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**THE ROLE OF MOTIVATION IN ESL LEARNING**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to discuss how the affective factor *Motivation* can influence the learning of English as a second language in an undergraduate pre-service teacher education course, more specifically in the Portuguese/English and Correspondent Literatures major at the Federal University of the Pampa (Universidade Federal do Pampa). This research works on different views of motivation: Intrinsic and Extrinsic motivation; Instrumental and Integrative motivation; and Behavioristic, Cognitive and Constructivist motivation. Our focus lies on the possible correlation between motivation and dropout. For data collection, we created two quizzes and applied them to 20 students. The first quiz was applied to 10 students of Portuguese and English. The second one was applied to 10 students who started studying both languages but eventually gave up English. The results show that intrinsically motivated students are less likely to give up the second language. No correlation was found between dropout and the other views of motivation investigated.

Key-words: affective factors, motivation, dropout, ESL

## RESUMO

Este artigo objetiva discutir como o fator afetivo *Motivação* pode influenciar a aprendizagem de Inglês como segunda língua em um curso de Licenciatura, mais especificamente no curso de Licenciatura em Letras: Inglês/Português e Respectivas Literaturas da Universidade Federal do Pampa (UNIPAMPA), campus Bagé/RS. Esta pesquisa trabalha com diferentes visões de motivação: intrínseca e extrínseca; instrumental e integrativa; e construtivista, cognitiva e behaviorista. O foco do trabalho é na possível correlação entre motivação e evasão. Para a coleta de dados, criamos dois questionários e aplicamos a 20 estudantes. O primeiro foi aplicado a 10 alunos de português e inglês. O segundo foi respondido por 10 alunos que começaram a estudar as duas línguas mas acabaram desistindo do inglês. Os resultados mostram que os alunos com mais motivação intrínseca têm menor probabilidade de desistirem da segunda língua. Nenhuma correlação foi encontrada entre a evasão e as demais visões de motivação investigadas.

Palavras-chave: fatores afetivos, motivação, evasão, ESL.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

School dropout is one of the factors that have been concerning researchers in the teaching-learning area the most. As it is known, governments have been creating many policies to try to diminish its rate, but it is a complex topic because it depends on public investment in Education. However, the government is not the unique responsible for school dropout, it is also due to family problems, social demands and individual factors, especially those involving affect.

According to Arnold and Brown (1999:1), affective factors are those related to “emotion, feeling, mood or attitude which condition behavior”. The authors claim that we should understand the affective domain for two reasons. The first one is that teachers who understand students’ affective side can help overcome problems created by negative emotions and create and use more positive emotions that lead to more effective language learning, like self-esteem, empathy and motivation. The second reason is that language teachers should be concerned not only with language learning, but also with learning to live in society. Arnold and Brown quote Goleman to state that our society has focused on people’s rational, cognitive side, and “selfishness, violence, and meanness of spirit seem to be rotting the goodness of our communal lives (...) There is growing evidence that fundamental ethical stances in life stem from underlying emotional capabilities” (GOLEMAN, apud ARNOLD & BROWN, 1999:3). So the authors recommend that we bring to the classroom mind and heart.

Amongst the various affective factors worth studying, like self-esteem, risk-taking, anxiety, empathy, extroversion, inhibition, motivation, learning styles, beliefs, personality, among others, this research will explore learners’ motivation, since, from my own experience as a student and also as a teacher, I have always noticed that some students, in the same classroom and using the same resources, respond differently to language learning.

Assuming that motivation conditions behavior and, as Arnold and Brown (1999:1) state, can lead to more effective language learning and that, on the other hand, lack of motivation can lead to dropout, the main goal of this research is to find out if there is a correlation between motivation (or lack of it) and dropout in the Languages Program at the Federal University of the Pampa (Universidade Federal do Pampa). I also intend to identify students’ specific types of motivation when learning ESL (English as a Second Language). My main research questions are: “What are the

motivations of prospective ESL teachers?” and “What types of motivation are present in those who finish the program and those who quit?” My hypothesis is that prospective ESL teachers who complete the program present more intrinsic, integrative and cognitive motivation than those who quit.

Though there are interesting studies about motivation, not many have been conducted on an undergraduate pre-service teacher education course. This research intends to help fulfill this lacuna. This work is also justified by the possibility of helping not only teachers but also students to verify how much motivation is part of the language learning process and how much effort they are willing to apply on studying English.

