# ESL STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TOWARDS CLASSROOM LEARNING-SPECIFIC MOTIVATIONAL COMPONENTS

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- God, for His grace.

# Summary

Key words: Motivation, ESL learning, black secondary schools, ESL classroom, course content, teaching method, tasks, ESL teacher, ESL students, L2.

The purpose of this study was to determine if learning-specific motivational components could affect students' L2 learning motivation. The study was conducted in black secondary schools in the Potchefstroom region. A questionnaire was compiled to investigate students' motivation towards course-specific, teacher-specific, and group-specific motivational components. A total of 107 grade 10 students were randomly selected from three black secondary schools for the study.

The results of the study indicated that learning-specific motivational components do affect ESL learning. In accordance with the students' responses, areas needing attention and improvement were identified for all three motivational components (i.e. course, teacher, and group). Course content was found to be uninteresting and irrelevant, the teaching method and teaching/learning materials were found to be unimaginative and uninteresting, and learning tasks not to be motivating. With regard to the teacher, areas found most wanting were a demonstrable competence and to a lesser extent, a few aspects of personality. Group-specific components which seemed to have the most motivational potential were competitive and cooperative rewards structures, and the group gave strong indications of cohesion. It was also found that factors external to the classroom had great bearing on learning motivation.

This study has left the impression that if students' opinions could be taken into account when designing learning programmes, their motivation, in general, could be significantly improved, as well as their performance and achievement in ESL learning.

# Opsomming

Sleutelterme: Motivering, swart sekondêre skole, Engels as tweede taal, kursusinhoud, leerwyse, leeropdrag, tweede taal onderwyser, tweede taal leerlinge, tweede taal.

Die doel van hierdie studie was om vas te stel of geleerdheid-spesifieke komponente van motivering leerlinge se tweedetaal aanleer kan beïnvloed. Die studie is in swart sekondêre skole in die Potchefstroomgebied uitgevoer. 'n Vraelys is saamgestel om die leerlinge se motivering ten opsigte van kursus-spesifieke, onderwyser-spesifieke, en groep-spesifieke motiveringskomponente te ondersoek. 'n Totaal van 107 Graad 10 leerlinge is lukraak gekies uit die leerlinge van drie swart sekondêre skole.

Hierdie studie het aangedui dat geleerdheid-spesifiek motiveringskomponente wel die aanleer van 'n tweede taal beïnvloed. Volgens die leerlinge se response benodig al drie van die motiveringskomponente (naamlik kursus, onderwyser, en groep) aandag en verbetering. Die kursus inhoud word as oninteressant en ontoepaslik ervaar, die leerwyse en leermiddele word as verbeeldingloos en oninteressant ervaar, en die leeropdragte as ongemotiveerd. Wat die onderwyser betref, het veral bewese vermoë, en tot 'n mindere mate persoonlikheidsaspekte aandag gekort. Groep-spesifieke komponente wat die meeste motivering tot gevolg gehad het was mededingende en die ko-operatiewe vergoedingsstrukture. Dit is ook gevind dat faktore buite die klaskamer 'n groot invloed op leergedrag en motivering gehad het.

Hierdie studie kom tot die gevolgtrekking dat indien leerlinge se menings in aanmerking geneem word in die ontwikkeling van leerprogramme, hulle motivering en taalgebruik in die algemeen aanmerklik verbeter word.

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# Chapter 1

# Introduction

## 1.1 Problem statement

According to Kolesnik (1978:2), scholastic achievement is dependent on ability and motivation, and while learners might have the ability to achieve, they might lack the drive or inclination (i.e. motivation) to use that ability. Research has shown that motivation is one of the most important factors in language learning (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Weiner, 1972; Lambert & Lambert, 1973; Gardner, 1979; Ely, 1986b; Dörnyei, 1990; Ramage, 1990; Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford, 1994). McCombs and Pope (1994:10) state that almost everything that happens in a classroom has a motivational influence on students. This includes the manner in which information is presented, the kind of tasks given, the manner in which the teacher interacts with students, and the manner in which students interact amongst themselves.

The state of education in South African Black schools is not encouraging. The performance and achievement levels of the students do not seem to increase dramatically, as reflected in matric results (Collings, 1998; Hartshone, 1990; Riley, 1998). The matric results point to problems which are acquired and carried over from lower grades. External factors could partly be responsible. Threats of strike action were possible for the larger part of 1997 over a teacher-retrenchment dispute with the government (Garson, 1998; Grey, 1998a). School budget cuts and restrictions on the supply of textbooks and stationery to schools (Bridgraj, 1998a), and late registration of students (Grey, 1998b) regularly cause concern. Absenteeism among principals and teachers (Jeevanantham, 1998), and the threat of school violence and gangsterism (Bridjraj, 1998b; Friedman, 1998; Gilmore, 1998) make regular appearances in the media. Although these are external factors, they specifically influence education in South African schools. In the classroom, teachers and students have low ESL proficiency (Zulu, 1996a; Meyer, 1997), lessons are presented such that they are beyond the understanding and relevance of students (Zulu, 1996b), and learning materials are usually not available till late in the year; factors which delay learning and are demotivating.

Gardner (1979:193) believes that the acquisition of an L2 is a social-psychological phenomenon, not educational, because the learner is acquiring symbolic elements of a different ethnolinguistic community. Therefore, social-psychological variables dominate L2 motivation research (e.g. Hermann, 1980; Genesee et al., 1983; Svanes, 1987; Olshtain, et al., 1990; Clément et al., 1994; Hilleson, 1996). However, this approach has been criticized (e.g. Ely, 1986b; Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Skehan, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford, 1994; Oxford & Shearin, 1994) for being too limiting in the scope of research possible within its framework. Its critics assert that the motivation construct needs to be expanded to include educational variables, so that research can be grounded in the real-world domain of the classroom, and consider the perceptions of practising teachers and students. In addition, L2 motivation research should consider findings in other fields of study, especially education. Gardner and Tremblay (1994), and Tremblay and Gardner (1995) support this call as they agree that there is "a missing ingredient", the category of variables which involves situational characteristics. Motivational components which are specific to classroom learning situations include course-specific, teacher-specific, and group-specific components (Dörnyei, 1994).

Course-specific motivational components refer to course content, teaching method, and learning tasks. Important variables that determine motivation towards course content are interest, enjoyment and relevance (Ely, 1986a; Dörnyei, 1994). Students' interest in the content keeps them attentive, involved, and the work becomes more meaningful and enjoyable. Stern (1983) states that course content should be compatible with materials used, and that there are several options available: non-print and authentic materials, and technology. The use of authentic materials can increase classroom motivation (Peacock, 1997), and teacher-made materials prepared with a specific group of students in mind are also effective (Stern, 1983). According to Carter and Long (1991), students are motivated when their work relates to them as individuals. This, however, does not suggest that students cannot be motivated when the work does not have any personal meaning for them. Learning tasks are regarded as motivational when students perceive that they are related to personal needs, interests and goals, and are of appropriate difficulty levels so that they can be successfully accomplished (McCombs & Pope, 1994). Blumenfeld (1992) stresses that it is not so much variety, diversity and challenge that motivate students, but meaning and value of tasks. Task type and familiarity also increase motivation (Prabhu, 1987).

