allows, on the one hand, to expand job opportunities and academic achievements, as well as to know and interact with other cultures (Benavides et al., 2021).

For Sadycova et al. (2018), intercultural ability is impossible without communication, and the use of internet resources in a foreign language lesson in this sense is simply irreplaceable. The virtual internet environment allows to go beyond the temporal and spatial learning, allowing for authentic communication on real topics; to achieve optimal results, it is necessary to integrate its use in the process of a lesson in a competent way. In addition to working with reading and speaking skills, it is possible to fill a wide lexical range of vocabulary.

In addition to those mentioned above, cross-curricular training is added, which chooses to achieve the fulfillment of students in an integral way, prioritizing diverse, productive, recreational, and interactive activities as part of new teaching strategies. Chavez et al. (2017) claimed that teaching a foreign language should be a priority for the educational system, which allows the expansion of cultural and social components. Consequently, it is a priority to generate simulated realities, which increase a communicative, linguistic, and interactive interpretation in teaching and learning. With this vision, the role of technologies is important since they constitute tools of multiplicity. This means to Acosta et al. (2018) that educational innovation and foreign language teaching are extremely important to transform the methods used in the current educational system through emerging technologies.

# Technology in EFL Teaching and Learning and its Effects on Learners' Motivation

Currently, technological access allows the inclusion of digital tools and resources, taking advantage of the diversifications of pedagogical strategies. García et al. (2018) state that technological tools modify the forms of teaching. This entails the recognition of divergences, learning styles, and the role of students and teachers. Moreover, the internet intersects research, interaction, and communication activities to become a public space with global access, which brings new forms of learning and co-construction of content with different interpretations. There is a large volume of published studies describing the role of technology on EFL teaching and learning and students' motivation, and technology and innovation. For this reason, the authors of this chapter selected five research articles that contain the information required to answer these research questions: What is the role of technology in innovation and in students' motivation? Which teaching methods are the most suitable to integrate technology in TEFL?

Misirova's (2022) study found out teachers' beliefs about TEFL innovations. She drew to the conclusion that teachers perceived the integration of ICTs as one of the innovations to foster students' interaction, motivation and engagement during their lessons. Nevertheless, the low speed of the internet frequently disrupted the normal development of technological-based activities.

In their action-research study, Sevy-Biloon and Chroman's (2019) implemented an international language exchange video chat program between 17 Ecuadorian EFL university students and 17 English native speakers who were Spanish language learners from a university in the USA. Their goal was to increase foreign language learners' intrinsic motivation and oral communication. All participants had opportunities to interact through synchronous sessions to improve their speaking skills .Their findings demonstrated that both Ecuadorian and US students felt intrinsically motivated during five weeks of video chats. Their communication skills increased significantly, especially their fluency; however, some Ecuadorian students felt frustrated because their US partners sometimes failed to connect on the due dates.

Correspondingly, Albahiri and Mohammed Alhaj (2019) attempted to provide a guideline for more systematic utilization of YouTube in EFL classrooms at King Khalid University/Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They used YouTube with 45 students to get them engaged through short videos that displayed attractive visual images and audio that served as an effective input to increase learners' language proficiency. The researchers concluded that YouTube technology not only improved learners' EFL skills but also increased their motivation to learn the foreign language with enthusiasm and commitment. "Evidence indicates that YouTube technology motivates learners, increases retention of material and aids comprehension of spoken discourse. Its utilization creates an interactive and dynamic environment for accommodating students' every need required for their English speaking" (p. 11).

By drawing to the concept of innovation, Rahman et al. (2018) demonstrated that English as a medium of instruction (EMI) is an innovation itself in higher education in several Asian countries. In their study, they analyzed the EMI policies in eight countries: Bangladesh, China, Malaysia, Pakistan, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Vietnam. The researchers concluded the EMI in Asian higher education boosted students' English language proficiency. Therefore, Asian countries' motivation to insert EMI in their educational systems was mainly because high levels of English as a lingua franca provides high-qualified professionals who broaden Asian economic status at an international level. EMI also enables the option of internationalization of higher education in Asian countries. In short, English language learning represents monetary growth in the Asian context through the vertiginous commerce among international markets.

Reyes Gómez and Rey (2020) identified innovation as the implementation of ICTs in the EFL teaching and learning processes. Their action-research findings highlighted the students and teachers' interests and perceptions towards the use of digital tools. The researchers found that students got bored using some digital apps to practice on their own. On the contrary, they felt motivated when teachers used some apps in the classroom as part of a gamification pedagogy. Likewise, teachers perceived that a conventional or traditional power point presentation could enhance students' motivation much more than a sophisticated app when teachers have the pedagogical skills to organize their lessons properly. Additionally, teachers and

students expressed that they refused to use technological tools in order to force or accelerate students' regular learning process on their own.

It is worth mentioning that among the studies aforementioned, student-centered methods for TEFL are highly recognized by the researchers. For instance, in her study about "Teaching English and Innovations at Schools", Misirova (2022) revealed that EFL teachers believed that innovation is closely related with the application of ICTs and student-centered methods such as Content and Language Integrated Learning, Gamification, and Communicative Language Teaching. These methods develop students' critical thinking through practice and communicative activities that make students' learning experiences more memorable and enjoyable which simultaneously enhance their motivation to learn English.

Moreover, Reyes Gómez and Rey (2020) found, through their study on EFL teachers and students perceptions about methodological innovation in English language teaching, that Gamification was as an innovative and effective pedagogy to teach and learn English through playful activities, which ultimately increase their capacity to retain the contents in their working memory. In fact, student-centered methods for teaching English are supported by the theory of constructivism; what is more, "constructivist strategies are often called student-centered instruction" (Slavin, 2010, p. 258).

So far, this chapter has focused on innovation, technology and motivation for English language learning. The following section will discuss the *postmethod* as an innovative pedagogy for TEFL.

## The *Postmethod* as a Meaningful Innovation in Language Teaching and Learning

The purpose of this section is to review the literature on the *postmethod* as an innovative pedagogy for TEFL. It begins with a general overview of its origin, and its position among the other teaching methods. Then, the macro strategies of the *postmethod* framework are described with some suggested micro strategies as experienced by the researchers of this chapter as experienced in-service EFL teachers.

Currently, we are living in the digital era whose technologies overwhelm human beings' knowledge and control. In fact, education in the 21st century digital world has to prepare future generations to face unknown challenges, especially to overcome the dehumanization of the people (Schwab & Malleret, 2020). As explained by Gates et al. (1996), although the computer will create new and effective learning environments beyond the educational institutions, it will not replace the human social essence of learning.

For many years, several instructional methods for learning English as a second or foreign language have appeared and disappeared depending on their efficacy in motivating learners to acquire the language. As a matter of fact, many investigations have revealed that learners' beliefs about teaching rely on what they consider a motivational or non-motivational type of instruction. Primarily, they think instruction is the most crucial factor for them whether to get motivated or to get blocked from achieving their language proficiency (Lockhart & Richards, 1994).

With the aforementioned in mind, Keller (1987, as cited in Briggs et al. 1992) proposed the motivational model ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence and Satisfaction) to be inserted in the instruction process to create a motivational classroom atmosphere. Taking this into account, teachers' lessons should start by gaining students' "attention" by deliberately presenting visuals, mnemonics, or such artifacts to enhance learners' comprehension. In addition, the condition of "relevance" has to emerge from the lesson objectives that should be aligned with the learners' interests. As long as the lesson is delivered, teachers have to provide enough guidance, practice, and feedback so that learners can feel "confident" that they can do what they are being taught. As a result, the feeling of "satisfaction" upon completing the tasks enhances students' motivation to keep learning.

Therefore, this section briefly describes the *postmethod* pedagogy as an alternative to innovating the teaching practices which can capture learners' motivation for their successful language acquisition. The *postmethod* meets the criteria of the motivational model ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction) through the implementation of macro and micro strategies that generate motivational strategies to gain students' attention and interest in learning. Thus, the section starts with the presentation of the origin of the *postmethod*, the difference between method and

*postmethod*, teachers and students' role in the *postmethod* pedagogy, and the principles of the *postmethod*. Finally, it is presented the *postmethod* framework which describes its macro and micro strategies which function with the motivational model ARCS.

## The Origin of the *Postmethod* Pedagogy

English language teaching (ELT) has been making steady progress since the beginning of the last century. Nevertheless, the search for an effective method has become the holy grail for teachers and theorists who seem to be disappointed after using different methods repeatedly, producing limited results. These old-fashioned methods and more recent ones have flourished and have been left apart to be replaced by a new paradigm named the *postmethod* pedagogy (Chen, 2014).

Conversely, it can be said that the *postmethod* is not a just-out-of-oven invention. It was in the Spring of 1994 when Kumaravadivelu first set out this alternative to the prevailing methods in language education. He considered that teaching English should not be restricted by teaching method theories. As a result, he characterized the *postmethod* as a three-dimensional scheme founded on three principles: particularity, practicality, and possibility. Furthermore, the author advocated for the application of shortened techniques in EFL classrooms.

After all, once the *postmethod* began being used, many theorists wondered about the relationship between method and *postmethod*, and, more importantly, the difference between these two paradigms. In the following paragraphs, the differences between the method and *postmethod* are described.