## **2. DROPOUT**

School dropout is the name given to the interruption of the process of studying in any educational level. Considering public schools and universities<sup>1</sup>, I must say that dropout means a waste of society’s money, which not only has a tremendous social impact but also undermines economic growth when people do not graduate to work in specific areas as expected while others cannot apply to those same programs due to the limitation of number of students accepted per year or semester in the Universities. According to the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC), the alarming number of 54% of the undergraduate students in public universities quit studying at some stage of their graduation. Silva Filho (2007) has studied dropout rates in many different regions of Brazil and he says that the state of Rio Grande do Sul, located in the South of Brazil, has one of the highest levels of college dropout, considering both public and private institutes.

The university analyzed in this work – Universidade Federal do Pampa (UNIPAMPA) - is a relatively new institution (7 years old) with ten campi spread onto small towns in the far south region of Brazil. The campus of Bagé offers ten undergraduate courses including Chemistry Engineering, Computer Engineering, Food Engineering, Production Engineering and Renewable Energies and Environment Engineering. In the teaching area, the university works with Physics, Mathematics,

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<sup>1</sup> “Public”, in Brazil, means that students do not pay tuition; they pay for books, housing, and transportation.

Chemistry, Music and Language pre-service teacher education courses. The latter is divided into three majors, Portuguese Language and Literature, Portuguese/Spanish and Correspondent Literatures, and Portuguese/English and Correspondent Literatures. The focus of this work lays on dropout rates in the latter.

The Languages Program started in 2006, along with the foundation of the university. Each year, the program receives a hundred new students, except in 2007, when sixty students entered. The first year of study is the same in the three modalities, but in the second year students need to choose the specific language(s) they are going to go on studying. I chose to analyze the Languages Program due to its considerable dropout level, more specifically in the Portuguese/English major.

UNIPAMPA has a specific way of registering and characterizing dropout. The academic department of Campus Bagé has produced a table with the number of students who have left the undergraduate programs at any given time since the foundation of the university. This table distinguishes the following categories of students: those who simply quitted the program, those who changed the language, those who transferred to another program in the same institution, those who transferred to another university, the diseased and the graduated.

Students who quitted are those who simply abandoned the program with or without officially closing their enrollment in the institution. The ones who changed the language are those who decided for one of the second languages usually in the second year of the program or those who started and quitted the second language to keep studying only Portuguese. The ones who changed the program are those who quitted the Languages Program and applied for one of the other programs available at the university, such as engineering or another pre-service teacher education course. The students who changed the university are the ones who left UNIPAMPA to study in another university or college, public or private. The diseased are those who died while still enrolled at the university. Finally, the graduated are the students who successfully finished the program.

I am going to analyze in detail all the data related to dropout at the Languages Program, but first it is worth discussing the factors that can affect students' development in a program and result in dropout. These factors can be divided into intrinsic and extrinsic, that is, caused by the student or caused by other people or the surrounding environment. Extrinsic factors are, for example, low-quality educational system, lack of public policies to identify and diminish dropout rates, relationship



problems (student-student, student-teacher, student-institution), family problems, financial problems, among others. Intrinsic factors, on the other hand, are those related to, for example, students' own decisions, students' incompatibility with the program, shift in interest, among others. In the next section, I am going to discuss more about the affective factors and how they relate to dropout rates in public universities.

### 3. AFFECTIVE FACTORS

The process of learning a language is not only influenced by learners' cognitive side, but also by the affective domain.

The affective domain is the emotional side of human behavior, and it may be juxtaposed to the cognitive side. The development of affective states or feelings involves a variety of personality factors, feelings both about ourselves and about others with whom we come into contact (BROWN, 2007:153).

As it is possible to see from Brown's words, personality factors are of great importance for teaching because students are not just sensible to the content they are learning, they are also affected by their own feelings and the feelings of the people they are in contact with, classmates and teacher, for example.

Brown (2007) describes students' affective factors and their influence on the language learning process. He identifies the five steps students go through while learning a language: *Receiving*, *Responding*, *Valuing*, *Organizing* and *Value System*. *Receiving* is one's capacity to open their mind to stimulus; the subject must want to engage in the process of learning ESL, which is not completely natural, paying attention to the surrounding environment as a whole. The next level is *Responding*, but responding when the person feels ready, not obliged, and hopefully satisfied with the response. Only then, students may reach the capacity of *Valuing*. It means that the learner can say if something is worth or not, what is important for him/her at the moment. The fourth level is *organizing*. After students value something as important, they must be able to connect all the important things into an organized system, putting everything into a scale of importance. At the end of this process, students have their *Value System*, which can be described as a "philosophy or worldview" (BROWN, 2007:153) created during/with the steps described above, and they usually act according to it.

