Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation in Senior High School Students from Margarita Cortés Educational Institution in Esmeraldas, Ecuador

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Abstract

The present study had as main purpose to determine which types of motivation (Extrinsic or Intrinsic) the students from the First Year of Baccalaureate of Accounting and Informatics specialties, from Margarita Cortés institution, experienced when they learned English as a foreign language. To achieve this purpose, a survey based on the Attitude and Motivation test battery from Gardner was adapted and applied to 58 participants from the mentioned institution. The results of the study showed that the students experienced an extrinsic motivation to learn this language. Also, it must be emphasized that even though the type of motivation most experienced was extrinsic, the intrinsic also obtained a high percentage.

Key Words: motivation; extrinsic; intrinsic; Baccalaureate students

Introduction

Today English has taken a very important role as a lingua franca in many countries (Jenkins, 2009), therefore, it is vital that Ecuador, and particularly Esmeraldas, becomes part of this globalization process. When talking about Lingua Franca it refers to a language that is adopted as a common language between speakers whose native languages are different (Oxford, 2015). It means that a lingua franca gives people the possibility to communicate among them even if they do not have the same mother tongue or first language.

Nowadays, in countries in development, it is usual to see how important English is. Its importance lies on the fact that the necessity of people with knowledge in English is increasing day by day and that this language cannot be neglected if people want to move on. Even in small cities like Esmeraldas, English is being used more frequently.

According to Esmeralda's news, learning English is an imperative need because this one is an international language. It denotes that even in small cities, in developing ones like Esmeraldas, English has an important role. And it is not only because of better job opportunities in this city, but also because nowadays people use English for everything. The English demand is increasing with the time and people should keep up this process.

Currently, English is an essential part of the curriculum of schools and universities. For this reason, parents and teachers encourage students to acquire this new tool of communication anyway.

As it is well known in Ecuador, specifically in Esmeraldas, the English language is not considered as an important tool in the development of the labor and student field. There are several reasons which show that English is not important and prestigious as it should be. First, because English has been taken as a compulsory subject in the syllabus imposed by the government instead of as an important tool of communication; students think in English as another subject to pass, as a barrier in their curriculum, and sometimes it can happen because teachers do not point out the advantages or importance that the learning of the English language has. The importance of English resides in the utility that currently has, years before this language was learnt by people in specific situations, conditions and for determined areas such as teaching, translation and no more. The learning of this language was limited by the field in which it was going to be developed. It means it was developed in specific areas, but later in their daily routine or directly in their lives it was not included. However, nowadays English is observed from a different point of view; currently it is a necessity, an essential part of the integral and labor development of the individual itself.

Second Language (SL)

Some authors such as Gass and Selinker (2008) mention that Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is a complex field whose focus is the attempt to understand the processes underlying the learning of a second language. In other words, SLA is a learning process which involves an intricate procedure, due to the fact that in addition to learn a language, learners try to comprehend what this process includes. SLA is acquiring a language or a second one; a second language can be acquired at any time or age, the only aspect they must take into account is to develop the language skills integrally; it means to develop the four principal skills: listening, writing, reading and speaking. There exists a brief but significant difference between learning a second language as native and learning a language as a non-native speaker. A second language is generally called target language while for native speakers is called L1. According to Noam Chomsky (as cited in Forbes, 2015) it does appear that young children have a much richer capacity to develop and to acquire many languages simultaneously than adults have. Noam Chomsky states that children have a higher capacity to acquire languages than adults and it is due to the fact that children acquire language unconsciously; in other words children acquire language just living it day by day because of their natural exposure to language while adults need to learn structures and patterns (grammar) which lead them to create sentences, paragraphs and generally language in a fluent way.

According to Gass and Selinker (2008) the study of any new discipline needs to take into consideration the familiarization of oneself with the specific terminology of that field. It denotes that any area has a particular glossary, and to be involved in this part of the process depend exclusively on us. Each area handles a specific lexicon, which will help learners to understand the topics and issues covered in the area. In this case the SLA

is not the exception; the most common terms in this field are Second Language (L2), Native Language (NL) and Target Language (TL).

TL (Target Language) is related to the contents that learners are studying, taking into account what they want to learn or what they must learn according to their teachers. According to The Free Dictionary (2003) target language is a language that a nonnative speaker is in the process of learning. The target language is the goal that nonnative speakers want to achieve. This is a process that the individual proposes himself to achieve because of many factors he or she considers.