Teacher-specific motivational components refer to, for example, teaching style and personality. The teacher has to provide an environment of interest in which the students' worth and

significance is validated, and they also have to provide opportunities for relationship building (McCombs & Pope, 1994). Brophy et al. (1983) claim that the teacher's presentation style, the comments about the work and tasks and feedback influence the amount of effort (i.e. motivation) students put into their work. According to Ellis (1994), students have different views about the kind of teacher they think is best for them; some prefer teachers who create space for them to pursue their own learning paths, while some prefer teachers who structure learning tasks more tightly. Dreyer (1998), describing 'a silent battle' of conflicting teaching and learning styles between teachers and pupils, states that this incongruence is frustrating for both, and interferes with effective teaching and learning. Hyman and Rosoff (1985), Seaton (1993), and Kouba (1993) support changing teaching styles to accommodate different learning styles; flexibility, choice, and different challenges for students enhance interest and motivation.

Group-specific motivational components refer to group dynamics which include competitiveness, comparison with other learners' progress and group cohesiveness (Ellis, 1985). According to Clément et al. (1994), social processes and dynamics of the classroom play an important motivational role; there is a close association between students' evaluation of their own learner group and L2 learning behaviour. Some students might be motivated more by group work and cooperating on a common goal than by individual efforts which reflect the academic achievement of one person at the cost of other students (Purvis, 1983; Chambers & Abrami, 1991; Peterson, 1992; Dörnyei, 1994).

A review of the literature, therefore, seems to indicate that in addition to external factors that may influence students' motivation to learn (e.g. teachers on strike), factors specific to the learning situation may also influence students' motivation in the Black ESL classroom.

The following question needs to be addressed:

- What are ESL students' motivation towards course-specific, teacher-specific and group-specific components in the ESL classroom in Black schools?

## *1.2 Purpose of the study*

The purpose of the study is to:

- determine the ESL students' motivation towards course-specific, teacher-specific and group-specific components in the ESL classroom in Black schools.

## 1.3 Central theoretical statement

Classroom learning-specific motivational components can affect ESL students' motivation.

## 1.4 Method of research

### 1.4.1 Literature review

The relationship between language learning motivation and achievement has been extensively researched (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Weiner, 1972; Lambert & Lambert, 1973; Gardner, 1979; Ely, 1986b; Dörnyei, 1990; Ramage, 1990; Dörnyei, 1994). Social-psychological variables dominate research into EFL/ESL motivation (e.g. Hermann, 1980; Genesee et al., 1983; Svanes, 1987; Olshtain et al., 1990; Clément et al., 1994; Hilleson, 1996). However, this approach has been criticized for excluding classroom learning-specific motivational components (e.g. Ely, 1986b; Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Skehan, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford, 1994; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). A need to expand the motivation construct to include classroom learning-specific motivational factors is identified, as well as research based on real classroom learning situations, including course-specific, teacher-specific and group-specific motivational components (Dörnyei, 1994).

### 1.4.2 Empirical study

A one-shot cross-sectional survey design was used. The accessible target population included three Black schools in the Potchefstroom region in the North West Province. A total of three Grade 10 classes were randomly selected to participate in the study. A motivation questionnaire devised by the researcher to assess the students' motivation towards course-specific, teacher-specific and group-specific components was designed. The questionnaire has content and face validity. The survey was conducted during the first semester of 1999. The researcher distributed the questionnaires during scheduled English classes in order to obtain a 100% return rate. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and frequency counts) were used to analyse the data.

## *1.5 Chapter division*

In chapter 2 motivation theories are discussed, and their relevence to classroom learning is highlighted. Classroom learning is also discussed to highlight important aspects of ESL learning which are influenced by motivation. Chapter 3 focuses on the classroom learning-specific components, namely, the course, the teacher, and the group. In chapter 4 the method of research employed in this study is discussed. Chapter 5 focuses on the presentation and discussion of the results. Chapter 6 contains the conclusion and recommendations for future research.

# Chapter 2

# Motivation and ESL learning

## 2.1 Introduction

The complexities of both motivation and second language (L2) learning have generated extensive controversy and debate. It is accepted that motivation is one of the determining factors in successful L2 learning (Gardner, 1985; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Dörnyei, 1994). Together with factors such as personality, learning style, aptitude, and age, motivation influences the route along which students achieve, the rate and success in acquiring the language (Ellis, 1985:99), as well as students' attitude towards the L2 and L2 learning (Gardner, 1985). Motivation is extremely important in classroom L2 learning especially if it offers the primary opportunity for coming into contact with the L2. It is also important when taking into consideration the social context in which learning takes place; the differences in socio-cultural and classroom contexts can translate into difficulty for students, and misunderstanding between them and their teachers. This would hold negative implications for motivation. Apart from these potential motivational variables, South African Black schools have a unique history that has in part contributed to the present learning problems.

Secondary schooling in Black South African schools has deteriorated markedly from the 1970s owing largely to protest politics which relied heavily on student support (Hartshorne, 1992). Hartshorne (1992:59-61) gives a number of reasons why Black secondary education is facing a dilemma. He claims that lack of clarity as to the fundamental purpose of secondary education is one of the causes; whether it is to prepare young people to proceed into institutions of higher learning, or whether it is geared towards the general development and upliftment of the community; what its relationship is with the world of work; and to what extent the economic needs of the country should influence it. He goes on to assert that Black secondary schooling has

failed in preparing students for the world of work. But, even more importantly, it has failed to develop social and life skills, values and attitudes that will not only build self-respect, but also respect for others and public property in a common shared society. This manifests itself in poor performance at school, poor school attendance, dropping out of school, drug abuse, gang formation, defacement of schools, disregard for authority, and failure rates that do not show any signs of abating. It is in contexts like the South African one where the assertion, "given motivation, it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to the language data" (Corder, 1981:8) becomes significant. If an individual has the opportunity to learn (school, teacher), even if the conditions are not ideal, if the person is motivated, then they will find a way to achieve in spite of adverse conditions.

The problems faced by L2 students are daunting, and need to be addressed from various angles that are not necessarily concurrent. While motivation research and findings in no way claim to exclusively have solutions to L2 learning problems, it is accepted that motivation is a prerequisite for success. The aim of this chapter is to attempt to show why motivation is regarded as indispensable in L2 learning: what it is, the different types of motivation, and what different theories claim about motivation. ESL learning is also discussed, to highlight some of the social contextual variables which affect classroom learning and motivation. Input and interaction are also discussed because they are one of the most important components for classroom L2 learning and acquisition, and, therefore, have a bearing on motivation. An attempt is made to relate this discussion to the South African context, and specifically, to Black secondary schools.

## *2.2 Motivation*

Motivation is one of the factors that directly affect learning. A review of the literature (cf. Ely, 1986b; Gardner, 1992; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992) has shown that motivation has a direct relationship with the following: the use of L2 learning strategies, the extent of the

students' interaction with native speakers of English, how much input they receive in the target language, how well they do on curriculum-achievement tests, the level of general proficiency in the language, and how long learners persevere with and maintain L2 skills after language study is over.

The concept of motivation is not easily defined, especially in its application to L2 learning. There is also lack of agreement regarding the appropriate use of the term. The following section looks at definitions of motivation and its use.

### *2.2.1 Definition*

Motivation is often defined in terms of the various components it consists of. While some definitions refer to general human behaviour, others specify aspects related to L2 learning.