Besides this five-level system, Brown (2007) focuses on the following affective factors: Self-esteem, Risk-taking, Anxiety, Empathy, Extroversion and Motivation.

**Self-esteem**

This factor is related to how individuals see themselves and to the reflections of this image upon their behavior toward language learning.

**Risk-taking**

This component refers to behavior, to how committed the learner is to take the risk of making mistakes while practicing the target language. High levels of risk-taking can bring positive results to learning.

**Anxiety**

It can be seen as a tension caused by uncomfortable situations and worries about one’s knowledge level. It is highly important to prevent that this feeling blocks the individual’s will to communicate while he/she is still learning the language.

**Empathy**

Empathy refers to the social aspect of the language learning, the relation between language and culture. When people have empathy for the language, they want to see themselves as part of the target culture(s).

**Extroversion**

Extroversion is related to one’s need to receive good feedback from others. Extroverts are not necessarily talkative.

**Motivation**

This is one of the most important affective factors, according to Brown (2007), and it is also the focus of this study. Motivation is a central question to language learning but, at the same time, it is intriguing because it involves many theories and categories. This factor is a tough question to work on since, even though it is an internal affective aspect, there are also many external factors involved. The environment where the subject lives, the opportunity of contact with the target language and his/her background experiences are examples of those external factors. Brown (2007) describes three perspectives on motivation:

Behavioristic	Cognitive	Constructivist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anticipation of reward</li> <li>• Desire to receive positive reinforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driven by basic human needs (exploration, manipulation, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social context</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Social status</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External, individual forces in control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree of effort expended</li> <li>• Internal, individual forces in control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security of group</li> <li>• Internal, interactive forces in control</li> </ul>
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**Table 1 - Three views of motivation (BROWN, 2007:163)**

On the one hand, the behavioristic motivation is related to the actions the subject does in order to be rewarded by external forces; that is, other individuals instead of himself/herself. On the other hand, cognitive motivation is related to the subject's willingness to make the necessary effort to achieve the objectives he/she finds important. It is not about receiving reward from others, but enjoying an internal individual sense of success. The third view of motivation, constructivist, is related to both factors described above; that is, learners are motivated not only by internal reasons, as "the need for knowledge" (BROWN, 2007:169), but also by external reasons, as reward.

Another way of addressing motivation is dividing it into two categories: integrative and instrumental. This categorization was first established by Gardner and Lambert (1972), but today many scholars, like Lightbown and Spada (2006) and Brown (2007), agree that in some contexts it is difficult to distinguish them. Integrative motivation is present when the subject is interested in learning a language for personal growth, for the pleasure of succeeding and, ultimately, for the interest in being integrated to the language and culture embedded in it. Instrumental motivation is formed by the necessity to learn a new language in order to have an external reward, like a diploma, a promotion, a better job, etc. In this case, the language becomes an instrument to achieve something else.

Yet another way of categorizing motivation is dividing it into intrinsic and extrinsic. The former refers to internal motives to learn a language, as self-accomplishment, while the latter refers to a necessity that comes from the outside. Intrinsic motivation is considered the ideal kind of motivation, according to Lightbown and Spada (2006, quoting VANSTEENKISTE et al., 2006). The authors agree that this type of motivation is considered optimal because it has been associated with the successful achievement of the language, while extrinsic motivation is less ideal because learners associate language to external goals which do not have much to do with the language itself.

In this research, I am going to analyze students' motivation in terms of the three perspectives presented above: Integrative vs. Instrumental, Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic, and

Behavioristic, Cognitive or Constructivist motivation, in the learning of ESL by students in a specific undergraduate pre-service teacher education course.

#### **4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

According to Andre (1995), qualitative research is connected to phenomenology, since it emphasizes human behavior. This is why I have chosen to do a qualitative research. I do not believe that motivation can be reduced to numbers. It is necessary to focus in the conceptual universe of the subjects to be able to understand how and which is the meaning they give to the social interaction that happens in their lives. The subjects' world, their experiences and the meaning they give to them are the focus of phenomenology and therefore the focus of a qualitative research.