## Differences Between Method and *Postmethod*

According to Kumaravadivelu (2001), second language teaching methods and the *postmethod* are opposed paradigms. A traditional method is built by theorizers who focus on teaching theories to be planned and applied. On the other hand, the

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*postmethod* pedagogy allows language teachers to build their theories based on their teaching practices and expertise to produce outcomes.

Kumaravadivelu (2001) further asserted that conventional methods have given far-reaching authority to theorists who have been designing procedures, techniques, and strategies all by themselves. On the contrary, the *postmethod* philosophy empowers language trainers to generate focalized, specific, and reflective teaching procedures. Another clear difference established by Kumaravadivelu (2003) is that the *postmethod* is an exploration of a singular method rather than a singular method itself. Besides, the *postmethod* empowers teachers to be independent language trainers and decide how to educate and overcome learning difficulties by designing their method from practice and being faithful to their method, allowing them to unfollow theorized methods.

It can also be said that methods are arduous prearranged pathways seeking outcomes. Meanwhile, the *postmethod* embodies pragmatism when assembling techniques from various methods based on organizational, analytical, and educational principles. This process requires years of teaching experience to avoid falling into eclecticism, meaning a random selection of subjective teaching procedures generating disorderly, devious, and naive teaching practices (Akbari, 2008).

> Postmethod pedagogy tries to cover wide-ranging ELT issues such as teaching strategies, didactic materials, curricular procedures, and assessment techniques that are not covered by traditional methodologies. Likewise, it considers numerous historical, political, and sociocultural events that fairly influence ELT (Can, 2009).

Apart from the information, it is relevant to understand the importance of both teachers' and students' roles in the *postmethod* pedagogy. Therefore, the subsequent paragraphs present further details in this regard.

## The Role of Teachers and Students in the *Postmethod* Pedagogy

The traditional teachers' role in countless teaching methods is usually limited to following the instructions and steps described by academics in their theories.

However, the *postmethod* pedagogy places teachers at the center of language learning and teaching and gives importance to their beliefs, experience, and proficiency in language teaching. In fact, teachers know best their learners and the classroom context, not only as teachers but also as students. Additionally, throughout their lifetime, many teachers gain knowledge of other teachers' actions and opinions, as well as parents and caretakers (Prabhu, 1990, as cited in Sun, 2021).

In the words of Safari and Rashidi (2015), contrary to the procedures of traditional teaching methods, which control teachers' and students' roles as followers, the *postmethod* suggests that teachers can create their own theories and methods based on their experience in their real-life teaching setting, as students are exposed to more personalized content and activities suitable for their learning styles.

Having described teachers' and students' roles in the *postmethod*, it is essential to analyze the principles of the *postmethod* that are enlisted as follows: particularity, practicality, and possibility.

## The Principles of the *Postmethod:* Particularity, Practicality, And Possibility

As previously mentioned in the origin of the *postmethod*, this was conceived as a three-dimensional structure formed by three pedagogic parameters: particularity, practicality, and possibility. These three parameters cooperate with each other in a synergic correlation (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, as cited in Chen, 2014).

For Kumaravadivelu (2003), the parameter of particularity involves that any language teaching system must be sympathetic to a specific group of educators teaching a specific group of language learners who should be chasing specific established goals inside their particular educational situation introduced in a particular socio cultural context. In other words, teaching practices should be particularly effective for that group of teachers, students, and their social backgrounds.

In the same vein, the parameter of practicality states the connection between theory and teaching procedures and the application of these procedures in the classroom (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). It signifies that theory must not be separated

from practice so that teachers' ability to generate theory based on their practices must be very prolific and sophisticated. Practicality is so important in *postmethod* pedagogy because it acknowledges language trainers to generate their theories from experience and put into practice what they have theorized.

Lastly, the pedagogical parameter of possibility was based on Paulo Freire's educational philosophy in which learners and teachers are recognized as the principal protagonists and their educational situation. Under Freirean critical pedagogies, teachers take into consideration learners' class, race, gender, and ethnicity so that their educational goals are best impacted by their teaching procedures. Likewise, learners' previous knowledge is influenced by their culture, socio economic status, and political environment where they grew up (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

These three parameters do not restrict the *postmethod*; they expand it to uncertain boundaries. Their connection implies an evolution to the teaching procedures, not a static but an evolutive alternative that can be shaped and reshaped based on their circumstances. These three pedagogical considerations are the conceptual foundation for the *postmethod* pedagogy.

Once the principles of the *postmethod* have been presented, it is essential to consider the limitations of the previous methods to better understand why the *postmethod* is in a position to replace most of them.

## Limitations of Previous Methods

In the educational context, a method is an instructional design for a specific level of application in order to fulfill prescribed objectives, predefining the teacher and learners' roles. The teacher's role is to implement a method, so little flexibility is used. In this regard, era methods ended by the beginning of the 90s when researchers and linguists shifted their attention to teachers and their practices rather than prescribed methods (Richards, 2013).

**Table 1**. Limitations of Previous Methods Versus the *Postmethod* Pedagogy

| Method / Authors | Description | Limitation | Proposed postmethod macrostrategy |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Thamarana, 2014).* | It focuses on developing communicative competence where students are presented with real-life communication situations to be able to use the grammar and vocabulary learned in class activities like role-play techniques to stimulate communication. | It focuses excessively on oral skills, while reading and writing are left apart. | -Contextualize linguistic input |
| *Grammar-Translation Method (GTM)* | It helps learners learn the target language through literature passages and the completion of follow-up questions | Hago (2020) considers that this method does not allow for active class participation, communication is not emphasized, and content is not taught. For these reasons, GTM has been mostly replaced. | -Facilitate negotiated interaction Activate intuitive heuristics -Foster language awareness |
| *Audiolingual Method Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011)* | It is based on the achievement of language habits, and the repetitions of patterns until they become a natural integration. | The major drawback is that the learner plays a passive role and has reduced control over his/her own learning. | -Integrate language skills |
| *Total Physical Response (TPR) (Widodo, 2005).* | It places listening comprehension as the most practical skill, imitating the first stages of mother tongue acquisition to later develop different skills. | It cannot be used to teach every topic, and it tends to be repetitive for learners. TPR has to be mixed with other methods due to the amount of energy required from teachers and learners (Intarapanich, 2013). | -Integrate language skills -Contextualize language input |
| *Silent Way Method (Khalilova, 2019)* | It is a structural approach since this follows a sequence based on grammatical structures. This method is flexible for teaching several topics. | It is not suitable for all proficiency levels | -Maximize learning opportunities |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Direct Method (DM)* *(Batool et al., 2017).* | The aim is to understand communication by using relevant didactic material. In this regard, the teacher's role is to directly use the studied language and avoid translating the materials used in the classroom. Despite this, the DM ignores the planification of written works, making it way more efficient. The method is great for early stages. | Not effective for more advanced classes | -Maximize learning opportunities |
| Suggestopedia (Zaid, 2014) | It uses advertising and not usual styles of material presentation for classroom learning. Suggestive techniques, mental concentration, and physical relaxation exercises are combined to elevate a person's personality and increase his or her abilities while the material is presented enthusiastically alongside relaxing music. | Not all classrooms are properly equipped to apply suggestopedia, and learners tend to make the learning process as light-hearted. | -Facilitate negotiated interaction |

As can be discerned, all the methods and approaches listed before have advantages and disadvantages. However, when classes are carried out, teachers are the ones who decide the most effective procedures to be applied to their students. Teachers play an imperative role in implementing what they know and have been trained for. In this context, the *postmethod* pedagogy is the solely method-approach alternative in which teachers create their own theory based on what these principles state: particularity, practicality, and possibility.

## *Postmethod* **Framework**

A framework of ten macro strategies that can become operative through micro strategies supports the *postmethod* pedagogy. A macro strategy is an approach created by teachers' concrete and real experiences and actions sustained with theoretical, psychological, and pedagogical knowledge. A micro strategy is a systematic procedure constructed by teachers and students aimed at teaching and learning successfully (Kumaravadivelu, 2008). With respect to micro strategies, they fit closely in each macro as experienced by the researchers during their EFL teaching practice as active teachers in the public sector education of Ecuador. However, a micro strategy may meet the principles of several macro strategies depending on each teacher's perspective.

**Macro Strategy 1:** Maximize Learning Opportunities. The most outstanding feature of this macro strategy is that the teacher and students' roles are equally important because both are creators and facilitators of knowledge. When teachers engage learners in collaborative work, a positive atmosphere emerges, and students feel motivated to defeat their fears and enhance their learning (Kumaravadivelu, 2008).

**Suggested Micro Strategy.** Reciprocal Peer Questioning to Maximize Learning Opportunities. From the researchers' perspective, as experienced EFL teachers, reciprocal peer questioning (RPQ) is a strategy that meets the criteria to maximize learning opportunities. It is collaborative work among peers with the teacher's support for clarification and orientation. Group cohesion increases confidence, which is a factor in enhancing learners' motivation (Troya & Moreno, 2018). Ching-Ying (2014) validated RPQ as a three-step effective strategy for reading comprehension as follows:

1. Individual work for self-questioning. Students read independently and raise their own questions in relation to the reading.

2. Pair or group work. Students get involved in collaborative work to get responses to each other's questions. They make a consensus about what they think are correct answers.

3. As a whole class. Students socialize their questions and answers and get feedback from different groups and their teacher.