Wlodkowski (1978:13) states that between what gets a student to start and what helps that person to finish a learning task can be an incredible maze of motivation issues. He states that motivation refers to processes that can: (a) arouse and instigate behaviour, (b) give direction and purpose to behaviour, (c) continue to allow behaviour to persist, and (d) lead to choosing or preferring a particular behaviour. For Maehr (1982), cited in Stipek (1988:12), there are five indices of behavioural patterns of motivation: (a) the direction of an individual's attention and activity, (b) persistence, the length of time spent on an activity, (c) activity level, the intensity or half-heartedness of task-engagement, (d) continuing motivation, returning to task without external incentives; and, (e) performance, a consequence of the factors mentioned above. These definitions refer to general human behaviour.

Gardner (1985), whose conception of motivation refers specifically to language learning, lists the following as components of motivation: a goal, a desire to achieve the goal, effort, and favourable attitudes towards learning the language. While attitudes towards

learning the language might be implied under general terms, it is spelt out in Gardner's definition, and is considered very important in his work.

Gardner (1985) also distinguishes between motivation and orientation. Orientations refer to a class of reasons for learning a second language, while motivation refers to the directed, reinforcing effort to learn the language. Gardner and Tremblay (1994:361) explain that one's orientation in studying a second language does not necessarily correlate with achievement, unless there is some degree of motivation. Oxford and Shearin (1994:14) hold the view that motivation and orientation are easily confused since they use the same basic terminology. They explain the orientation/motivation distinction through this example: a learner who registers to take a language course for any number or class of reasons (orientation), and working hard to learn the L2 when in the course (motivation).

The definitions for motivation have the same basic elements: drive, desire, aims, affective reaction and behaviour. Kolesnik (1978:3) lists some of the terms associated with motivation: innate drives, urges, instincts, impulses, tensions, needs, freely chosen goals, purpose, plans, values, beliefs and aspirations. However, there is another variable, attitude, which is not so readily accepted as an unquestionable component that belongs in motivation terminology.

#### *2.2.1.1 Motivation vs. attitude*

Lambert and Lambert (1973:72) define attitude as "an organised and consistent manner of thinking, feeling, and reacting to people, groups, social issues, or more generally, to any event in the environment." They identify thoughts and beliefs, feelings or emotions, and tendencies to react as components of attitudes. For Triandis (1971:2), four components make up attitudes: (a) a cognitive component, (b) an idea, (c) an affective component, the emotion which charges the idea, for example, feeling good or bad about the idea, and (d) a behavioural component, a predisposition to act. The relevance of attitudes in language learning can be gathered from the assertion made by Lambert and

Lambert (1973:77) that attitudes play powerful roles in determining our behaviour. They affect our judgements and perceptions of others, they influence our speed and efficiency of learning, and they help determine the groups we associate with. Attitude, therefore, is one of the factors that influence our behaviour, including language learning behaviour. But as to the exact nature of the relationship between motivation and attitude, there is no consensus.

Dörnyei (1994:274) criticises the tendency of researchers to use attitude together with motivation as if it is generally accepted that they belong together. He urges that it be remembered that they are constructs of different branches of psychology, and be used warily. Crookes and Schmidt (1991:471) state that cognition, motivation and affect are accepted as distinct from one another. Yet, there is still a tendency to group motivation and affect, particularly attitude, together. This is done despite the lack of agreement on the nature of the relationship between the two. According to Ellis (1985:117) one reason for this is the abstractness of the concepts, which makes it difficult to compare theoretical propositions. Regardless of the uncertainty, attitude features widely in motivation research. Gardner and Tremblay (1994:363) argue that belonging to different branches of psychology does not provide enough ground to stop using the constructs together. The significance of attitude in their work is reflected in their characterisation of motivation as consisting of: (a) behavioural components, namely motivational intensity, (b) cognitive components, referring to desire, and (c) affective components, the attitudes towards learning the language. They claim that the exclusion of any of the components would yield an inadequate description of motivation. For this study as well, attitude is considered important in understanding the motivational states of students. Thus far, attitude still features prominently in motivation studies, a practice that might continue for a while yet. Aside from this problem with attitude, there are other deviations regarding the operationalization of the motivation construct.

#### *2.2.1.2 Problems with the operationalization of the motivation construct*

There is an absence of a unanimously accepted definition of motivation. Although motivation is defined and described using similar basic terminology, operationalizing the

construct poses a problem. Dörnyei (1994) points out that Gardner's motivation construct does not include details on cognitive aspects of motivation. He also mentions that there has been a recurring question about how 'social' an L2 motivation construct should be and about the nature of the relationship between social attitudes and motivation. A social construct would consider the role of language as a communication tool, as integral to an individual's identity, and language as a channel of social organisation embedded in the culture of the community. Crookes and Schmidt (1991) see motivation as consisting of internal and external factors. Internal components include: (a) interest in the L2 based on existing attitudes, experience, and background knowledge which the student has, (b) relevance to personal needs which are met by learning the L2, (c) expectancy of success and failure, and (d) outcomes, the extrinsic rewards felt by the student. External components, which are behavioural, include: (a) choice to pay attention to and engage in L2 learning, (b) persistence over a period of time, and (c) maintaining a high activity level.

According to several researchers (cf. Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Skehan, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford & Shearin, 1994), existing motivation theories are limiting. Oxford and Shearin (1994:12) state that evidence indicates that the motivation theories might not cover all possible kinds of L2 learning motivation. They add that other potentially valuable motivational and developmental theories in L2 research have been excluded; there is a need to go beyond the boundaries of social psychology. According to Crookes and Schmidt (1991:470), motivation research should be connected to other related education research, and it should be grounded in the real world domain of the L2 classroom. Skehan (1991:285) suggests that research be expanded to include, amongst others, classroom events and materials, and the general educational reward framework. The fact that L2 learning motivation spans a number of fields does not simplify matters, but incorporating them will also widen the scope of possibilities and solutions to the problem of motivating students.