In this investigation, the first step was a bibliographical research about dropout and motivation followed by the development of a quiz to assess students' motivation (Attachments). Simultaneously to the quiz development, I analyzed the document provided by the academic department of Campus Bagé to understand the institutional numbers of dropout.

With the quiz, I evaluated the following dichotomies: Integrative vs. Instrumental Motivation, and Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivation. Besides, I also verified how the three perspectives, Behavioristic, Cognitive and Constructivist, appeared in the context investigated. The quiz was applied in the second academic semester of the year 2012 to twenty undergraduate students. The small number of participants is usually one of the characteristics of qualitative research. Half of the participants have kept on studying English in the Languages Program, while the other half had given up English and were going to graduate only in their mother tongue, Portuguese. The quiz was qualitatively analyzed considering the relevance of all the answers as well as the average number of answers in each group of students.

#### **5. RESULTS**

##### **5.1 The Numbers**

I am going to start the analysis by looking at the rates of dropout found at UNIPAMPA, provided by the university. According to Gaiosio (2006), there are many reasons why the levels of dropout are so high at the universities of Brazil. Considering that, it is relevant to this analysis to show how UNIPAMPA organizes the dropout data at the Languages Program. Firstly, it is necessary to make it clear that all the students who have entered the Languages Program since the year 2009 have started in the Portuguese major only. In the first year, students take the same subjects, including one of the second languages, since even students in the Portuguese major are supposed to take at least two semesters of either English or Spanish (or one of each). In the second year, students are supposed to choose which second language, if any, they are going to go on studying. The Portuguese (solely) major was created in 2009, and this is why there is no data available for it prior to 2009.

MAJOR/YEAR	Quitted	Changed language	Changed program	Changed university	Deceased	Graduated	TOTAL
PORTUGUESE 2009	11	49	0	0	0	0	60
PORTUGUESE 2010	49	0	0	1	1	0	51
PORTUGUESE 2011	41	22	0	4	0	13	80
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>191</b>
PORTUGUESE/ENGLISH 2006	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
PORTUGUESE/ENGLISH 2007	12	0	0	0	0	0	12
PORTUGUESE/ENGLISH 2008	27	0	3	2	0	0	32
PORTUGUESE/ENGLISH 2009	21	26	0	1	0	0	48
PORTUGUESE/ENGLISH 2010	15	0	0	1	0	0	16
PORTUGUESE/ENGLISH 2011	8	11	0	1	0	6	26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>136</b>
PORTUGUESE/SPANISH 2006	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PORTUGUESE/SPANISH 2007	12	0	0	0	0	0	12
PORTUGUESE/SPANISH 2008	13	0	1	2	0	0	16
PORTUGUESE/SPANISH 2009	16	22	0	1	0	0	39
PORTUGUESE/SPANISH 2010	11	0	0	1	0	0	12
PORTUGUESE/SPANISH 2011	7	16	0	0	0	11	34
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>FINAL TOTAL</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>440</b>

As it is possible to see in the table, the levels of dropout in each major are not significantly different. These numbers have made me consider that the reasons for the high levels of dropout are not as simple as I had previously thought. Since the city of Bagé is very close to the border with Uruguay, people are used to saying that for the

students raised in this region it may be easier to study Spanish as a second language rather than English, and this could be a reason for English students to give up more than students from other programs. However, the table shows it is not completely true, as the differences in dropout rates among the three languages are not so expressive, and the figures are higher in the Portuguese major.

The table also shows that, from 2006 to 2011, the majority of students who dropped out the Languages Program simply quitted (245), and an expressive number of students decided to try a different language (146). Only four decided to try a different program in the same institution. It is impossible to be sure if this number truly reflects students' wish to change, because the institutional rules for program change are very strict. I did not have access to the number of students who tried to change program, I simply know that four succeeded. Other 14 students moved to another university or college – these are usually students whose family had to move to a different city or students who simply found a more suitable program elsewhere.

Only 30 students got graduated up to the first semester of 2011. This is a very small number considering that 100 students enter the Languages Program every year (except in 2007, when 60 students entered). So, there were 30 graduates (6 in Portuguese/English, 11 in Portuguese/Spanish, and 13 in Portuguese) out of 160 (100 from 2006 and 60 from 2007), that is, 19%. It does not mean that all the other 130 students dropped out, many may be still studying and will eventually graduate in the following years, but I do not have this information.