RPQ is a cognitive process that is developed socially among teachers and students to increase reading comprehension and social skills as well. The interaction among peers comes after a private independent work in which each student tries to get his/her own tools/questions to contribute to his/her group. While working in groups, students' self-confidence increases their language attainment. In conclusion, their learning has been influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and by the interaction of collaborative work (Ching-Ying, 2014).

**Macro strategy 2:** Facilitate Negotiated Interaction. Facilitating negotiated interaction implies a two-way communication process between teacher-students and students-students. This process is evident when students feel motivated to begin a conversation, a discussion, or any type of interaction rather than just to be subjected to respond to their teachers' prompts or questions (Kumaravadivelu, 2008). They (teacher and students) are able to interchange ideas, opinions, and information in different situations for different purposes. When facilitating negotiated interactions, teachers assist learners' expectations for successful learning, which is one of the motivational categories of the ARCS model.

**Suggested Micro Strategy.** Four Corners to Facilitate Negotiated Interaction. Four corners is a strategy for promoting speaking skills; it develops students' social skills through interactive activities as well. Before going to one corner of the classroom, students must think about which corner meets their personal perspective. This strategy works very well in remote learning by breaking out the rooms. The four corners strategy promotes respect and tolerance for diversity as it shows students that every person has his/her own beliefs and attitudes. Kurnia (2018) reported in his study about the implementation of the strategy four corners for speaking skills, and the author observed that "by the end of the lesson, students are able to express their positions, as well as opposing arguments, on a particular issue" (p. 106).

This strategy is very versatile and its procedure is explained below:

1. Teacher presents to the class a topic or issue to be discussed and shows four alternatives to choose from; for example, strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree.

2. Teacher gives students some thinking time to make a choice from the four alternatives.

3. Teacher asks students to go to the corner labeled with their alternative.

4. Students who meet at the same corner have to discuss their reasons for their choice. At this stage, when teachers work with large classes, they can have students work in pairs in order to share their ideas.

Four corners can be adapted for remote learning during a live class session with an online platform that has the option to create breakout rooms. Either on campus or remote learning, the strategy of four corners creates opportunities for students to negotiate their interaction, which consequently increases learners' comprehension and production. To this extent, it is necessary to highlight that the motivational category of satisfaction is observed in students' production since they get the feeling of achievement of having done good work.

**Macro Strategy 3:** Minimize Perceptual Mismatches. How learners interpret their teacher's intentions or instructions will be the main factor for a successful or failing learning. Kumaravadivelu (1994) warns practitioners that several perceptual mismatches may occur during the teaching and learning process. For this reason, teachers should always be aware of them in order to guarantee effective interaction and learning. Actually, a teacher's guidance fosters learners' confidence, which is a motivational factor that guarantees the learning process (Briggs et al. 1992).

**Macro Strategy 4:** Activate Intuitive Heuristics. Activating intuitive heuristics is related to the opportunities that teachers can create for their learners to discover by themselves what is implicit in a variety of resources. Kumaravadivelu (1994) states that this macro strategy works out better with the language systems, such as grammar, vocabulary, phonology, and discourse. A language system should not be explained explicitly because of grammar constructions; for example, they cannot be explained extensively because there is an infinite number of combinations of grammar structures. That is why the teachers' role in activating students' intuitive heuristics is crucial for the acquisition of the English language. One way of doing so is by "providing enough textual data so that the learner can infer certain underlying grammatical rules" (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, p. 36).

**Suggested Micro Strategy.** Formulaic Expressions to Activate Intuitive Heuristics. Formulaic expressions are promising in activating intuitive heuristics because they are a chain of words that function as a unit. Such expressions as

greetings (have a good one), farewells (take care), congratulations (well done), apologies (sorry for being late), idioms, and collocations (it's a piece of cake) are considered as formulaic expressions because they have a high occurrence in the spoken language (Ebrahimi et al., 2021). When these expressions are explicitly taught, teachers encourage learners to use them in different situations during their natural interactions. As previously stated by Briggs et al. (1992), teachers' guidance enhances learners' confidence to perform properly, which generates a subsequent feeling of satisfaction as a motivational factor during the teaching and learning process.

Formulaic sequences can be taught as vocabulary words without grammar explanations because the main goal is their meaning and use rather than form. For instance, have a good one!; take care; how are you doing?, see you soon. However, learners will eventually infer the implicit form of formulaic expressions because they become aware of their grammar patterns after they have been introduced into their lexical range.

**Macro Strategy 5:** Foster Language Awareness (FLA). This macro strategy focuses on teaching and learning the formalities of L2 without grammar-based strategies. FLA strategies engage students in a cognitive process that regulates their learning. Even though LA strategies enable learners to correct themselves, teachers' and peers' immediate feedback is crucial to avoiding fossilizations (Kumaravadivelu, 2008). Certainly, feedback is an instructional event that highly affects learners' performance because it is a motivational characteristic that provides a supportive classroom atmosphere that ensures learners' self-esteem to progress confidently.

**Suggested Micro Strategy.** Paraphrasing Game to Foster Language Awareness. "Paraphrasing game is an activity that develops capability in both directions: the cognitive capability to comprehend and the linguistic capability to express ideas autonomously" (McLeod, 2020, p. 38). Prepare a set of words, phrases, sentences, or brief texts from students' textbooks or graded reading[1] for your students to find another way to say them. Students should have already been familiar with the topics so that they would be able to increase their language awareness while attempting to

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[1]This website provides several choices for readers according to proficiency levelshttps://learnenglishteens. britishcouncil.org/study-break/graded-reading

say the exact text in their own words and the new items of grammar and vocabulary. In short, paraphrasing integrates reading and writing skills, vocabulary development, and grammar construction.

McLeod (2020) explains below how to play the paraphrasing game:

    1. Form groups of three students: Player A, Player B, and Player T (timekeeper and evaluator

    2. Player A reads out the text.

    3. Player B has to paraphrase it using synonyms, different word order, and different grammar structures within a time limit monitored by Player T.

    4. Player T (timekeeper) checks how similar the paraphrase is to the original version. The winner is the one who wrote the same meaning of the text with his/her own words.

While comparing the paraphrasing and the original text, teachers can engage students in a discussion activity to monitor and give feedback. This is the way we can foster learners' language awareness. As Kumaradivelu (1994) asserted, "LA refers to the deliberate attempt to draw learners' attention to the formal properties of their L2 in order to increase the degree of explicitness required to promote L2 learning" (p.37). In conclusion, paraphrasing games may be used for both oral and written production as well as for working in groups or individually. It is noticeable that teacher and peer feedback make this game effective that constitutes a motivational factor of the events of the instruction (Briggs et al., 1992).

**Macro Strategy 6:** Contextualize Linguistic Input. Chen (2014) studied the effect of the *postmethod* framework on students' learning. Regarding the macro strategy contextualizing linguistic input, he reported that almost three quarters of the surveyed students found it quite appealing when their teacher used authentic textual data from video, films, and mp3. Students expressed how they felt like part of an interactive community. Therefore, Chen advocated for teachers to create and get different sources from the course book to provide learners with authentic materials to contextualize linguistic input. In the light of the motivational model ARCS, this macro strategy focuses on the principle of relevance since it situates learners in real-world conditions where language is used for communication (Briggs et al., 1992).

**Suggested Micro Strategy.** Discourse-Based Teaching to Contextualize Linguistic Input. Authentic materials from different sources, such as written and spoken discourse found in conventional and online sources through newspaper articles, documentaries, and text messages on social webs are real-life artifacts that teachers can take advantage of to teach grammar rules. Elturki (2010) points out that teachers can create role-plays, essays, and debates on authentic materials with the aim of contextualizing linguistic input and integrating language skills. As a result, discourse-based teaching attempts to recreate real-life situations that can catch students' attention that is a motivational factor for effective learning.

**Macro Strategy 7:** Integrate Language Skills. Whether to separate or integrate the four skills of the language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) usually seems to be a hard decision to make when planning a lesson. As explained by Perfetti et al. (2005) the comprehension of a written text helps learners to be closer to producing a spoken or written text. Therefore, it is impossible to teach one skill at a time. In spite of the fact that coursebooks force teachers to do so by organizing the activities into separate sections for each skill including the grammar and vocabulary section, teachers implicitly integrate or should integrate language skills during their teaching process. That is the way learners will be able to build progressively their language proficiency from lower to higher levels (Kumaravadivelu, 1994).

**Suggested Micro Strategy:** Jigsaw to Integrate Language Skills. Jigsaw is a cooperative learning technique that requires the organization of the class into groups. First of all, the teacher divides the class into 4 or 5 home groups who have to solve a problem or solve a reading comprehension task. Once home groups have mastered the assigned task, each member of the group has to move to expert groups, which are formed by one member from each home group. The goal of forming expert groups is to discuss the assigned task and find out a new solution. The transition from home groups to expert groups enhances students' interaction and participation. During the process, students are engaged in different practice activities that integrate two or more language skills. Teachers' feedback clarifies and strengths students' active participation. Ehsan et al., (2020) corroborated through their experimental study, that the jigsaw technique improved students' reading skills, but interestingly they also revealed that the jigsaw "immersed students in learning English" (p.1). They identified that during the reading activity, students got involved in active discussions

and problem solving activities. In short, it was not possible to isolate only one skill at a time to be learned.