NL (Native Language) makes reference to the first language acquired by a child, generally known as mother tongue or primary language (Gass and Selinker, 2008). It is the first language people acquire while they are children in an early age. A first language represents the culture, customs and traditions of each country. The first or native language indicates the cultural identity of an individual due to the fact that this one creates confidence, personality and a sense of belonging to the individual.

L2 is defined as the learning of any language after the L1 has been learned, even if it is the third, fourth or fifth language learned after the L1 (Gass and Selinker, 2008). In other words, L2 is the process to acquire a language as part of the first language or mother tongue. This process includes the speaking and writing of the language in a fluent way. According to educacion.com webpage, a central characteristic defining second language acquisition is that it occurs in the context in which that language is spoken. For example, native Spanish speakers learning English in the United States or native German speakers learning Japanese in Japan are considered second language learners.

Learning Strategies

Teachers have to take into consideration that learning strategies are essential in the learning process, due to the fact that they determine the best tactics, strategies and methods to work on with students. Those strategies include several tips or methods that allow them to memorize or internalize information. Some students learn doing (kinesthetic), others watching (visual) and others listening (auditory). Each type of learning permits the individual to acquire data in a competent and effective way. Domanaki (as cited in Oxford and Nyikos, 1989) supports that learning strategies are essential inside the learning process for several reasons.

First, the correct use of the learning strategies will increase the possibilities of the learners to succeed, due to the fact that they will provide them the tools for developing the learning process in a correct, ordered and practical way. This process is consciously developed by learners to help them in the effective acquisition of information.

Second, the learning strategies contribute to the autonomy and responsibility of the self-learning of the individual. In other words, learners take conscience of the importance of guiding their self-learning, of developing their capacity of self-motivation and become autonomous people for achieving their aims

successfully. Learning strategies contribute to the self-motivation and autonomy of learners, which will increase their probabilities to learn even more. Autonomous students take on their shoulders the responsibility of their own learning, it means that they learn by themselves using books, internet or any medium that allow them to acquire data instead of just waiting to be taught as the rest.

Constructional models

It must be mentioned that according to Gardner (2006) it is possible to consider two types of constructional models. It means that Gardner's research shows that in addition to the already established types of motivation such as extrinsic (external factors), intrinsic (internal factors), integrative (affinity for people who speak a distinct language) – instrumental (profit some social or economic reward through the learning of a second language), there are two other models called Language Learning Motivation and Classroom Learning Motivation. The first is related to the motivation to learn a second language (Gardner, 2006). This type of motivation is generally experienced in a language learning context. It is that it is acquired or transmitted through the learning or acquisition of L2, there are certain factors that increase the willingness to learn a second language in this case language learning motivation is specifically related to the motivation toward language.

Motivation on Second Language Acquisition

Motivation is a fundamental factor on learning a second language. It is defined as the desire or willingness to do something; enthusiasm (Oxford, 2013). In other words motivation is the predisposition and enthusiasm that allow people to accomplish short and long term goals they propose. Related to second language acquisition, motivation plays an essential role, due to the fact that as learning languages is in part difficult, motivation will help the learner to forget that part and to be concentrated in the goals they are going to reach. In addition, the interaction will help learners to realize certain aspects such as: intonation, pitch, pronunciation, which sometimes are not applied correctly. Also, through this intercommunication, they can improve and be corrected when necessary.

Students' motivation depends on many factors: good teachers full of knowledge and abilities that develop in students the encouragement to be someone better, the support given by their parents, and even classmates, which will increase the confidence and the effort put in the study of any subject. Furthermore, it is very important for students to receive clear and direct instructions. Students need to be sure about what they are going to do, getting confused with the instructions and activities only will decrease their motivation toward the acquisition of the language. If teachers are precise and explicit, they will accomplish the tasks or activities in an easier and better way.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

As Ryan and Deci (2000) point out, Intrinsic Motivation happens when someone is doing an activity for his or her inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence. It means that Intrinsic Motivation is the willingness to learn something for learners' decision, something that comes from within. Intrinsic motivation is closely related to the self- satisfaction for developing activities, tasks and learning in general, while extrinsic motivation is the opposite. This kind of motivation is generated by external factors.