It is also possible to notice that language change started in 2009, when the Portuguese major became available. In three years (from 2009 to 2011), after at least two semesters studying Portuguese and one of the second languages, 71 students (23% of the 300 students who entered the program in this period) officially decided to make English or Spanish a permanent part of their college studies, while 75 students decided to quit the second language (37 from the Portuguese/English major and 38 from the Portuguese/Spanish). Most of these students started the program between 2006 and 2008 (when Portuguese major was not available), and waited for the first opportunity to change, since the table shows that 48 students (26 from the Portuguese/English major and 22 from the Portuguese/Spanish) quitted the second language in 2009. There were no freshmen among these 48 because they were already officially enrolled in Portuguese only. Among the other 27 students who quitted the second language up to 2011, there might be other seniors as well as some of the 71 students who entered in 2009 or

afterwards and, after having decided to keep a second language, eventually quitted and kept only Portuguese. The table does not show whether those who quitted a second language started another second language or kept studying only Portuguese, but our personal experience with the students strongly suggests that changing from one second language to another is very rare.

The number of students who quitted the second language but remained in the Languages Program studying probably only Portuguese is very significant (75), but the number of students who simply quitted the program is far more impressive (245), 44% of the 560 students who entered the Languages Program in that period. Adding the students who moved to another university and to another program in the same institution, it adds up to 47%. It is also impressive to know that those 44% simply quitted without trying another language or even another program. However, the focus of this work is on two specific groups: the ones who remained in the Portuguese/English major and those who quitted the English language but remained in the Languages Program studying only Portuguese. The reasons for these students' decision are analyzed in the next section.

## 5.2 The quizzes

Amongst other reasons, I mostly wanted to investigate, by applying the quizzes, the reasons why students decide to start and later leave the program. The quizzes were applied to two different groups: students who have kept studying English up to the end of the program (from now onwards referred to as group A); and students who started studying English but eventually gave up and remained studying only Portuguese (from now onwards referred to as group B). The quizzes were applied to 10 students in each group, which is a significant number, since the table shows that 37 students moved from the Portuguese/English major to the Portuguese only. So, the students who answered the quizzes represent about 27% of these students.

When asked why they started studying English, students provided the following answers:

REASONS TO START STUDYING ENGLISH	Group A - still studying English	Group B - studying only Portuguese	Total
Because they like English	9	6	15

Professional needs	6	7	13
Desire to teach English	2	2	4
Because they have always dreamed of learning English	3	0	3
Because they thought they would learn English during the course	0	3	3
Wish to have contact with other countries and cultures	2	1	3
Identification with the English language	0	2	2
Because learning English is a challenge	1	0	1
Desire to be fluent in English	0	1	1
The possibility of earning more money	1	0	1
The possibility of keeping their studies in a master's and doctorate program	0	1	1

Students from Group A produced seven reasons for choosing the language. A massive majority (9 out of 10 students) said they simply liked the language. The only one who did not like the language started to like it along the program. Six students pointed out professional needs, three said they have always dreamed about learning English, two wanted to teach it, two wished to communicate with foreigners, one sees it as a challenge and another sees it as a possibility of making money. In sum, most students from group A started studying English because they liked the language and considered it important for their future carrier.

Students from group B produced eight reasons. The most cited (by 7 out of 10 students) was professional need, that is, studying English would not only give them the opportunity to teach English, but also help them in case they chose another carrier. Six out of 10 students said they liked English, they liked music, movies and also how the language sounds. Three of them thought they would become proficient in English by taking the Languages Program. Two students had always wanted to teach the language, and other two chose the program because they felt empathy towards the language. One of them wanted to be in touch with foreign people, another intended to keep up studying in a master's or doctorate program and yet another one wanted to be fluent in the language, saying that it only happens if you teach it. So, just like group A, most students from group B started the program because they liked the language and considered it important for their future carrier.

When asked why they stopped studying English, students from group B provided the following answers:



REASONS TO STOP STUDYING ENGLISH	Students from group B
Affective problems with the teacher	5
Absence of stimuli by the teacher	4
Difficulties on learning the language	4
Feeling depreciated by the teacher	3
Unsatisfactory performance	2
Lack of time to dedicate to learning a new language	2
Difficulty to conciliate English with other disciplines	1
Disagreement with the teacher	1
Financial problems	1
Feeling ashamed and inferior compared to classmates	1
Absence of previous knowledge	1
Low-quality education (the second language)	1
Interest in teaching the mother tongue (Portuguese)	1
Unfulfilled expectations	1