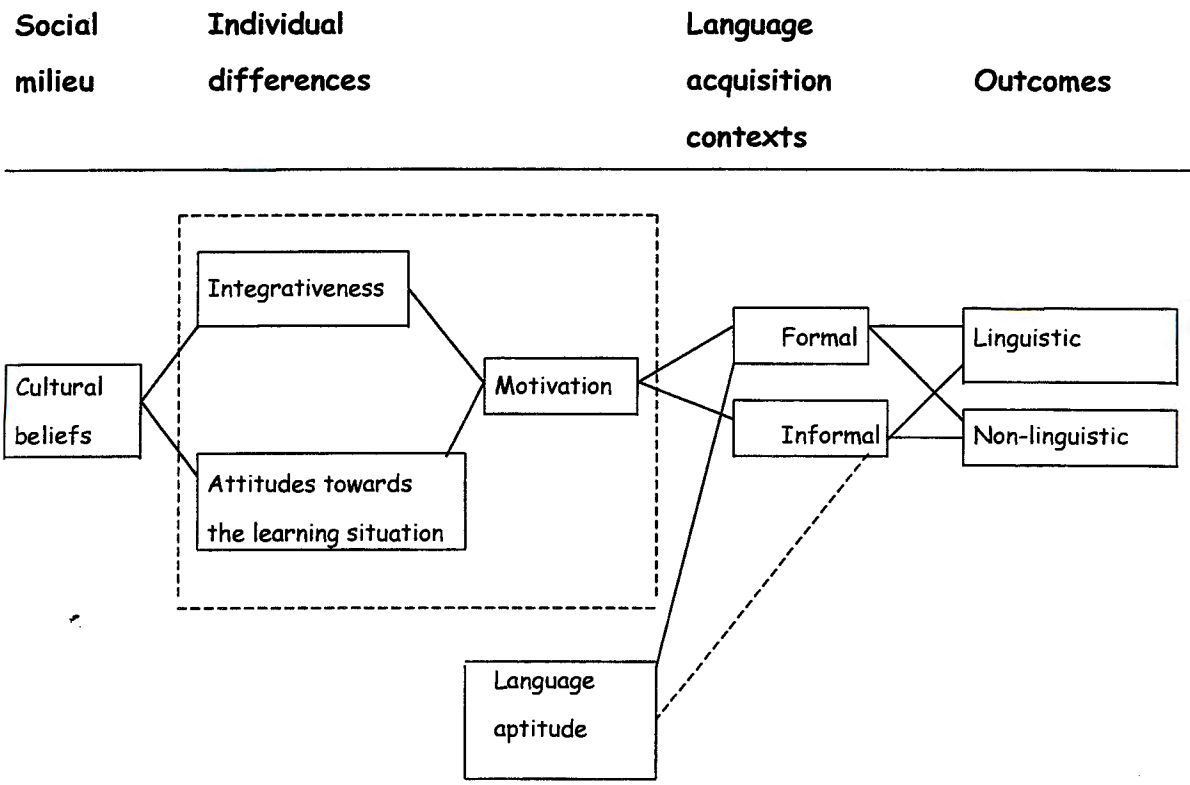
### 2.2.2 Theories of motivation

Theories of motivation focus on the behaviour of the individual in relation to his/her surroundings. The various approaches to human motivation provide a more complete picture of human behaviour. The theories discussed in this chapter are chosen because they are easily applicable to classroom L2 learning, and thus provide a fuller explanation for various behaviours related to classroom L2 learning behaviour. The following theories are discussed: Gardner's socio-educational model, need theories, expectancy-value theories, and reinforcement theories. Gardner's theory explains why individuals learn an L2. Need theories explain how certain needs and desires affect the setting of goals, as well as the motivation behind attainment of those goals. Instrumentality (expectancy-value) theories explain how our expectations affect our motivation towards certain goals. Reinforcement theories explain how rewards affect motivation. These theories are applicable to different aspects of classroom behaviour, and together provide a holistic understanding of L2 learning motivation.

#### 2.2.2.1 Gardner's socio-educational model

The socio-educational model was an attempt to explain the role of some individual difference variables (e.g. intelligence, language aptitude, anxiety, and motivation) in influencing proficiency in a second language. It comprises four components, namely, the social milieu in which language learning takes place, individual difference variables, language acquisition contexts, and outcomes that are linguistic or non-linguistic. According to the model, these factors have the ability to interact and influence each other, and ultimately influence L2 learning achievement. Diagram 1 gives a schematic representation of the model, and shows the relationships that exist between the components.

**Diagram 1: Gardner's socio-educational model**




**(Skehan, 1989:59).**

The three variables (integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation, and motivation) which fall under individual differences make up the integrative motive. The integrative motive is a key element of Gardner's theory. It is its prominence that might have led to the criticism that Gardner's work initially placed undue importance on integrative motivation. The social milieu is the context where attitudes and expectations are formed. Individual differences are influenced by the milieu, and they, in turn, influence contexts of language instruction; the formal and informal. Language aptitude is more influential in formal learning contexts than in informal contexts, while motivation is influential in both formal and informal contexts. Explicit instruction in schools and unstructured acquisition-oriented settings influence learning outcomes, which are both linguistic and non-linguistic. Linguistic outcomes refer to language knowledge and skills,

and non-linguistic outcomes refer to interest in learning more about the language (Gardner, 1983:223).

Gardner's work has been criticized for placing more emphasis on integrative motivation than on instrumental motivation, which is considered to be as important to language learning motivation. The debate surrounding the two types of motivation is discussed below.

#### *2.2.2.1.1 Integrative and instrumental motivation*

Integrative motivation refers to a drive to acquire the language of another group or language community because of a desire to be associated with, or to be like members of that community. Instrumental motivation, on the other hand, is related to a desire to gain personal benefits as a result of learning the language. The two constructs have not warranted equal attention, or rather, they have not always assumed positions of equal importance, a discrepancy that has not gone unchallenged. This section examines the debates concerning the type of motivation that "best" promotes L2 achievement, motivation orientations that are not distinctly integrative nor instrumental, and whether motivation is the cause of L2 achievement, or whether it is the result of L2 achievement.

A prominent argument in integrative-instrumental discussions is which type of motivation best brings about successful L2 learning and acquisition. Gardner's belief (1979:193:) that integratively motivated students stand a better chance of successful L2 learning has had fairly extensive support (e.g. Gardner, Smythe, & Brunet, 1977; Gardner, Smythe & Clément, 1979). However, there are a number of opposing findings. In her study, Lukmani (1972) reports that instrumental motivation was found to be more positively related to achievement than integrative motivation. Oller et al. (1977) also found that instrumental motivation was related to ESL proficiency rather than integrative motivation. Strong (1984) reports that a positive relationship between integrative motivation and acquired English proficiency did not exist. Genesee et al. (1983) found that expected motivational support from the target language group did more to facilitate L2 learning

and proficiency than attitudes towards the target language, culture and group. These studies cast doubt on the belief that integrative motivation is more influential in L2 learning achievement. In response to the criticism that integrative motivation seems to be regarded as most important, Gardner and Tremblay (1994:361) insist that integrative motivation is important, but not paramount. Gardner and Tremblay (1994:361) state that, "there is very little reason to expect that one's orientation in studying a second language would be expected to correlate with achievement in a second language unless it reflects some degree of motivation". Therefore, it is important that a student be motivated, without placing emphasis on the type of motivation. Any number of factors, such as situational variables, might influence motivation and success in L2 learning. However, integrative and instrumental orientations have been shown to provide unsatisfactory explanations for L2 learning motives with the implication that other types of motives exist, and they do not necessarily fit into the integrative-instrumental distinction.

Oller et al. (1977) claim that the integrative-instrumental differentiation is not absolute; that which is considered instrumental in one context is considered integrative in another. A desire to know more about the language, literature and the culture could easily be integrative as well as instrumental. It depends on the context and the subjects participating in the study. They also claim that there are reasons which students give for learning a second/foreign language that cannot be categorised under either of the two. Oller et al. (1977:20) suggest redefining integrative orientation to include affective traits such as kindness, friendliness, sincerity, and helpfulness. An instrumental orientation could be redefined to include cognitive and impersonal traits like intelligence, success, and power. Dörnyei (1994: 275) suggests that the integrative and instrumental constructs should not be taken as absolutes, but as broad tendencies or subsystems that comprise of context-specific clusters of loosely related components.