**Macro Strategy 8**: Promote Learners' Autonomy. In an investigation into Kumaravadivelu's *postmethod* framework, Barboza and Cad (2013) found that students' interactions foster learners' autonomy. Their students worked collaboratively in synchronous e-learning, which integrated them into a learning community. The authors claimed that teachers' and peers' continuous feedback and scaffolding during their classes built a sense of autonomy. These learning experiences helped learners to take ownership of their progress, which ultimately will motivate them to have life-long learning beyond the classroom. Given this situation, students can experience the feeling of satisfaction that is a motivational factor for increasing their enthusiasm for learning. Thus, freewriting is a micro strategy that promotes learners' autonomy along with teachers' guidance.

**Suggested Micro Strategy**: Freewriting to Promote Learners' Autonomy. Freewriting is a technique that helps EFL learners to gain both confidence and fluency in producing their own texts (Hwang, 2010). Freewriting is more informal and does not force learners to follow fixed grammar rules. This type of writing focuses on writing fluency rather than writing accuracy. Its primary purpose is to reduce learners' anxiety and pressure to be scored using a rubric with fixed criteria, which eventually might block their confidence to produce even a brief and simple written text. Learners usually struggle with their writing skills, even in their mother tongue. That is why freewriting seems to be useful to go through a path that leads language learners to write, both fluently and accurately. According to Hwang (2010), freewriting can be guided or unguided. When it is guided, teachers give a specific topic for a specific amount of time. On the other hand, unguided freewriting occurs when learners by themselves choose the topic to write in a given period of time without self-editing.

Freewriting, like many other strategies, can be adapted for remote learning using Padlet[2] as explained below:

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[2]This is an online tool for sharing ideas and working collaboratively. www.padlet.com

1. Teacher organizes his/her Padlet using different options from its board, such as written posts, photos, and videos.

2. Teacher writes the title Freewriting and gives some instructions about topics and allotted time for the activity. Then, as many columns as necessary could be added per student.

3. Students write their names in the title of their columns and start freewriting.

4. Teacher and students can post on someone else's column with the comment option.

5. Teacher can send the grade to their students privately.

To sum up, freewriting promotes collaborative work and is a motivational strategy that makes learners express their ideas and thoughts freely in an authentic context.

**Macro Strategy 9:** Raise Cultural Consciousness. Learning a foreign language implies learning new cultures as well. Language becomes active and dynamic in the sociocultural context where it is spoken, whether as a native language or a second/ foreign language. Raising cultural consciousness is related to knowing and valuing both the foreign language's culture and the learners' own culture. Globalization and the internet open doors to new cultures and to show the world our own identities. They also help to enhance our culture through English as an international language (Canagarajah, 2014).

**Suggested Micro Strategy:** Pen Pals to Raise Cultural Consciousness. Engage students to choose a cultural topic of their own country; such as their traditions, their music, their rivers and landscapes, their beliefs, their daily routines, food, sports, and several other areas that catch their interest to share with native or non-native English speakers from different cultures. The goal goes beyond the use of English as a tool for communication; it is to enhance learners' awareness of their own culture and others' cultures, too (Thompson, 2009).

**Macro Strategy 10:** Ensure Social Relevance. English has become an international language, and we can find speakers from different backgrounds who use the language for a variety of purposes. These days, there are as many non-native speakers of English as native speakers. The myth of getting a native-like accent is disappearing (Canagarajah, 2014). In contrast, what is required is "intelligibility and

acceptability rather than native-like perfection" (Stern, as cited by Kumaravadivelu, 1994, p 42). As a result, language is understood among the members of a society who make sense of their communication in English based on their purposes for the interaction.

**Suggested Micro Strategy:** Shadowing Technique. Shadowing is a technique that requires EFL learners to repeat what someone else in English has said. From the personal experience of the researchers of this chapter, authentic materials such as English songs, short YouTube or TikTok videos are effective sources for students to listen and repeat the words or phrases as closely similar as the original speakers. As stated previously, the goal is not to get a native-like accent. Nevertheless, the researchers totally agree that natural exposure to language helps learners to improve their language skills. Currently, this technique has migrated to artificial intelligence as offered by Google Play, in its free Shadowing App.

## Conclusions

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the researchers sought to answer the following questions:

**How do foreign language teaching and learning innovate education?**
• Foreign languages improve global citizens' communication around the world. Bilingualism and multilingualism strengthen people's level of education, expand their job opportunities, fosters safe mobility to foreign countries, and ensures social relevance among the members of the society.

**What is the role of technology in innovation and in EFL students' motivation?**
• Several studies validate the technology as an evidence of innovation because the ICTs allow foreign language teachers to fill the gap of time and space to make their students interact among English speaking people, natives or nonnatives, around the world. Technology diversifies the pedagogical practices that motivate students to acquire long life learning skills. In addition, English

language learning is an innovation in itself because it is the international language for business, science, and entertainment.

**Which teaching methods are the most suitable to integrate technology in TEFL?**

• Technology itself would be useless in TEFL unless EFL teachers adopt efficient student-centered methods to integrate technology in their teaching process. Empirical studies confirm that Content and Language Integrated Learning, Gamification, and Communicative Language Teaching are the most suitable methods to develop students' critical thinking through practice and communicative activities, Thus, students' learning experiences become more memorable and enjoyable which simultaneously enhance their motivation to learn English inside and outside the classroom with the aid of the technology.

**How does the postmethod guarantee effective English language teaching and learning?**

• The *postmethod* pedagogy releases teachers from being stuck in fixed methods that hinder their creativity and innovation. The *postmethod* meets the criteria of the motivational model ARCS that supports teachers' instruction to boost learners' motivation for long-life learning. Furthermore, it fosters teachers' reflection upon their own practices, which at the same time develop their investigative skills. The *postmethod* framework, as well as its pillars of practicality, particularity, and possibility, constitute the path where teachers can reconstruct their pedagogical actions with autonomy.

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# Chapter V

# Strategies and techniques to enhance student motivation in the EFL classroom

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## Introduction

Motivation is an essential element in foreign language learning. It intervenes in successful learning (Ordorica, 2010) as motivated learners push themselves to reach their learning objectives and enjoy the learning journey (Gardner, 2001). Because of this, teachers must create a motivating atmosphere to cultivate extrinsic motivation in their students (Legault, 2016). Planning the implementation of curricular activities and strategies that would ignite students' desire to learn the target language is one effective approach. With this in mind, this chapter presents an array of communicative strategies and techniques that foreign language teachers can implement in their classes to encourage language practice and learning in motivating ways.

The strategies and techniques presented in this chapter were selected considering the main results of the inter-university research project entitled *"Factors that motivate English learning of university students in Ecuador: researching the perspectives of different educational stakeholders"*. These strategies and techniques could have a positive impact on student motivation within the language learning classroom context. In this regard, by the end of this chapter, language instructors are expected to be equipped with pedagogical tools that would help them take theory into practice in their classrooms. By doing so, English as a foreign language (EFL) students may become more motivated toward language learning.

In each technique and strategy, there is a description of it, the objective for its implementation, the English proficiency level it will be suitable for, the skills that are promoted in students when working on it, as well as steps we suggest following for implementing it. Finally, it is essential to mention that some of the strategies and techniques suggested have been of interest to investigators who have evaluated and validated them from different perspectives through research studies. Others, nevertheless, have not been validated through scientific inquiry but through their continuous use in language classrooms. On the whole, this chapter contains a methodological guide with different helpful didactic strategies and techniques to maximize student learning and foster students' motivation, as their voices, interests, and needs are at the center.

## Methodology

This work was conducted following two approaches: a qualitative and a teaching-experience-based one. The qualitative system consisted of the use of the literature review technique to provide scientific support for each strategy and technique suggested in this chapter. In this regard, articles published in open-access scientific journals were identified and read to extract key ideas that would be used in the description of each strategy and technique (and, in some cases, to identify the procedures for their implementation). These articles addressed either the strategies and techniques included here as such or other conceptual elements that would contribute to the elaboration of their descriptions.

On the other hand, we used the knowledge we have developed through our teaching practice to propose:
- the objectives for implementing the strategies and techniques;
- the indications regarding the English proficiency level the strategies and techniques would be suitable for;
- the skills that are promoted in students when working on the strategies and techniques; and,
- the steps to implement some of the strategies and techniques presented here.

## Strategies and techniques for EFL classes

### W-L-C-DYU (Watch, Listen, Connect, & Demonstrate Your Understanding)

***Description:*** W-L-C-DYU (Watch, Listen, Connect, & Demonstrate Your Understanding) motivates students to learn English by engaging them in the observation of TV or video content (such as movies, series, commercials, news broadcasts, comedy shows, cartoons, documentaries, talk shows, music (YouTube) videos, or any other piece of audio-visual content) with the purpose to produce language in a meaningful way.

TV or video content helps to contextualize the content and language that the learners are studying (Al-Jarf, 2012), facilitating comprehension and retention (Kaur et al., 2014). According to Canning-Wilson (2000), these materials promote visual stimuli, which will motivate the learner to predict, speculate and activate background information. Following the same line of thought, Zaidi et al. (2018) indicate that "... using videos [...] grabs students' attention, improves students' concentration, generates interests in the lesson, improves attitudes towards content, draws on students' imagination and makes learning fun and meaningful" (p. 544).

***Objective:*** To use TV or video content to stimulate students' visual and hearing senses, build their cognitive skills and motivate them to learn English engagingly.

***English level:*** all proficiency levels.

***Integrated skills:*** listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

***Procedure / steps:***

1. Select TV or video content associated with the lesson you are teaching. The material should be selected considering your students' language proficiency level.