Four of the reasons pointed out are related to teacher-student relationship: not getting along with the teacher (5 out of 10), lack of stimuli by the teacher (4 out of 10), feeling underestimated by the teacher (3 out of 10), and being affected by a specific incident with a teacher (1 out of 10). They also mentioned difficulties in learning (4 out of 10), unsatisfactory performance in the program (2 out of 10), lack of time to dedicate to the program (2 out of 10), feeling ashamed and inferior compared to classmates (1 out of 10), lack of money (1 out of 10), bad quality of the English classes (1 out of 10), unfulfilled expectations (1 out of 10), difficulties in conciliating the study of English with the other subjects (1 out of 10), and wish to teach the mother tongue (1 out of 10).

These reasons students produced can be related to what Gaioso (2005) presented in his studies:

Reasons pointed out by Gaioso (2005)	Reasons pointed by the students who quitted	Number of students
Poor affective bonding	Affective problems with the teacher Absence of stimuli by the teacher Feeling depreciated by the teacher Disagreement with the teacher	7
Successive failures	1. Unsatisfactory performance 2. Difficulties in learning the language 3. Difficulty to conciliate English with other disciplines 4. Feeling ashamed and inferior compared to classmates' performance	6
Low-quality education	Low-quality education	1

Absence of career guidance	Shift in vocational orientation: interest in teaching Portuguese instead of English	1
Financial problems	Financial problems	1

It is possible to see from the table above that the reasons pointed out by the students correlate to the ones presented by Gaiosó (2005). It is also possible to say that most students gave up basically for two reasons: poor affective bounding and successive failures. This result corroborates the relevance of affective factors for learning.

It is also important to highlight here that a student from group A claimed she used to feel ashamed in the English classes, but not because she was ashamed of speaking in class, but because there was a professor that made her feel uncomfortable by giving her negative feedback in front of all the classmates. This statement shows that she also went through what the majority of students (7 out of 10) in group B endured, but she is still studying English. She is one of the students who said she wanted to teach the language. The question is why she persisted while the others did not. Motivation may be part of the answer.

### **5.2.1. Intrinsic x Extrinsic Motivation**

Besides asking about students' reasons to start and stop studying English, the quizzes were composed of 14 other questions that can be, among other classifications, divided into two categories: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. One of my objectives was to check whether the students of both groups presented one of these two kinds of motivation. Analyzing the quizzes from group A and comparing their answers, it is possible to infer that 60% of the students (6 out of 10) are intrinsically motivated, since they are taking the Portuguese/English major mainly because they like the second language, want to communicate with foreign people and travel abroad for personal purposes.

Two students (20%) from group A came up with the following reasons why they study English: professional needs, influence from parents and friends, need of external feedback. These answers classify them as extrinsically motivated students. The other two students (another 20%) are both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. They presented the same level of motivation in both categories. They produced motives like: external reward, professional needs, salary and personal motives (such as liking the language, cultural interest and feeling more intelligent).

In group B, on the other hand, a very significant number of students (9 out of 10) mentioned carrier, external influences such as family and friends, better life perspective, the importance of getting good grades, need of stimuli from classmates and teachers, the pleasure of being able to get through an external obstacle, social status and need of hearing compliments from others. In other words, 90% of the students who gave up studying English can be considered extrinsically motivated.

The single intrinsically motivated student from the aforementioned group (10%) showed that she likes to study languages in general and English is important to her because of the possibility of travelling abroad, knowing other peoples and cultures. But even though this student can be considered intrinsically motivated, her passion for English has no match in the students from group A placed in this category. I have learned that this student started in the Portuguese/English major, changed to Portuguese/Spanish and ended up by taking only Portuguese.

In sum, considering the dichotomy intrinsic x extrinsic motivation, it is possible to notice a significant difference between the two groups. Motivation in group A is predominantly intrinsic (only 20% are extrinsically motivated), while in group B it is the opposite, 90% are extrinsically motivated, which confirms the first part of my hypothesis. So, taking only this aspect into consideration, it is possible to infer that intrinsically motivated students are less likely to quit learning the second language.

### **5.2.2. Instrumental x Integrative Motivation**

As I discussed earlier, integrative motivation is present when the subject is interested in learning a language for personal growth, for the pleasure of succeeding and, ultimately, for the interest in being integrated to the language and culture embedded in it. Analyzing these aspects in the quiz answered by the students I noticed that both groups have high levels of instrumental as well as integrative motivation.