Another debate surrounding motivation studies is whether motivation leads to achievement (causative motivation), or whether success causes motivation (resultant motivation). Spolsky (1989) discusses some studies which corroborate the view that motivation causes success, and in particular, integrative motivation: Gardner (1985);

Lalonde (1982); Gardner, Smythe, and Brunet (1977); and Gardner, Smythe and Clément (1979). According to Spolsky (1989:153), "the general weight of these studies has been to suggest that while greater motivation and better attitudes lead to better learning, the converse is not in fact true: learning another group's language does not necessarily improve one's attitude to the group." On the other hand, Strong (1984) and Hermann (1980) are among those who believe that success leads to motivation.

Notwithstanding all these arguments concerning integrative and instrumental motivation, the two constructs are still dominant in motivation research. The reason for this could be that they have been the dominant categorisation for long, and have become entrenched in motivation terminology. But, since there is awareness of this dominance, the challenge to expand the motivation construct has been taken up by several researchers (e.g. Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Oxford & Shearin,1994).

#### *2.2.2.2 Need theories*

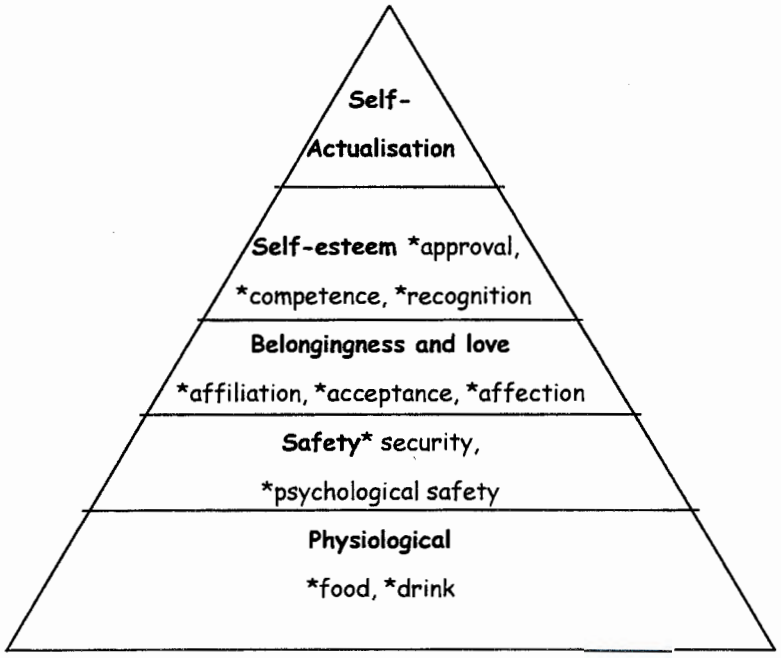
These theories place emphasis on the individual's capacity for self-determination, and the striving for personal growth, driven by certain goals (Kolesnik, 1978:146). These goals are geared towards self-enhancement. One of the bases of these theories is that individuals have needs which, if not satisfied, create tension.

##### *2.2.2.2.1 Hierarchies of need*

Maslow (1954) is attributed with pioneering work on the theory of hierarchies of need. Its central tenet is that human beings have a need to grow, to develop abilities, to be recognised, and to achieve. Human needs have at least one important characteristic; they are usually means to an end rather than ends in themselves (Maslow, 1954:21). For example, we need money to buy food to satisfy hunger. For Maslow, the study of motivation must be, in part, the study of the ultimate human goals, desires, or needs. Human needs seem to arrange themselves in some sort of hierarchy, as follows: physiological, safety and security, belonging, esteem, and self-actualisation. Diagram 2

gives a schematic representation of human needs in their hierarchical importance, beginning from the bottom to the top.

**Diagram 2: Maslow's hierarchy of needs**




**(Maslow, 1954:).**

Physiological needs refer to appetites and body needs. These needs are considered most important because to a person lacking food other needs assume secondary importance. Once physiological needs are satisfied, other higher needs are pushed to the fore. Safety and security needs refer to stability, dependency, protection, freedom from fear, anxiety and chaos, need for structure, order, law, limits, and strength in the protector (Maslow, 1954:39). For a child, safety could be routine and familiarity; safety will be manifested differently due to factors such as age. Belonging refers to the need for affectionate relations with people generally, and with specific groups or with family. If this need is not satisfied, it could lead to loneliness, feelings of being ostracised, and rejection. Esteem needs refer to stability, elevation of the being, self-respect, and the esteem of others. Also included are desires for strength, achievement, adequacy,

confidence, reputation, prestige, status, fame and glory, recognition, dignity and appreciation (Maslow, 1954:45). Satisfaction of these needs leads to feelings of self-worth and confidence, as well as feeling useful and necessary as opposed to feeling inferior, weak and helpless. Self-actualisation refers to the desire for self-fulfilment, to become everything that one is capable of becoming. This need finds different expression in people: athletically, creatively, academically, or artistically.

Maslow (1954:51) cautions that it is not the rule that these needs always follow this hierarchical pattern; some needs do override others. For example, when a need has been satisfied for a long time, it might be undervalued and taken for granted. The implications for classroom learning are extensive.

#### *2.2.2.2.1.1 Implications for classroom learning*

The classroom serves as a cosmos in which basic human needs have to be satisfied within the context of what takes place in it (Lindeque, 1996:154). The following are examples of how needs of students are manifested:

- need for certainty: "What is expected of me?"
- need for security: "What will happen if I fail this test?"
- need for friendship: "Why can't I ask Mary about her answer?"

Students are bound to have different needs at any given time, which makes it impossible to lay emphasis on one need. A student that has not had food before coming to school will find it difficult to give full attention to classroom proceedings, as a basic need has not been satisfied. The teacher might not know the reasons for the student's inattentiveness or lack of interest, and might not be able to act on it, were it known. Another student might have security needs, or a need for love and belonging. In classes with large numbers of students, it can be difficult for a teacher to be attuned to the needs of each student, and even more difficult to give the necessary individual attention. However, this is not to say that it is only the teacher that can satisfy the needs of students; fellow students are also integral to the satisfaction of needs (e.g. for love and belonging).

Students who have suffered humiliating failure will not become autonomous students until they are convinced that the teacher will support their efforts and that they can make errors without being blamed or punished (Good & Brophy, 1995:349). Some students might not feel secure enough to be autonomous students; they might feel more comfortable working with other students. Forcing them to work alone might yield miserable results, and it might be demotivating. Family and cultural structures also influence student needs. Students used to guidance from parents might feel comfortable in a classroom where the teacher takes charge, and students from a fairly conservative background might feel secure if classroom learning is structured along similar lines.

This theory makes it clear that classroom motivation is not only dependent on external factors, i.e. factors that can be manipulated or controlled by teachers or students, for example, the choice of learning materials or choice of tasks to be completed. Needs will also be manifested differently in students (e.g. the need for belonging and acceptance could be manifested in a jocular, playful and loud behaviour for one student, while another student might be withdrawn and shy as a result of this need not being met). Grounds exist for misunderstanding on the teacher's part, since he/she might not understand the causes of certain behaviours.

It is, therefore, desirable that teacher's knowledge of factors that influence students' behaviour extends to knowledge of what motivates students as human beings, and what motivates students as individuals. It is hoped that if teachers are equipped with this knowledge then they will develop a sensitivity to students' needs and behaviours. They can also foster a classroom ethos where students can be encouraged to be sensitive to their fellow students' needs.