2. Divide the class into small groups to allow collaborative work and peer support throughout the lesson.

3. Have students work on a pre-viewing task. Pre-viewing tasks may include brainstorming; reading a short piece of text and talking about it; observing a picture related to the content they are going to watch, and describing, discussing, or making predictions about it (about the people, location, time, actions, etc., they observe); answering questions that would connect the content of the audio-visual material with their personal experiences. Have students note their ideas and then share them orally in their groups and with the whole class.

4. After working on the pre-viewing task, have students watch the TV or video content (with the sound on or off and with or without subtitles in English or their native language, taking into consideration the students' language proficiency level). Have students take notes on the TV or video content as they watch it. Students may take these notes following a guide to know what exactly to look for or just take general notes. Replay the video if necessary.

5. Depending on what you expect your students to do, after watching the audio-visual material, you may have them describe what they observed or write their impressions on it through a poster (they can exchange their posters with other groups so that they can read their classmates' ideas); write a story based on the TV or video content; complete a worksheet answering comprehension questions; prepare an oral presentation where students will speak about what they observed (a general idea and, or specific details of the places, people, etc. that appeared in the audio-visual material); participate in a role-play that illustrate what they observed in the TV or video content. If you want to challenge your students' creativity, you may have them work on a hands-on activity such as performing news writing or an oral report based on what they observed.

## Oral presentations

**Description:** Oral presentations motivate students by offering them an opportunity to engage in spoken production. In oral presentations, learners are expected to prepare (out of class preferably) and present some content or topic to the class.

Oral presentations prompt students not only to use all four language skills but

to develop a high-value work competence (Brooks and Wilson, 2014; Wilson and Brooks, 2014). Students develop their strategic planning skills as they have to "plan and prepare for their presentation" (Tuan and Neomy, 2007, p. 105). As a result of learners' participation in oral presentations, Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan (2010) as cited in Nguyen (2015) mention that "there is an increase in students' confidence in talking in front of people, and their knowledge of the field. In addition, there is an enhancement of their critical thinking skills with the opportunity to be involved in taking full responsibility for their learning" (p. 136).

**Objective:** To use oral presentations to promote the enhancement of students' four language skills, help them build their work competencies, and motivate them to learn English engagingly.

**English level:** all proficiency levels.

**Integrated skills:** listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Divide the class into small groups to allow for collaborative work and peer support throughout the development of the activity.

2. Assign a topic for students to present or give them the choice to select the topic themselves. Topics should be assigned considering your students' language proficiency levels.

3. Have students plan the structure of their presentation and the approach they will follow to deliver their presentation. Keep in mind your students' language proficiency level since students with lower proficiency levels will need more support than those with higher proficiency in the target language. Similarly, the amount of content demanded in the presentation, and the length of it should be according to the students' language proficiency level.

4. Provide students with reading materials or suggest sources where they will find content to read and prepare their presentations. This will prompt students to enhance their reading skills.

5. Have students prepare a poster, a PowerPoint presentation, or any other supporting material they will use during their presentation. Suggest the combination of visuals and words to make their presentation illustrative. As they do this, have them make an English script to deliver their presentation. By preparing this material, students will be allowed to enhance their writing skills.

6. Have students rehearse for presenting their work; ask them to look up the pronunciation of words in a dictionary and practice it; ask students to deliver their presentation within their groups and record it so they can self-evaluate their performance. This will give them extra practice in their oral performance.

7. Have students deliver their presentations to the whole class.

8. Have their audience take notes and write questions to ask the presenters. This will ensure that the audience pays attention to their classmates' presentations and practice their listening, reading, and writing skills.

9. After each presentation, have the audience make comments or ask the presenters questions. Presenters should reply to their classmates. This will allow for all students to practice their listening and speaking skills and interact among one another.

## Conversation clubs

*Description:* Conversations clubs promote students' motivation toward language learning by offering them opportunities to practice the language in a friendly and engaging atmosphere.

Hamadameen and Najim (2020) indicated that participating in "an English-Club (also called English Conversation Club, Spoken English Club, or English Conversation Circles) is a great way to improve communicative skills" (p. 286) as they support their users to improve their speaking skills (Sigala et al., 2019). Either organized by students or teachers, Dobson (1992) says that for these clubs to be successful, they need "a dynamic leader or leaders who can skillfully arrange entertaining activities such as debates, film showings or games that will stimulate all members to use their English" (p. 6).

**Objective:** To promote students' participation in conversation clubs to enhance their spoken output and motivate them to learn English engagingly.

**English level:** all proficiency levels.

**Integrated skills:** mainly listening and speaking - reading and writing to a lesser extent.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Plan the dynamics of the conversation club considering the following points:

a) The modality for carrying out the activity -onsite or online- should be decided in advance. If it is onsite, you should secure a venue where the group will meet. If it is online, you should select the video conferencing platform (consider teaching participants how to use it if necessary).

b) The number of participants attending conversation club meetings should not be more than ten as the aim of these clubs is to give everyone a chance to practice speaking English. Arrange groups with similar proficiency levels, so that beginning-level participants do not get demotivated for not having enough linguistic resources to interact with advanced learners or to avoid advanced learners getting bored when interacting with beginning-level participants.

c) Meetings should be conducted weekly to promote the regular speaking practice. It is necessary to decide on the schedule of the meetings; consider carrying out the meetings during a time of the day that does not interfere with students' classes.

d) The establishment of rules is also necessary. For example, participants should commit to attending the meetings; during the conversation club meetings, participants should use English only; participants should commit to preparing in advance (by reading or writing something) to discuss a topic if the group agrees.

e) The appointment of a conversation leader for every meeting is advisable so that everyone gets committed to the success of the activity. Attend the meetings as a guide but try not to dominate the speaking activities. Let the students be the stars!

f) Selecting topics for discussion in the meetings is also necessary. As the guiding teacher, you could bring a list of topics and share it with the groups so that they can select those topics of their interest. Participants could also contribute with more ideas. Remember that this is a space where learners attend voluntarily to practice their English in a friendly atmosphere. Therefore, they should be empowered to hold accountable for the successful development of the meetings.

g) The assortment of the type of speaking activities that will be carried out in the meetings is essential as well. Will participants practice their oral skills through games/ debates/role-plays/casual exchange of ideas/ etc.?

2. Share the dynamics of the activity with your students.

3. Organize conversation club meetings.

4. Have your students carry out the meetings.

5. Evaluate the activity by collecting participants' insights.

6. Keep implementing the activity and make adjustments to it by considering the evaluation results.

## Literature circles

**Description:** Literature circles are small discussion groups that consider students' reading interests as the base to help them practice their language skills.

In literature circles, participants select a piece of literature that is of common interest to all group members and read it on their own (Shelton-Strong, 2012). Selected readings can be of different text types and genres (Irawati, 2016; Widodo, 2016). Roles are assigned to ensure that all students contribute to the discussion meetings; these roles include "Discussion Leader, Real-Life Connector, Passage Person, Summarizer, Graphic Organizer, The If Person, Character Creator, among others" (Maher, 2015, p. 9). Upon agreement, literature circle members get together regularly "… to share ideas, feelings, questions, connections, and judgments about books [other reading

materials] they have read" (Daniels 2002, p. 7 as cited in Widodo, 2016, p. 348). Meetings are carried out until literature circle members finish reading the piece of literature they selected, and a new circle begins.

It is essential to mention that the roles, responsibilities, and products submitted by each member of the literature circle may vary considering the goals the teacher wants to achieve. However, Table 1, developed by Maher (2015, p. 11), can serve as a guide for teachers willing to implement literature circles in their classes. It includes a description of the responsibility that each role in the literature circle has and suggestions of products to be submitted by the individuals performing each role.

**Table 1.** Student roles in literature circles

| Title | Role | Role work to submit |
|---|---|---|
| Discussion leader | Responsible for generating discussion and time … [The discussion leader] must create enough questions to generate discussions | Ten interesting, thought-provoking, discussion-generating questions. |
| Passage person | This person will highlight passage paragraphs to discuss. Ideally, passages that are unclear and require further examination and study collectively. Of particular note are passages that seem important to the overall understanding of the story. | Choose at least three passages in the text, and highlight why you chose them. For example, you thought they were unclear, important, critical to understanding the story, etc. |
| Visualizer | This person will collect several images from the internet. If the student is more creative, they could draw the images as well. Particularly important images would include cultural items or photos of products or people found within that culture [or story]. | Submit ten images from the internet. Ideally, they should be words/items that are culturally different, and seeing a picture would be helpful to the group. |
| Graphic organizer | This person can either draw or collect images from the internet, but they must organize events sequentially with arrows and other diagrams. This person has more of a visual summary type of role. | Submit their graphically organized material. |
| Culture connector | The person with this role records anything in the story that is culturally different or unique that might interest the other members. It can include elements from subcultures, past periods, or foreign cultures. | Submit three uniquely and thought-provoking cultural differences between the readers' world and the story. |

| Vocabulary Wizard | Choose ten words they find that is new and worthwhile to study in order to understand more of the story. | A vocabulary quiz. This role involves creating a vocabulary quiz with matching answers to test their members. |
|---|---|---|
| Real-Life Connector | This role connects events in the story with personal real-life events or hearsay. Then they ask group members if they have had similar experiences. For example, a character has an interaction with a police officer. This person connects his/her own experience with a police officer and then elicits other stories from other members. | Submit two personal real-life connections with the questions to elicit more discussion from other members. |
| Summarizer | Summarize the assigned text for the session. | Submit the summary. |
| The IF master | Creating what if scenarios. For example, what if you were Jay Gatsby? What if you were in his same situation regarding X, what would you do? | Submit two thought-provoking questions such as ¨what if you were X, what would you do in situation Z?¨. |

Source: Table published in EFL literature circles: Collaboratively acquiring language and meaning by Maher (2015, p. 11).