Extrinsic motivation is when students establish goals for themselves for specific reasons, which are not associated directly to their willingness to learn, but to the rewards or outcomes they are going to receive. According to Dev (as cited in Peek, 2004) students can be described as extrinsically motivated when they are engaged in learning purely for the sake of attaining a reward or for avoiding some punishment. Students with these characteristics generally do a task or any activity for the outcome that they will receive, for the expectation of getting something, like candies, extra points, privileges, stickers and in the case of parents, even money. Extrinsically motivated students are not focused on the process itself but on the expectation of what they are going to receive as a result.

Method

Research Hypothesis

The survey applied in this research was directly related to two types of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic. It permitted to determine which of them was the most experienced by teenagers from the 4th level of Baccalaureate of Accounting and Informatics from Margarita Cortés high school, a public Institution located in Esmeraldas city, Ecuador.

The participants answered about their agreement or disagreement with the questions proposed. The survey consisted of fourteen questions; seven related to intrinsic motivation and seven related to extrinsic motivation. The present research tried to prove the following hypothesis: Students will experience both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, due to the fact that they and their parents are looking for better opportunities of job in Esmeraldas and because there are some students that like English.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this research was the Attitude and Motivation test battery by Gardner (1985). The main purpose of this questionnaire was to show and analyze the motivation and level of agreement and disagreement

toward learning foreign languages, in this specific case English. This test measures a wide range of parameters of language learning. The questionnaire was developed through the Likert scale method, which let students show the specific level in which they think they agreed or disagreed. This research is based on specifically two types of motivation: Intrinsic and Extrinsic.

Attitude and Motivation Test Battery

The present research applies the Attitude and Motivation test battery created by Gardner in 1985, which has 118 questions. It covers four different types of motivation: extrinsic, intrinsic, instrumental and integrative. This questionnaire is directly related to the motivation that people experience toward foreign languages, their aptitudes, desire and willingness to acquire a second language.

 Those questions used the Likert Scale format; according to McLeod (2008), Likert (1932) created a method in which people stated their level of agreement and disagreement with any topic proposed, in other words people can express how low or big was their agreement or disagreement with a specific issue. In the present research, the researcher made an adaptation of the original questionnaire. Those variables are in detail explained in the next paragraph:

First the survey was translated from English to Spanish; it is because of the lack of the English knowledge of students, second, the Gardner´s questionnaire has 118 items, while in this research the researcher only used 14 items; third Gardner's questionnaire contains four types of motivation: intrinsic, extrinsic, integrative and instrumental, while the survey applied by the researcher contains only two, intrinsic and extrinsic. Furthermore Gardner's questionnaire is based on the motivation toward foreign languages, while this one is exclusively based on the motivation toward the English language.

Participants

For this research, a sample of 58 students of baccalaureate level from Margarita Cortés High school, a public Institution located in Esmeraldas City, was taken. They were from the 1st level of secondary, and their ages vary from 14 and 15 years old. There are two groups defined in this sample: the first group with 30 students belonging to Informatics and the second one with 28 students belonging to the specialty of Accounting.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The statistical exploration of the collected data was tabulated through Microsoft Excel 2010 in order to figure out the kind of motivation experienced by the sample (Students from Margarita Cortés High school); extrinsic or intrinsic. The tool used for standardizing the data was a pie graphic.

Results

Related to intrinsic motivation, as sated in figure 1, the pie denotes that a high percentage (36%) strongly agreed with this kind of motivation. In other words, participants think about intrinsic motivation as a way to learn languages by their own, and because of their willingness. In contrast, there is a low percentage (7%), which reflects that some participants have a different point of view about this issue. It can be related to many things such as their disinterest in English or any other language, their preference by another subject or field, or just because they do not like it. On the other hand a 22% stated that they moderately agreed with this kind of motivation, which denotes that majorities are going by the same route.
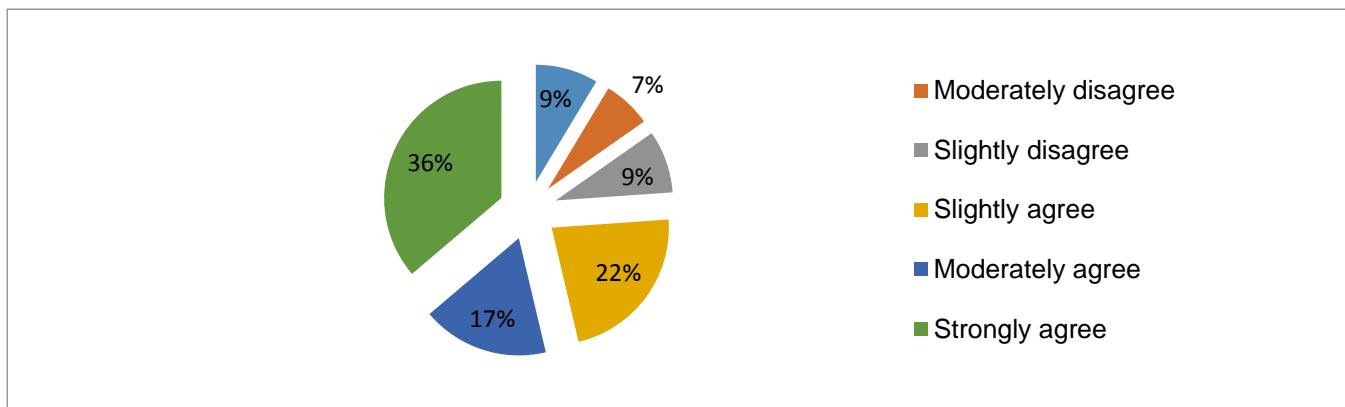