#### *2.2.2.2.2 Need for achievement*

This theory is widely associated with McClelland (1951), and it is concerned with the social origins and social consequences of the need for achievement (Mook, 1996). This theory recognises that everybody has a need for achievement in one or other area, and

that some people's need is stronger and deeper than that of others. According to this theory, an individual seeks goals that have not been attained; it is the expectation of a goal that affects behaviour (Mook, 1996:542). The concern lies not with a subject's momentary desire to achieve, but with enduring characteristics. However, an individual could have high need for achievement, but unless the need is awakened by a challenge or is roused to activity, it might remain dormant or submerged and have little effect on the behaviour (Kolesnik, 1978:123).

Commonly identified as *nAch*, achievement motivation according to McClelland (1985), is for people who prefer to achieve through their own efforts. People have to be able to attribute their success/failure to personal causation. Individual responsibility is a strong factor. McClelland (1985) emphasizes a moderate degree of risk-taking in the theory, that a sense of self-achievement would be maximized when the task is neither too difficult, i.e. risky, nor too easy, i.e. devoid of risk. If there was risk, the expectation would be that success would be unlikely, and if there was no risk, there would be no challenge.

#### *2.2.2.2.2.1 Implications for classroom learning*

Students with a need for achievement show greater preference for difficult tasks, they enjoy carefully calculated risks, where skill and ability are involved, and not chance (Johnson, 1970:110). These students are confident in their ability and do not depend on luck or fate. They are also interested in concrete measures of how well they perform a task. According to McClelland (1965), a high achievement motivation can be developed. His theories and training were directed towards businessmen, but it is highly applicable to students as well. The following guidelines are based on McClelland's (1965: 324-330) training strategies, and could prove useful in developing achievement motivation in students:

- Create expectations that a person can, will and should change in a positive way as a result of the training experience.

- Have the student develop a clear conceptualisation of the behaviour or motive, and he/she should also learn precisely how the need for achievement is related to successful performance.
- Show that the desired change is consistent with demands of reality, everyday events, self-image, and cultural values.
- Get the student to commit to achieving concrete goals in life related to the newly formed motive.
- Have the student keep a record of progress toward achieving goals to which he/she is committed.
- Maintain an atmosphere in which the individual feels capable of guiding and directing his/her own behaviour

A society that values achievement and success will most likely have students who hold the same values. The classroom environment is an opportune place where the *nAch* motive can be fostered, given that it is a controlled environment. Sharpening students' *nAch* motive is to work on inherent need; it is a question of awakening what is already there. Instrumentality theories, on the other hand, deal with external factors, which are a result of experience (cf. Section 2.2.2.3).

### *2.2.2.3 Instrumentality (expectancy-value) theories*

The distinctive characteristic of these theories is the attempt to relate action to the perceived attractiveness or aversion of expected consequences (Feather, 1982:1). What a person does is seen to bear some relation to the expectations that the person holds and the subjective value of the consequences that might occur following the action. Among the concepts that have been used are: incentive values, utilities, valences, and reinforcement values, all of which can be positive or negative. The motivation types that fall under this class of theories include attributive motivation and achievement motivation.

#### *2.2.2.3.1 Attributive motivation*

According to Weiner (1972:310), attribution theory deals with "why" questions, the relationship between phenomena (effects) and the reasons (responsible agents) for those events. Attribution deals with causality, causes that can only be inferred, as they are not observable.

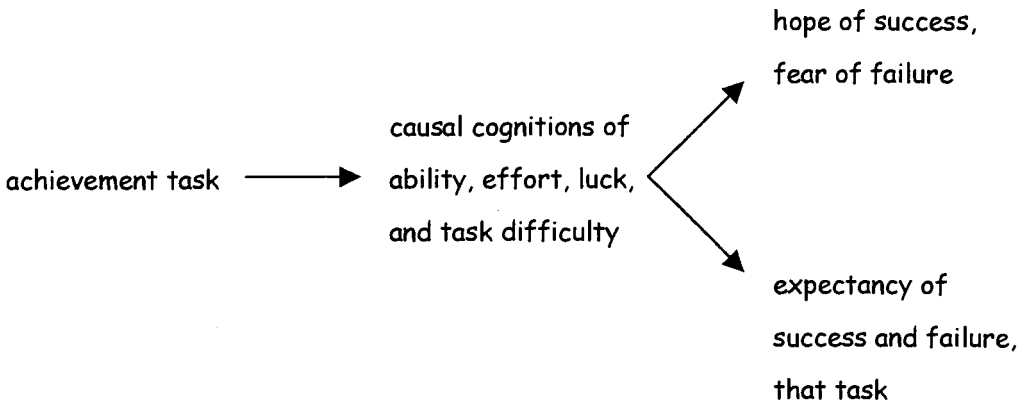
Weiner et al. (1972:99-100) cite consistency and generality as salient cues for ability attributions; students are likely to judge their ability on past performances, and their expectations for present tasks are based on the perceived ability. Task difficulty is judged according to how the class as a whole performs; if many succeed, it is easy, and if few succeed, it is difficult. Alternatively, if a student fails when others fail, or succeeds when others succeed, this is attributed to an external factor, like task difficulty. And when a student fails when others succeed, the cause is internal, for example, low ability. Attributing consequences to luck makes the cause external; it is outside the control or influence of the individual. When outcomes are random and inconsistent, luck is likely to be seen as the cause. Effort is likely to be decided on once the results of a task are known. If an individual succeeds, he/she is likely to perceive effort as the cause.

An individual's beliefs about ability, effort, task difficulty and luck have a significant influence on attributive motivation as well as their performance achievements. A study conducted by Covington and Omelich (1979) indicates that students try to avoid being labelled as having low ability by any means possible. If a student expends high effort and still fails, he/she feels shame, because the implications are that he/she does not have the ability to do the task. But, if they put in little effort, and fail, they do not feel shame. This is because failure can be attributed to not having done all they could rather than being attributed to low ability. Jagacinski and Nicholls (1984) differentiate between effort expended in task-involving and ego-involving situations and found that ability was conceived differently in each situation. In task-involving situations, high effort led to feelings of competence and pride. In ego-involving situations, high effort led to low feelings of competence, less pride, and greater embarrassment. Fyans and Maehr (1979) found that attributions guide task preferences, which affect achievement

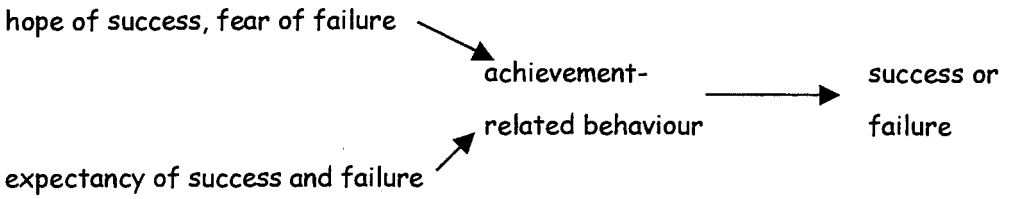
patterns. Students showed preference according to their beliefs about ability, effort, or luck, and chose tasks that would demonstrate that, and not put into question their ability or effort. Diagram 3 indicates the relationship between attribution and achievement.