**Objective:** To promote the students' participation in literature circles to enhance their reading skills and spoken output and motivate them to learn English engagingly.

**English level:** all proficiency levels.

**Integrated skills:** listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Plan the dynamics of the reading circle encounters considering the following points:

a) The modality for carrying out the activity -onsite or online- should be decided in advance. If it is onsite, you should secure a venue where the group will meet. If it is online, you should select the video conferencing platform (consider teaching participants how to use it if necessary).

b) Literature circles should be organized considering students' interests in terms of the pieces of literature (type and topic of the book) students may be willing to read.

c) Students' proficiency levels should be considered when selecting the reading materials. As the teacher guide, you should propose a list of pieces of literature that would fit your students' language needs to select the ones that match their interests. Graded readings may be helpful for literature circles.

d) The number of participants that compose the literature circles will depend on the number of roles assigned. For instance, if we are to have all the roles indicated in Table 1, then we should have nine students in a reading circle.

e) Since these discussion groups aim to allow everyone a chance to practice and improve their skills in the target language and enjoy discussing pieces of literature of their interest, students' proficiency levels should be considered when assigning the roles. If the groups are composed of students with varied proficiency levels, then assign those roles that demand more language command to students with a higher proficiency level; leave fewer demanding roles for students with low proficiency levels until they feel ready to take a more significant step to assume more demanding roles. By doing so, we prevent beginning-level participants from getting demotivated for not having enough linguistic resources to comply with the role assigned or advanced learners from getting bored because the task they have to comply with is little demanding.

f) Allow students to assign the roles themselves so that they become empowered and are held accountable for the successful development of the meetings.

g) Meetings should be conducted at least once a week. The number of meetings will depend on how much reading material is assigned for each meeting. Is the book selected for discussion in the literature circles short or long? How many chapters or pages are students going to read and prepare for discussion in each meeting?

h) It is necessary to decide on the schedule of the meetings; consider carrying out the meetings during a time of the day that does not interfere with students' classes.

i) The establishment of rules is also necessary. For example, participants should commit to attending the meetings; participants should commit to complying with the roles assigned for each meeting; during the reading circle meetings, participants should use English only.

j) Attend the meetings as a guide but try not to dominate the speaking activities. Let students be the stars!

2. Share the dynamics of the activity with your students.

3. Organize literature circles meetings.

4. Have your students carried out the meetings.

5. Evaluate the activity by collecting participants' insights.

6. Keep implementing the activity and make adjustments to it by considering the evaluation results.

# Self-recorded videos

**Description:** Similar to oral presentations, self-recorded videos motivate students by offering them an opportunity to engage in spoken production as learners are expected to prepare and present some content or topic through a video recorded in their spare time.

Self-recorded videos allow learners extra oral practice beyond classroom boundaries (Mei-hui, 2016), motivating them to study the language and improve their spoken output (Binnendyk, 2021). As students have some time to prepare for the videos, they have the opportunity to recall information and language studied in class (Barbudo, 2020) and find meaningful use for it. These days, teachers can use social media or platforms such as TikTok to motivate students to record these videos (Xiuwen and Bakar, 2021). The purposes of the self-recorded videos can be many, from giving short oral presentations about familiar topics to stimulating students' reflection on the content they study in class. In this sense, Safitri et al. (2021)

see video-stimulated reflection as a tool with many benefits for learners, including retaining subject content and enhancing their speaking performance.

**Objective:** To use self-recorded videos to provide students with additional practice of their oral skills, enhance their speaking performance, and motivate them to learn English engagingly.

**English level:** all proficiency levels.

**Integrated skills:** listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Decide whether the activity will be developed individually or in small groups and set the work configuration.

2. Assign a topic for students to present in their videos or give them a choice to select the topic themselves. The topic should be assigned considering your students' language proficiency level.

3. Suggest sources for students to find the content they may need to prepare their videos - other videos as models, reading materials, images, etc.

4. Have students plan the dynamics of their videos (venue, content, supporting materials, presenting approach they will follow).

5. Have students compose the script they will follow in the video.

6. Review the plan and script they have prepared and provide feedback.

7. Have students practice their pronunciation and rehearse before recording their videos; ask them to look up the pronunciation of words in a dictionary and practice it; ask students to carry out practice recordings so they can self-evaluate their performance in the videos before doing the final video. In this way, they can monitor different aspects such as organization of their performance, language usage, pronunciation, grammar, etc.

8. Have students record the final version of their videos, upload them to a shareable platform and share the links of the videos with the class (in a forum, for example).

9. Have the audience watch the videos and comment on them. This will allow other students to practice their listening and writing skills as well as for everybody to receive peer feedback.

## Peer conversations

**Description:** Peer conversations or peer dialogues are about students participating in peer-to-peer spoken production that stimulates spontaneous real-life like interactions. This type of activity motivates students by offering them an opportunity to learn how to express themselves in a conversation, negotiate meaning, improvise, and scaffold their learning with the support of their peers.

Second or foreign language classes seek to develop learners' ability to use language to communicate with others. This is said to be achieved when "a language learner can use the language to express his ideas, feelings, and thoughts in the form of [...] dialogue [...] or when language learners can make a conversation with others" (Manurung, 2015, p. 45). According to Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994), a "conversation is a highly organized activity which requires certain skills on the part of the speakers" (p. 41); therefore, finding effective ways to prepare students for spontaneous oral exchange is challenging for educators. As a solution, Huriyah et al. (2020) suggest the implementation of peer conversations. Through peer-to-peer classroom interaction, learners collaborate and develop negotiation skills (Yu, 2008), which are essential to make input comprehensible. Similarly, learners learn to improvise, favoring spontaneous oral production (Fauzan, 2014).

**Objective:** To provide students with opportunities to simulate real-life interactions, promote the enhancement of their conversational skills, and motivate them to learn English engagingly.

**English level:** all proficiency levels.

**Integrated skills:** listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

*Procedure / steps:*

1. Decide whether the activity will be developed in pairs or small groups and set the grouping configurations.

2. Assign a topic for students to talk about or give them a choice to select the topic themselves. Topics should be assigned considering your students' language proficiency level.

3. Suggest sources for students to find linguistic resources or any content they may need to use to facilitate their spoken interaction - dialogues as models, reading materials, images, etc.

4. Provide students with expressions, vocabulary, or grammar points they may need according to the topic they will discuss.

5. Have students plan the dynamics of their interactions in the dialogues/conversations.

6. Have students compose a model script they may use as a guide (especially for beginning-level students; encourage higher level students to interact spontaneously).

7. Review the script they have prepared and provide feedback.

8. Have students practice their pronunciation and rehearse before performing the final version of their conversation/dialogue; ask them to look up the pronunciation of words in a dictionary and practice.

9. Have students perform their dialogues for the whole class so that everyone gets an opportunity to listen to their classmates and learn from their interactions.

10. Have their audience take notes of expressions they find helpful for future use. This will ensure that the audience pays attention to their classmates' presentations and practice their listening and writing skills.

## Mobile apps for autonomous learning

**Description:** Mobile apps motivate students by offering them an opportunity to engage in autonomous language learning. Learners can choose the apps that meet their needs in terms of skills and preferences.

Appropriate use of mobile devices offers many benefits for language learning. The apps that learners can access through their cell phones may allow them to become autonomous and active learners (Cabrera-Solano et al., 2019). Similarly, learners have the possibility of personalizing their learning process and making such learning experiences more engaging and meaningful to themselves (National Educational Technology Plan, 2017, as cited in Fay et al., 2017). The work learners do on these apps can be supplementary to in-class activities (Al-Jarf, 2020). Hossain (2018) mentions the following as advantages for language learners as well:

- [Learners can] practice any item of the language anytime, anywhere.
- The smartphones and the apps are portable.
- The learners do not have to carry books, a pen, and paper.
- They can take tests on the different skills of the target language.
- They can share their proficiency with their friends through the same device.
- They can practice the four skills of the target language on the same device.
- On the apps, they can have lessons and tips on the different skills.
- They can have knowledge and fun together.
- They can be technologically advanced and linguistically benefited simultaneously.
- They can get the apps for free.
- Apps can accompany them 24/7 like an expert teacher on the target language. (Hossain, 2018, p. 2)

*Objective:* To motivate the use of mobile apps to promote students' accountability for their learning, enhance their linguistic skills, and motivate them to learn English engagingly.

*English level:* all proficiency levels.

*Integrated skills:* listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

*Procedure /steps:*

1. Provide your students with a menu of mobile apps that would help them improve their language skills. Make sure the menu of apps includes the practice of different macro and micro-skills as well as that the apps selected include content for different language proficiency levels.

2. Have students select one or more apps according to their interests, needs, and language proficiency level. Help them install the apps on their mobile devices.

3. Encourage students to use the apps for at least ten minutes a day.

4. Monitor students' progress in the apps.

5. Promote opportunities for students to share with the whole class what they are learning in the apps they are using. By doing this, their classmates may feel motivated to try other apps.