Figure 1: **General view of survey related to the Intrinsic Motivation**

Related to Extrinsic Motivation, (Figure 2), the results denote that a high percentage (44%) feel extrinsically motivated toward learning English. It may happen because currently English is increasing the job opportunities in this city. Many people are finding jobs because of their knowledge of English. Furthermore, it clearly represents that these sample want to acquire this language because of the benefits that this language brings with it. In this moment English is the bridge for them that will allow them to get the real objective they proposed since the beginning. In contrast with this result there is a low percentage (4%) that determines the sample wants to learn English because of internal reasons. It means that they like this language itself, for their culture or because they feel motivated to learn more each day.
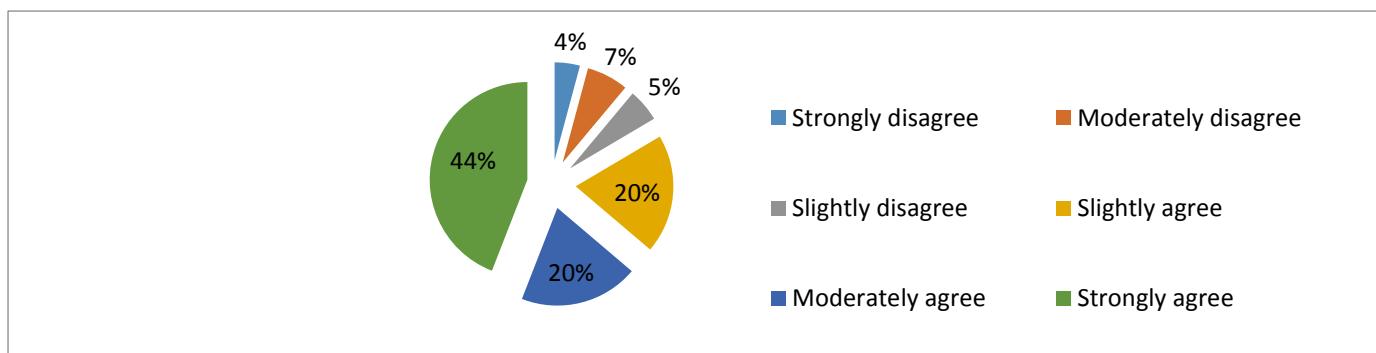
Figure 2. **General view of survey related to the Extrinsic Motivation**

An overall view denotes that an 84% of the sample in general terms agreed with this kind of motivation. It means that a high amount of the sample wants to learn English because of external factors. Those factors could be related to educational or labor purposes. In the case of educational fields would be because they may want to follow a profession for which English is compulsory. In relation to the labor field may be because of the job opportunities that English would bring with it.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the types of motivation (Intrinsic and Extrinsic) experienced by students of First Year of Baccalaureate of the Informatics and Accounting specialties from Margarita Cortés high school when they learn English. The results determined with a high 84% that the sample felt extrinsically motivated toward learning English. In other words, students want to learn English because of the opportunities and benefits that it may bring to their lives but not for the mere sake of enjoying the language itself. The general objective of the research was to discover the types of motivation (Intrinsic and Extrinsic) experienced by students of First level of Informatics and Accounting specialties from Margarita Cortés high school when they learn English. The objective was successfully achieved with an 84% as result. It means that through the development of this investigation, it could be determined that students feel extrinsically motivated to learn English as a second language.