**Diagram 3: An attributional model of achievement behaviour**

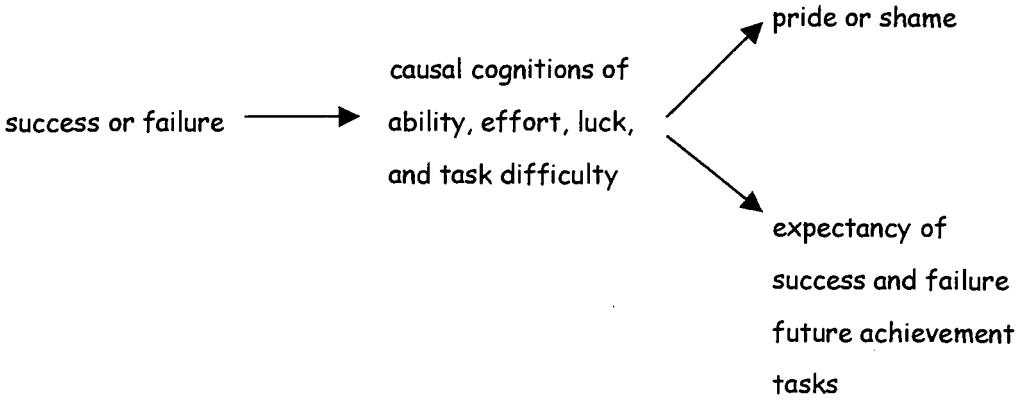
**Stage 1: Task evaluation**




**Stage 2: Goal-directed behaviour**




**Stage 3: Task and Ascription Re-evaluation**




**(Weiner, 1972:355).**

#### *2.2.2.3.1.1 Implications for classroom learning*

Attribution theory claims that an individual attributes causes of things that happen not necessarily to reality, but to personal perceptions. Although this theory involves inferring instead of directly observing behaviour, there is still an opening for teachers to manipulate students' perceptions about their performance in class, especially through the type of feedback that they give to students. Attributions are not permanent once formed; a teacher who is aware of the attributions students tend to make regarding their abilities can cultivate perceptions that are favourable to sustained motivation (Weiner, 1972:410 ).

This theory highlights the importance of the appropriate level of task difficulty, so that students perceive the relationship between effort investment and performance outcome. Many students explain their success or failure on the basis of habitual ways that they have learned to view their behaviour, without noting the actual causal factors. The teacher's role is to help such students develop the capacity to use feedback appropriately. Students should be encouraged to attribute failure to causes such as insufficient effort or to use of the wrong strategy (Good & Brophy, 1990:359).

#### *2.2.2.3.2 Achievement motivation*

Johnson (1970:102) states that Atkinson's theory of achievement motivation applies only when an individual knows that performance will be evaluated in terms of some standard of excellence, and that the consequences of his/her actions will be either a favourable evaluation, success, or an unfavourable evaluation, failure.

Atkinson (1974:14) explains achievement motivation as a function of three variables: motive to achieve success, expectancy of success, and the incentive value of success. A motive is a disposition to strive for a certain kind of satisfaction, to approach success. Expectancy of success is the anticipation that the performance of an act will be followed by a particular consequence. If a student studies, chances are that he/she will succeed, and expectancy is strengthened by probability. An incentive represents the relative

attractiveness of a specific goal that is offered, or the relative unattractiveness of an event that might happen as a result of some act. The actual achievement-oriented tendency is the result of two opposed tendencies, the tendency to achieve success, and the tendency to avoid failure. Success implies high ability, while failure implies low ability.

The tendency to achieve success correlates with motivation intensity. Johnson (1970:103) states that people who tend toward achieving success show a preference for tasks of intermediate difficulty, and they persist longer in their tasks. The tendency to avoid failure is aroused when there is expectancy that some act will lead to failure, when there is an incentive to avoid failure, for example, punishment. This kind of student is normally inhibited from attempting a task where the probability of success is intermediate. The reason Johnson (1970:104) gives is that choosing a task with either a very high or a very low chance of success minimises anxiety about failure. If chances for success are high, there will be no failure, and if the chance for failure is high, there will be no blame. Past success is likely to lead to achievement behaviour in the future, while past failure would generate fear and stifle achievement behaviour.

#### *2.2.2.3.2.1 Implications for classroom learning*

Teachers can maximise their students' achievement motivation by keeping criticism constructive and minimizing reasons for students to fear failure, by helping the students to set challenging but realistic goals, and by offering incentives for good effort and performance (Johnson, 1970:109-110). Teachers must also recognize that students have different developmental levels; what is easy and within reach for some is unattainable for others (Johnson, 1970: 110).

Johnson (1970:121) gives advice on how to increase achievement motivation in students: increase the general need for achievement, or lower the fear of failure, and increase the expected probability of success. Gibson (1976:207) cites Kounin's (1970) suggestions of how achievement motivation in students can be increased:

- the teacher should provide sufficient challenge through a variety of approaches to interest students;
- participation of students should be ensured, and responsibility must be required of the students for activities; and
- students should be made accountable for their accomplishments in the classroom.

It is believed that achievement motivation can be learned, similar to the suggestion for *nAch* motivation (Kolesnik, 1978). Home, family background, culture, religion and environmental factors can influence achievement motivation. Therefore, by understanding the dynamics of achievement motivation, there is much that the school and the teacher can do to develop the achievement motive and drive students to value achievement.

#### *2.2.2.4 Reinforcement theories*

Reinforcement theories focus on situations where behaviour is strengthened by rewards. The effectiveness of that reward or reinforcer bears some relationship to the drive or motive active at the time of learning (Cofer & Appley, 1964:539). Reinforcers are also referred to as 'incentives', but more commonly as 'rewards' in motivation literature. In studies of motivated behaviour, the source of motives is seen as either extrinsic or intrinsic. Intrinsic motives come mainly from within the individual, while extrinsic motives come from the individual's outer physical environment, or from the interaction between a person and his/her perceived environment (Bigge & Hunt, 1980:34).