6. Reward students for their autonomous effort to improve their skills through mobile apps.

## Case study

*Description:* According to Yakovleva and Yakovlev (2014) case study is about students solving specific cases. The essence of this method is a collective analysis of a situation, finding a solution and a defense of that solution. The learners need to solve problems; for that reason, they participate actively in their learning process.

Various studies have shown that using case studies can generate many benefits in the teaching-learning process. For example, Popil (2011) observed that implementing case studies as a teaching method improved students' critical thinking skills, and as a consequence, their performance increased. On the other hand, Yadav et al. (2014), also observed that learners´ understanding was enhanced when they learned from case-based instruction, compared with traditional teaching methods. In conclusion, these two authors agree that using case studies can help students become more interested in their learning process and connected to the real world.

*Objective:* Students can analyze and discuss cases in classes, sharing their viewpoints and perspectives.

*English level:* it may be for all levels, but it is mainly recommended for higher levels (B1, B2, C1, and C2).

*Integrated skills:* listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

*Procedure / steps:*

1. Divide students into groups. The group size will depend on the case.

2. Have students read a predefined case, data set, scenario, or application. The complexity of the cases should go hand in hand with your students' language proficiency level.

3. Make a list of questions that ask students to reflect on the information and formulate a response to them.

4. Have students discuss and share their ideas and possible responses and solutions for the cases under evaluation.

5. Have students share their final product with other classmates and with the teacher.

## Role-play

*Description:* It is an educational psychodrama-based teaching technique that requires the commitment and interest of participants to complete each stage. It is also a communication technique that helps to develop language skills, facilitates student interaction in class, motivates students, and enhances learning (Perez, 2016). Hamzayevna (2020) stated that role play may develop a student's oral skills. It emphasizes the process of communicating, develops more fluency, and promotes enthusiasm in the classroom, which makes the students speak up; in this way, we would be achieving active participation of the student within the class. Role-play also reduces anxiety when speaking up, and it helps the students to develop different skills of language. Another advantage of role-playing is that learners pretend to be someone else. This helps shy students to overcome their shyness in speaking.

**Objective:** To develop communicative skills during the teaching-learning process of a second language. To help students practice English more realistically.

**English level:** all proficiency levels.

**Integrated skills:** listening, speaking, reading and writing.
**Procedure / steps:**

1. Divide the class into small groups.

2. Introduce the problem or scenario in which students are going to work. The complexity of the situations to be role-played should go hand in hand with your students' language proficiency level. If you are working with new students, you can do an Ice-breaker activity to facilitate students to get to know each other. With an older group, you can use a warm-up activity.

3. Give details about the context that students are going to use. Be very specific. Here, you can also clarify some doubts that students may have.

4. Assign to the students a specific role; in this way, they will know precisely the character that they are going to act. Also, ask them to use their imagination in order to be inside the paper they are representing

5. Act the scenario. Students can start to perform their roles. The teacher needs to be walking around, hearing the conversations, and giving some feedback when it is necessary. If some students finish too early, the teacher can give them a variation of the situation and they can continue talking.

6. Reflect with the class about what they have learned. This experience can be in an oral way; asking students to stand and share with the class their learnings. Also, it can be written, asking students to write a paragraph about their experiences and learnings.

# Poster presentation

**Description:** A poster presentation is an approach to presenting or showing a lecture or oral presentation, creating a different mood through the visuals given. The poster should present a new approach to creativity in the classroom. It aims to make the teaching presentation interesting by using visuals, i.e., and other things that can capture students' attention (Aziz and Jusoff, 2009). In this method, students must prepare an oral presentation on a given topic. With the help of the poster, they will present it to the public.

Poster presentation helps us to make students lose their fear of public speaking and, at the same time, promotes the active participation of both the presenter and the listener, who can ask questions. This participation helps a lot in learning, according to Bergmark and Westman (2018); in their investigation, the students surveyed described strong connections between participation and learning in general, and in particular for their future profession as teachers.

**Objective:** To analyze and evaluate information, synthesize ideas, and creatively demonstrate understanding of a topic or research.

**English level:** all proficiency levels.

**Integrated skills:** speaking, reading and writing.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Divide the class into groups (it also works for individual participation).

2. Establish the topic that students are going to investigate. Select the topics considering students' ages and language proficiency levels, and consider their likes and dislikes.

3. Ask students to read information related to the selected topic.

4. Students need to summarize the main points of the research they have done and create a poster that can include images. This poster is going to be presented in front of the class orally.

5. After the students finish their poster presentation, the teacher needs to review and give feedback. Also, the teacher can ask some other classmates to evaluate the presentation.

## Jigsaw

**Description:** Jigsaw is a research-based cooperative learning technique developed in the early 1978s by Aronson E.  at the University of Texas and the University of California. Each piece and each student's part are essential for completing and understanding the final product (Lalit and Piplani, 2019).

One advantage we can observe within this technique is that it promotes a student-centered class since the teacher is only a facilitator and those who do most of the work are the students. According to Adams (2013), "a jigsaw technique is beneficial in teaching because learning revolves around interaction with peers, students are active participants in the learning process and thereby help to build interpersonal and interactive skills among students" (p. 65).

Here are some suggestions that can make the use of jigsaw more effective.

- Give students enough time to fulfill their roles.

- Try not to use it daily as students might see it as repetitive and boring.

- Try to keep the groups between 4 to 6 students to guarantee the participation of all students.

**Objective:** To increase students' participation in the class. Also, to develop the four language skills and promote the use of cooperative work in the classroom.

**Level:** from A2 to C2.

*Figure 1.*
*Onion ring activity*

*Integrated skills:* listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

*Procedure /steps:*

Sabbah (2016, p. 449) suggests the following steps:

1. Divide the class and the reading material into mother groups of 3 to 6 students. Reading material should be selected considering students' language proficiency level.

2. Each member in each home team takes a sub-topic to study.

3. Group members in each home team who are studying the same topic meet to form expert teams to study and discuss their sub-topic and become experts in that sub-topic.

4. Experts return to their original teams to teach their subtopics to the members within their mother teams.
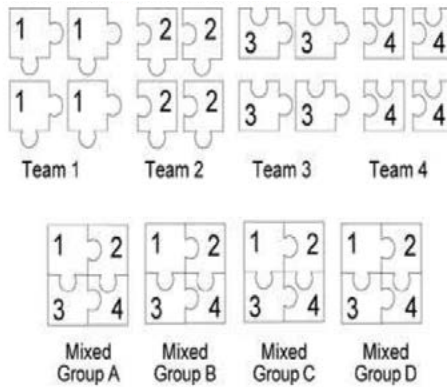


**Figure 1.** Suggested grouping configurations
Source: Sabbah (2016, p. 449).

## Onion ring activity

**Description:** The onion ring is considered an interactive activity which helps learners employ English as a tool for communication (Salter et al., 2017). In this activity, learners feel motivated to learn English since they can express their ideas, feelings, and opinions with their classmates freely.

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*Objective:* To motivate students to interact with their classmates by asking and answering questions about a specific topic.

*English level:* all proficiency levels.

*Integrated skills:* speaking and writing.
*Procedure / steps:*

Richards et al. (2000, p. 181) suggest the following steps:

    1. Firstly, select an appropriate place in the classroom or the school (playground, green areas, library, and others).

    2. Secondly, divide the class into two groups.

    3. Ask learners from group A to make a circle facing inward.

    4. Ask learners from group B to make an inside circle.

    5. Learners in group A and learners in group B must face each other.
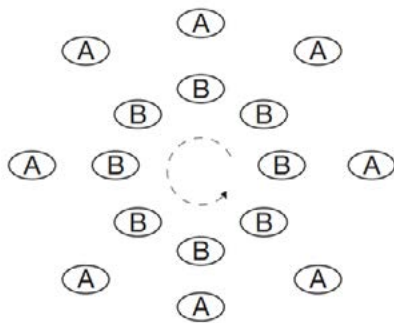
**Figure 2**. Each learner in group B faces a learner from group A
Source: Richards et al. (2000, p. 181).

    6. Explain the task clearly. Tell the pupils that learners from group B will start the conversation by asking questions, and learners from group B will answer those questions. The students from group A can take notes if they find relevant information. Complexity of the questions should be demanded considering students' language proficiency level.

7. Tell the pupils that when the teacher claps his or her hands, the students in group B move to the left, and practice the conversation with a new classmate from group A.

8. Monitor the pupils to work in-depth in the activity and encourage them to speak only in English.

## Fly swatter activity

**Description:** The fly swatter is an activity which facilitates students to develop language skills, and it motivates students to work in pairs or groups collaboratively.

**Objective:** To activate and engage learners to develop speaking and reading skills. **English level:** all proficiency levels.

**Integrated skills:** reading and speaking.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Firstly, give learners a short reading passage, and ask them to read for a few minutes (the selection of the passages should be made considering students' language proficiency level.). Secondly, post various sentences on the entire board.

2. Later, split the class into two teams.

3. Next, ask one member from each team to come over and ask him/her to stand in front of the class with their back facing the board.

4. Then give both learners a fly swatter.

5. After that, ask a question related to the previous reading to the players, and as long as the teacher ends reading the question, learners can face the board, find the answer for the given question, and swat it with the fly swatter. The student who swats the correct answer first will get credit for his/her team.