On the other hand, the specific objectives of the research were to create a questionnaire for determining what kind of motivation students experienced, to apply the questionnaire and to analyze the collected data through statistic operations. All those objectives were reached in an integral way. It is that the objectives were fully completed. The questionnaire was based and created from the Attitude and Motivation test battery; Gardner (1985) with some adaptations according to the sample's context and conditions then it was handling on

January, 2015 in Margarita Cortés high school and finally the data collected were analyzed and tabulated through the Microsoft Excel Programme.

Another important aspect to take into consideration is that the hypothesis was not fully reached as it was expected. The hypothesis stated by the researcher was "students will experience both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, due to the fact that they and their parents are looking for better opportunities of job in Esmeraldas and because there are some students that like the mentioned language itself". The results of the survey obtained through statistical operations showed that 84% of the students feel extrinsically motivated to learn this language. Even the hypothesis was not fully completed, it can be said that the difference between the percentages is not so big. There is a 16% of difference between both. The theoretical background proves that the data collected through the survey has more similarities than differences. The information collected in the research shows that generally students feel motivated by rewards and outcomes and the survey was a reliable proof of that. Another important point to focus on is the importance of the teacher's role and motivation in the classroom. The survey showed that a high amount of students are not motivated toward learning English because of their teachers, which could be directly related to the lack of learning strategies and methods applied in class or because they do not maintain a good rapport among them.

Furthermore, it must be kept in mind that the possibilities related to the lack of students' motivation are very similar because the researcher could note that aspects such as environment, context and community influenced in a direct way the development of this process. Some of those adolescents are involved in chaotic contexts without their parents' guidance and support. According to some teachers of this high school it is very common that teenagers' parents do not attend to the school's meetings or when they are summoned because of matters related to their children. Family, friends and community are aspects that affect in a positive or negative way the children's learning. For those reasons, parents must be aware of their role and the importance of people's behavior around their children. The context also plays an essential role inside this process because teachers realize that some students do not exploit their full potential because of the problems, insecurities and bad influences surrounding them. Parents and teachers need to be aware of the high influence that those factors have on students; they need to focus on getting away, establish dialogues with them or creating alternative activities that distract them of possible causes of failure or long- term problems.

The most probable causes of their lack of students' interest and motivation toward learning English as a second language are varied. Those are causes which are related, aspects like the family and context, the monotony in which teachers teach this language. It must be emphasized that those children come from poor families with low economic resources and divorced, which directly affect their academic results.

When teachers enter those classrooms it is very obvious to identify the total disinterest of students toward English. Some of those students are totally lost because some of them come from Public Institutions in which

they have never studied the English subject, others because of problems at home and the rest because they do not consider that English is an important subject in their curriculum. According to some dialogues established previously by the researcher in her practicum with students, she realized that the lack of students' motivation is not focused directly toward English but to their integral education, what means to all of the subjects they receive in the classroom.

This, at the same time has sparked a series of social problems that take hold of these young people lives. In the context the sample of students was taken, many things that must be taken into consideration occurred. There were many young mothers, there were alcohol and addiction problems, a lack of communication between students and their parents and children with attitude problems.

Finally, the process was accomplished integrally without any kind of problem. It must be denoted that although the questionnaire was done in Spanish students had certain problems of interpretation with the survey, which could be related to problems with the subject Language and Literature itself. Further studies must be done in this area because it is vital to find out much more alternatives and methods to encourage current societies to learn English. Furthermore, people must be conscious of the importance of self- motive for achieving any goal they propose in their lives.

Conclusions

Students have willingness to learn English because it will allow them to achieve their real short and long term objectives. This was determined by a high percentage (84%) that felt extrinsically motivated toward learning English. Some adolescents do not take the teaching of this subject seriously, which is closely related to the ideology that English does not work in real life.

Recommendations

Teachers need to emphasize the importance of learning English by itself instead of learning because of the expectation of getting something. Rewards and outcomes must be part of the process but not the principal goal of the process.

Learning strategies and a good rapport among teacher and students must be taken into account in the class. Even if the class cannot be personalized because of the number of students in the classroom, teachers need to determine certain strategies and alternatives which will allow students to acquire confidence with them in less time and in an easier way.

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