In the case of group A (currently studying English), 90% of students said that they liked studying English and that they would like to live in an English-speaking country. All the students said they liked songs, movies, and knowing more about other cultures. Nine (out of 10) see learning English as a mental challenge, and 8 (out of 10) feel rewarded when they notice they are succeeding in the learning process. These answers reveal an integrative motivation.

Looking into group B (not studying English any more), I noticed that all the students who gave up said they liked the language. Nine of them (just like in the other group) said they would like to live in an English-speaking country, and all of them, again, said they liked the songs, the movies and the cultures carried out by the target language. All students also think that learning English is a challenge and they feel rewarded when they succeed somehow in the language learning process. In sum, the massive majority of students from both groups presented integrative motivation, which does not corroborate my hypothesis that group A would have more integrative motivation than group B.

Instrumental motivation, on the other hand, derives from the necessity to learn a new language in order to have an external reward, like a diploma, a promotion, a better job, etc. In this case, the language becomes an instrument to achieve something else, like a carrier, new perspective in life, social status. In group A, 9 students (90%) said that their concern with their future career was a motive to study English. All of them said that they study the language to have a new perspective of life, but only 50% believe that it will bring a better social status. In group B, all of them mentioned career growth, as well as the belief in a new perspective of life. Nine of them also believe they would have a better social status if they learned English. So, the students from both groups present significant levels of both instrumental and integrative motivation, which makes me agree with the scholars, like Lightbown and Spada (2006) and Brown (2007), who said that it is difficult to distinguish these two categories in some contexts.

One aspect worth discussing is that the belief in social status improvement is different in the two groups (50% in group A, and 90% in group B). This might be due to an idealization of the English teaching career by the students who quitted. The ones who have kept studying English and now, theoretically, have a good level of linguistic competence might believe that they will probably not achieve a much higher social status just because they can speak the language, while the others might still believe that if they reached an advanced level of linguistic competence in English, they would be regarded differently by the society.

### **5.2.3. Behavioristic x Constructivist x Cognitive Motivation**

Brown (2007) pointed out three views on motivation: the Behavioristic, the Cognitive and the Constructivist. As seen earlier, behavioristic motivation is the one

related to the actions the subject does in order to be rewarded by external forces. Cognitive motivation is related to the subject's willingness to make the necessary effort to achieve his/her objectives in the study of the language. Constructivist motivation is the one in which the learners are motivated not only by internal reasons, as willingness to learn, but also by external reasons, as social status and interaction in the social context.

Behavioristic motivation proved similar in both groups. All the students mentioned need of reward and 80% cited need of positive reinforcement (in both groups). So this aspect does not seem relevant for the decision of quitting or remaining in the program. As to the Cognitive aspect, the results are also very similar in both groups. Nine students in group A and all students in group B (10) showed some kind of eagerness to learn. Likewise, 90% of group A and 80% of group B said they made a considerable effort to learn English. These numbers do not help differentiate the students. Analyzing the third aspect, Constructivist motivation, no relevant difference was found either. 90% of all the students showed interest in social interaction, which is a cultural facet of Brazilian students. So, these numbers do not confirm my hypothesis that students from group A would have more cognitive motivation than students from group B.

In sum, the only significant difference between the two groups in relation to motivation is in the dichotomy intrinsic x extrinsic. While group A (still studying English) is intrinsically motivated, group B (those who quitted) is extrinsically motivated, which confirms only the first part of my hypothesis. These results corroborate Lightbown and Spada's (2006, quoting VANSTEENKISTE et al., 2006) statement that intrinsic motivation is the ideal kind of motivation for language learners. So, these students' decision to quit or keep studying English in their undergraduate course is significantly correlated to their intrinsic/extrinsic motivation, but not to the other aspects of motivation (instrumental or integrative, behavioristic, cognitive or constructivist), which contradicts my expectations.

## **6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Arnold and Brown (1999:1) state that motivation is one of the key factors that can lead to more effective language learning. With this idea in mind, I developed this work with the intention of verifying if and how the lack of certain kinds of motivation would

lead to dropout in the context investigated. My major objective was to find the relation between motivation and students' decision to keep up or quit the Portuguese/English major of the Languages Program. I also intended to verify students' specific types of motivation.