6. Finally, both players sit down and give other team members to participate (Saputra, 2019).

## Haiku poem

**Description:** Haiku is a form of Japanese poetry. In this task, students have to create a short verse. The most common format is a three-line poem with a 5-7-5 syllable pattern. Lines of the verse are unrhymed (Rzepka and Araki, 2015).
**Objective:** To write and read short verses using English as a communication tool.

**English level:** A2, B1, and B2.

**Integrated skills:** listening, speaking, reading and writing.

**Procedure / Steps:**

1. Tell students they will write a poem of three lines: 5-7-5 syllable style.

2. Ask the students to write the two first lines about nature, university campus, or topics related to the senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell, or taste. It is not necessary to count syllables yet.

3. Next, ask students to write a third line. Ask them to write a completely different line from the first two lines.

4. Then, ask students to read the lines and ask them to rewrite the poem, using the 5-syllable, 7-syllable, 5-syllable format. Tell students that they can experiment with new ideas or new perspectives as they count the syllabus for the final product.

5. Finally, invite learners to share their haiku poems with the class (Ueda, 2020). Students can work individually and in pairs, or groups.

# Running dictation

**Description:** Running dictation is an engaging activity that facilitates the learning process. It helps students recall and retain information. It allows to create a significant relationship between the students and the educator.

**Objective:** To activate students' knowledge and help them become involved in written and interactive skills.

**English level:** A1, A2, B1, and B2.
**Integrated skills:** listening, speaking, reading and writing.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. First of all, prepare a short text.

2. Place the text on the front of the classroom, and place an empty sheet on the other side of the classroom.

3. Next, ask students to work in trios or small groups.

4. In the groups, learners have to delegate a student as a reader, runner, and writer. The reader stays next to the short text and passes the message to the runner. The runner passes the message to the writer. The writer writes the message on the empty sheet. The group that reproduces a similar text to the original is the winner (Agustiani and Yulia, 2018).

# Air writing

**Description:** Air writing is an activity that compresses saying and spelling the words. It creates cognitive impressions and helps cement the word in the learner's memory. This task also engages learners and gives them the value of practice in writing by finger movements (Chen, AlRegib, and Juang, 2016)

**Objective:** To practice spelling and writing by saying words and drawing letters with finger movements.

**English level:** A1, A2, B1, and B2.

**Integrated skills:** writing and reading.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Firstly, ask a volunteer from the class, and show him/her a sentence on the board. Ask the student to read the sentence by underlining the sentence with his/her right hand from left to right.

2. Secondly, ask the student to spell the words of the sentence aloud. At the same time, ask him/her to use the finger of his/her writing hand to air-write each letter of the given words in the sentence.

3. Finally, ask the student to repeat the sentence alone.

## Hide and speak

**Description:** Hide and Speaking is a communicative game which helps learners improve their speaking as well as their listening skills (Dewi et al., 2017).

**Objective:** To motivate students to ask and answer questions using the target language.

**English level:** A1, A2, B1, and B2.

**Integrated skills:** speaking and listening.

*Procedure / steps:*

1. Firstly, write a bunch of questions on small pieces of paper.

2. Secondly, hide the small pieces of paper with the questions in the classroom before learners arrive.

3. Divide the class into two groups.

4. Send the groups on a question hunt. When a learner finds a card, s/he must handle the question to the teacher. The teacher asks the question to the student, and if the student answers it correctly, his or her group obtains extra credit. After finding all pieces of paper with the questions, the group with the most points are the winners.

## Back to the board

**Description:** This activity provides learners to develop their senses and link language with any other previous knowledge they have learned (Donovan, 2017).

**Objective:** To enhance learners to define words by using synonyms and antonyms orally.

**English level:** A1, A2, B1, and B2.

**Integrated skills:** listening and speaking.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Divide the class into two groups.

2. Ask the teams to sit in a semicircle manner facing the board. One empty chair must be put in front of each group.

3. When one group member comes up, s/he must sit facing his or her group and have his or her back to the board.

4. The teacher writes a word on the board, and the students on the semicircle must describe the word on the board using synonyms, antonyms, definitions, and others.

5. The student on the seat listens to the given description and tries to guess the word. The student who guesses the word gets extra credit for his or her group. Students in the semicircle can come over the seats and move on with the game.

## Buzz the answer

**Description:** It is a cooperative learning technique in which learners work in groups to develop a specific task (Fatmavati, 2020). Throughout this game, educators can measure how much learners know about a specific topic (geography, history, grammar, vocabulary, and so forth.)

**Objective:** To analyze answers to a given question in groups and to select the correct answer based on group discussion.

**English level:** A1, A2, B1, and B2.

**Integrated skills:** listening and speaking.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Split the class into four groups.

2. Place the groups in the four corners of the classroom.

3. In the middle of the class, set a buzzer.

4. Read out a question with three options, and then countdown from 10 to 1. During this time (10-1), learners discuss the possible answers in groups and choose the correct option.

5. When the teacher says number one, one group member has to run to press the buzzer. The first one to press the buzzer and say the right option, obtain one extra point for his or her team. If, for any reason, the answer is incorrect, the second one who presses the buzzer can tell the answer.

# Famous film freeze frames

**Description:** This task allows learners to create and tell stories based on events from movies or films. This task involves planning, discussion, and performance (Dervishaj, 2017).

**Objective:** To motivate students to describe and guess scenes from movies.

**English level:** A1, A2, B1, and B2.

**Integrated skills:** listening and speaking.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Split students into groups of four or five.

2. Each group has to select a famous movie, and they have to select four of the most emblematic scenes of the movie. They recreate the scenes as freeze frames. Every student has to be on the scene, and they must not talk at all. Learners can play as objects, chairs, tables, trees, and so forth. When the four freeze frames have been practiced in the groups, they must present to the entire class.

3. The audience has to watch the four scenes in silence.

4. After the four scenes have been presented, the audience has to tell the stories of the scenes they have seen, and they have to tell the name of the movie.

5. The winner is the group that obtains more guesses.

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6. If the audience cannot guess the name of the movie, the group has to tell the name of the movie.

## Balloon Darts

**Description:** It lets the students be active in the class and engage learners to speak as they are involved in a challenging task (Hagos et al., 2020).

**Objective:** To ask and answer questions based on specific tasks.

**English level:** A1, A2, B1, and B2.

**Integrated skills:** reading and speaking.

**Procedure / steps:**

1. Write questions about a specific topic on small pieces of paper.
2. Insert the question in a balloon and blow it up.
3. Tie the balloons to a plywood backboard or the classroom wall.
4. Then line up the participants and give them three darts.
5. Learners have to throw the darts against the balloons. If they pop the balloons, they have to answer the questions.
6. If he or she answers correctly, he or she receives a prize. The teacher can also award prizes based on the total number of balloons they popped. Ask learners to keep discipline and to use the darts carefully.

# Chapter reflections

*How may the activities and strategies presented in this chapter impact on university students' motivation to learn English?*

Spolsky's (1985) model of second language acquisition proposes that, for language learning to occur, it is necessary to provide learners with practice opportunities (as cited in O'Malley and Chamot, 1995). Felder (1995) suggests that continuous lectures (teacher-centered classes) may cause the class to become monotonous, and therefore, boring. Furthermore, Felder (1995) asserts that students who become bored in class tend to become inattentive, leading to a drop in their motivation toward the course. This may cause students to give up on the class, as they may conclude that they are not good at learning English, for example. Consequently, teachers should offer learners an array of opportunities to use and practice the target language, thereby motivating them and leading to favorable learning outcomes. In line with this, participants in a study conducted by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) reported that activities such as role-plays, debates, film-making, games, singing, and preparing group presentations, among others, increased their enjoyment in their foreign language classes.

With this in mind, we consider that the communicative strategies and activities included in this chapter will have a positive impact on university students' motivation to learn English. All of the activities and strategies suggested evoke students' active participation in their learning process and the use of the language and different language skills in meaningful ways. As proposed in the procedures or steps of each activity/strategy, the tasks students should perform to accomplish the final products range from cognitively undemanding to cognitively demanding tasks. In other words, students start working in small activities until they get involved in more complex ones, allowing for the scaffolding of their knowledge. Likewise, these activities and strategies require students' hands-on participation (igniting their creativity) and collaboration among peers, ensuring the reinforcement of social and affective processes. Collaboration, social interaction, and the development of supportive activities are vital in foreign language learners' motivation as they allow learners to move through the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) and achieve

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their learning goals. Finally, in the procedures, we recommend considering students' interests, needs, and language proficiency levels, which will ensure their motivation while participating in the development of the activities/strategies.

## Concluding remarks

A motivating class environment provokes enhanced learning outcomes in students. Therefore, teachers should plan and select activities, techniques, and strategies that allow them to spice up their classes while helping them to accomplish their teaching goals. In this sense, implementing diverse communicative activities in second/foreign language classes enriches the teaching and learning process by creating a motivating atmosphere where students feel ready and willing to learn.

With this in mind, in this chapter, we have included a detailed teaching methodology guide concerning twenty-one communicative techniques and strategies. Even though we have included the objectives, proficiency levels, and steps to follow for the implementation of each strategy and activity, it is worth mentioning that these procedures are not set in stone and can be adapted according to students' needs and settings. We expect that the information included in this chapter will be helpful for foreign language teachers to put these strategies, techniques, and activities into practice in their classes and stimulate their students' motivation to learn English.

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