My first discovery was that motivation is not easy to investigate. I also found out that my hypothesis was wrong, only one of the motivation dichotomies (intrinsic/extrinsic) was found relevant. My expectation was that prospective ESL teachers who finish the program presented more intrinsic, integrative and cognitive motivation than those who quit. However, no significant difference was found in the integrative/instrumental or cognitive/behavioristic/constructivist modalities. So, my main presupposition was only partially confirmed. In addition, my main research questions were: "What are the motivations of prospective ESL teachers?" and "What types of motivation are present in those who finish the program?" The answer for the first question is that they present all the categories of motivation investigated, but at different levels. In relation to the second question, all I can say is that students who finished the program are more intrinsically motivated than those who quitted.

Thus, a correlation between dropout and the categories of motivation investigated could not be established. Apparently, students' decision to quit is not as determined by the lack of certain kinds of motivation, as it is by problems related to performance (successive failures) and interpersonal relationships (poor affective bounding). It seems relatively safe to affirm that those students' attitude towards these two kinds of problems was what really determined whether they were going to persist or not. The question of which factors influence students' attitude the most needs further investigation.

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## ATTACHMENTS

### 8.1 Quiz on motivation for students who have kept studying English (Group A)

1. What do you think your level of English is? Basic, Low-Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate, Advanced? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How are your grades in English, in general? Excellent, very good, good, reasonable, bad? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Did you decide to study English because you like it or because you need it?  
\_\_\_\_\_

	Very much	Yes	So-so	No
Do you like English?				
Do you like other languages?				
Do you like studying English at the University?				
Do you like other subjects at the University?				
Do you study English on your own?				
Do you use English to talk to your classmates outside the classroom?				
Do you try to use English to talk to people living abroad?				
Do you feel stimulated to learn more when you talk to people in English?				
Would you like to live in an English-speaking country?				
Do you feel stimulated to learn more when you get positive feedback from teachers or classmates?				
Do you think learning a language can make you more intelligent?				
Do you like to know about the culture of English-speaking countries?				
Is the knowledge of English important for your carrier?				
Did your parents or friends influence you when choosing to learn the language?				
Do you like songs, movies and other cultural products of English-speaking countries?				
Do you think learning English is a stimulating mental challenge?				
Do you think knowing English brings you a new perspective of life?				
Is it important to you to get good grades?				
Do you think that knowing English is like a dream come true to you?				
Do you feel rewarded when you succeed in a difficult exercise or task?				



Did your classmates influence on your decision to keep studying English?				
Did you think about your social status when choosing to learn English?				
Is it important to you to receive compliments from the teacher or classmates?				

What is your main reason to study English? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 8.2 Quiz on motivation for students who have given up English (Group B)

1. Qual você acha que é seu nível de inglês? Básico, Pré-Intermediário, Intermediário, Avançado? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Em geral, como eram as suas notas de inglês quando estava na licenciatura dupla? Excelente, muito boas, boas, razoáveis, ruins? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Você decidiu estudar inglês porque gostava ou porque precisava? \_\_\_\_\_

	Muito	Sim	Mais ou menos	Não
Você gosta de inglês?				
Você gosta de outras línguas?				
Você gostava de estudar inglês na universidade?				
Você gosta de outras matérias na universidade?				
Você estudava inglês por conta própria em casa?				
Você usava inglês para conversar com os colegas fora da sala de aula na universidade?				
Você tentava usar o inglês para conversar com pessoas que moram em outros países?				
Você se sentia estimulado a aprender quando falava em inglês com alguém?				
Você gostaria de viver em um país falante de inglês?				
Você gostaria de conhecer a cultura de países falantes de inglês?				
Você gosta de músicas, filmes e outras produções culturais em inglês?				
O conhecimento de inglês é importante para a sua carreira?				
Os seus pais ou amigos influenciaram você na hora de decidir estudar inglês?				
Você acha que aprender uma segunda língua pode tornar a pessoa mais inteligente?				
Você acha que saber uma segunda língua pode trazer				

uma nova perspectiva para a vida?				
É importante para você ter notas boas?				
Você se sente estimulado a aprender quando recebe feedback positivo de seus professores ou colegas?				
Você se sente recompensado quando consegue realizar um exercício ou tarefa difícil?				
Os seus colegas influenciaram na sua decisão de desistir do inglês?				
Você acha que saber uma segunda língua proporciona status social?				
Você acha que aprender uma segunda língua é um desafio mental estimulante?				
É importante para você receber elogios de seus professores e colegas?				

Qual foi sua principal razão para começar a estudar inglês na universidade? E por que motivo desistiu? \_\_\_\_\_

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