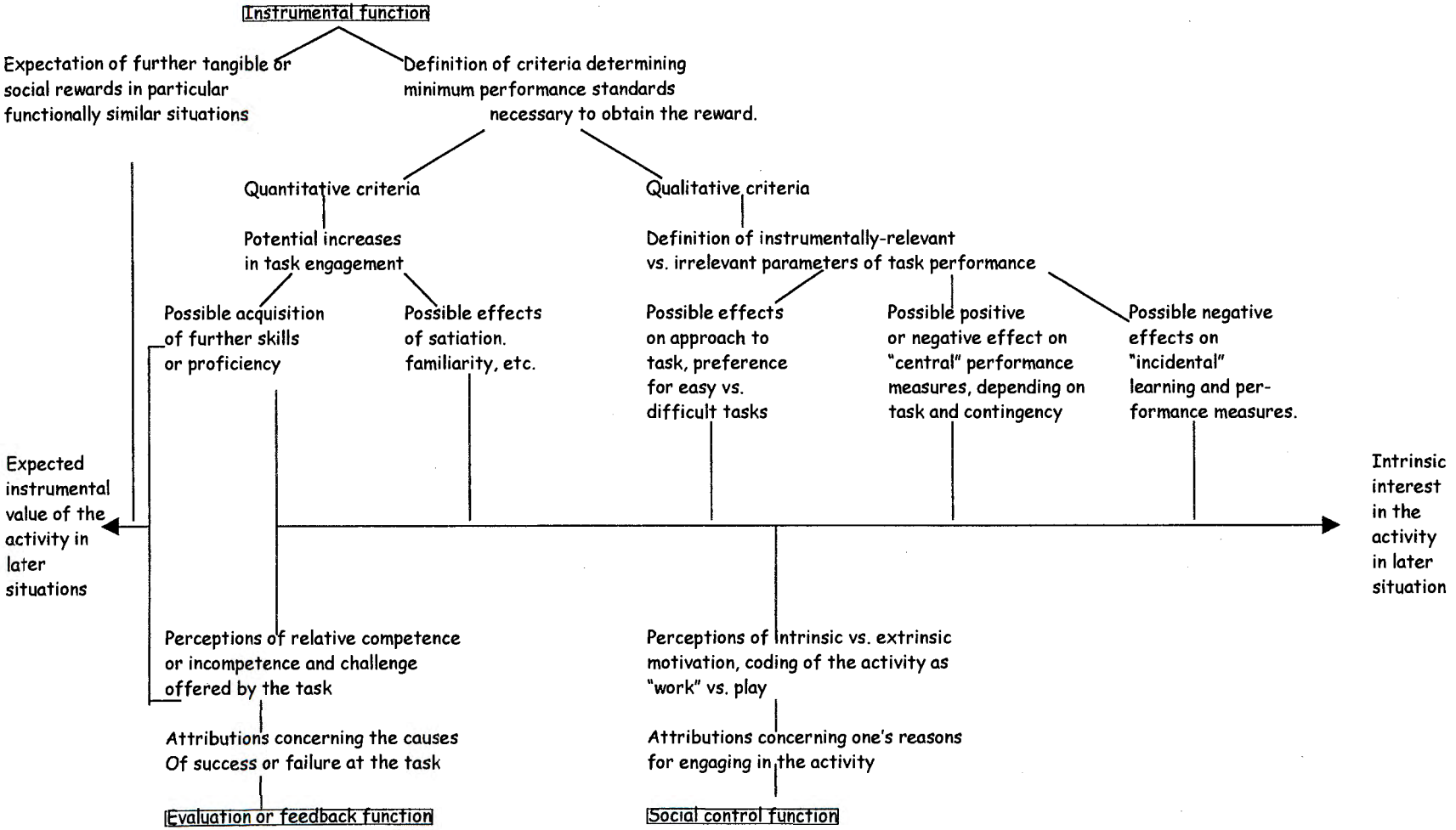
##### *2.2.2.4.1 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation*

Intrinsic motivation refers to an internal, personal motivational state of a student. Extrinsic motives exist when an individual is driven by reasons that have nothing to do with the activity; when the benefits will come from outside the activity.

Deci and Ryan (1985) claim that the pleasure and satisfaction of performing an activity/task derives from fulfilling innate needs for competence and self-determination. Intrinsically motivated individuals feel that they are performing an activity because of the challenge it presents to their competencies. The use of creative abilities called for by challenging tasks also gives satisfaction and a feeling of accomplishment. Beliefs about one's ability to successfully perform tasks, referred to as efficacy (Ames & Ames, 1985:3), are an important aspect of intrinsic motivation. Important factors in intrinsic motivation include effort expended towards achievement and accomplishment, a reduction in fear of failure, and an awareness of one's ability to influence events. Other factors that affect intrinsic motivation are characteristics of a task and personal values.

Rewards are extrinsic; we engage in most activities for the rewards that they are likely to bring. Cameron and Pierce (1994) claim that extrinsic rewards will not affect intrinsic motivation detrimentally; rewards will elicit compliant behaviour, and intrinsic motivation will develop. Lepper et al. (1996:21) list three functions of rewards, and state how they subsequently affect motivation: an instrumental or incentive function, an evaluation or feedback function, and a constraint or social control function. The incentive function results in increased task engagement, which could lead to intrinsic motivation, or an expectation of reward every time the individual engages in that task. As feedback, rewards could enhance an individual's sense of accomplishment, and in turn enhance intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, failure could reduce sense of achievement, and intrinsic motivation. The social control function is that it may seem as though an external agent is controlling the individual's actions, which could give the impression that the individual's participation is extrinsic rather than intrinsic. These three functions of rewards (instrumental, feedback and social control) are charted in Diagram 4.

## Diagram 4: The multiple processes by which rewards may influence subsequent behaviour




(Kohn, 1996:22).

Kohn (1996) argues against extrinsic rewards as they affect intrinsic motivation adversely; giving learners rewards for performances might interfere with learners coming to recognize the inherent value of performing well. Kohn (1996:21-22) draws attention to the instrumental, feedback and social control function of rewards (cf. Diagram 4). The perceptions of the instrumentality of an activity might determine whether, when, and how an individual engages in a previously rewarded activity. Rewards are an indication of one's ability in relation to others' abilities, or to an accepted standard. Rewards could enhance a student's sense of competence and accomplishment, or it could reduce them, with corresponding increases or decreases in intrinsic motivation. Kohn (1996) claims that it is impossible to isolate the effects of rewards and to claim that they diminish intrinsic motivation because a positive or negative result is possible.

#### *2.2.2.4.1.1 Implications for classroom learning*

Students, especially teenagers, are unlikely to say that there are intrinsic rewards to be gained from studying (Csikszentmihalyi & Nakamura, 1989:53). The problem with extrinsic rewards is that in their absence, students do not perform as well as they would otherwise. Marks rewarded for tasks function as incentives, although a negative result could be that marks are considered more important than actual knowledge gained and the pleasure and benefits of learning. Another effect of the marks-rewards system is the feedback it gives about ability. If a student attains a low mark, there is a possibility that a student could take that mark as an indication of low ability, depending on the attributions he/she makes. But low marks generally are not encouraging, regardless of causal attributions.

### *2.2.2.4.2 Summary*

Any theory of motivation does not adequately explain classroom behaviour on its own. They focus on different aspects of the same process. Some theories explain behaviour in terms of innate drives, urges, instincts, impulses, tensions, needs and other forces which the individual has no control over. Other theories explain behaviour in terms of freely chosen goals, purposes, plans, values, beliefs and aspirations. Motivation is not fixed and constant; it changes depending on the learning situation and process.

Teachers are encouraged to carry out motivational teaching practices, with the hope that they will influence the direction, strength and intensity of student motivation. Motivation is susceptible to the influence of other factors, and success is a strong motivator.

ESL learning and the variety of motivational conditions that exist in the classroom offer problems that are not easily understood or solved by the teacher. In classrooms, teachers have to contend with a wide range of motivated behaviours, and it can be difficult to find a starting point for dealing with various individual needs. This is why interaction and input has been chosen for this discussion, because they are aspects of ESL learning that students receive equally, although they might react differently to them. The following section aims to highlight important ESL learning features and the link they have with motivation.

## *2.3 ESL learning*

Language learning is the process of internalising a language (Crystal, 1992:218). Learning implies conscious effort exerted to try and gain some knowledge. Teaching entails "planned attempts to intervene in the learning process" (Ellis, 1990:14), where students are directed towards specific properties of the language and also towards specific learning activities and tasks. Learning and teaching are often regarded as distinct from each other, because learning involves different factors such as intelligence, memory, personality, and motivation, while teaching involves factors such as methods, techniques, and styles (Crystal, 1992:218). While this might be the case, the two are mutually supporting, especially in a classroom, where learning is almost totally dependent on teaching. Motivation is important for both teaching and learning to be effective.

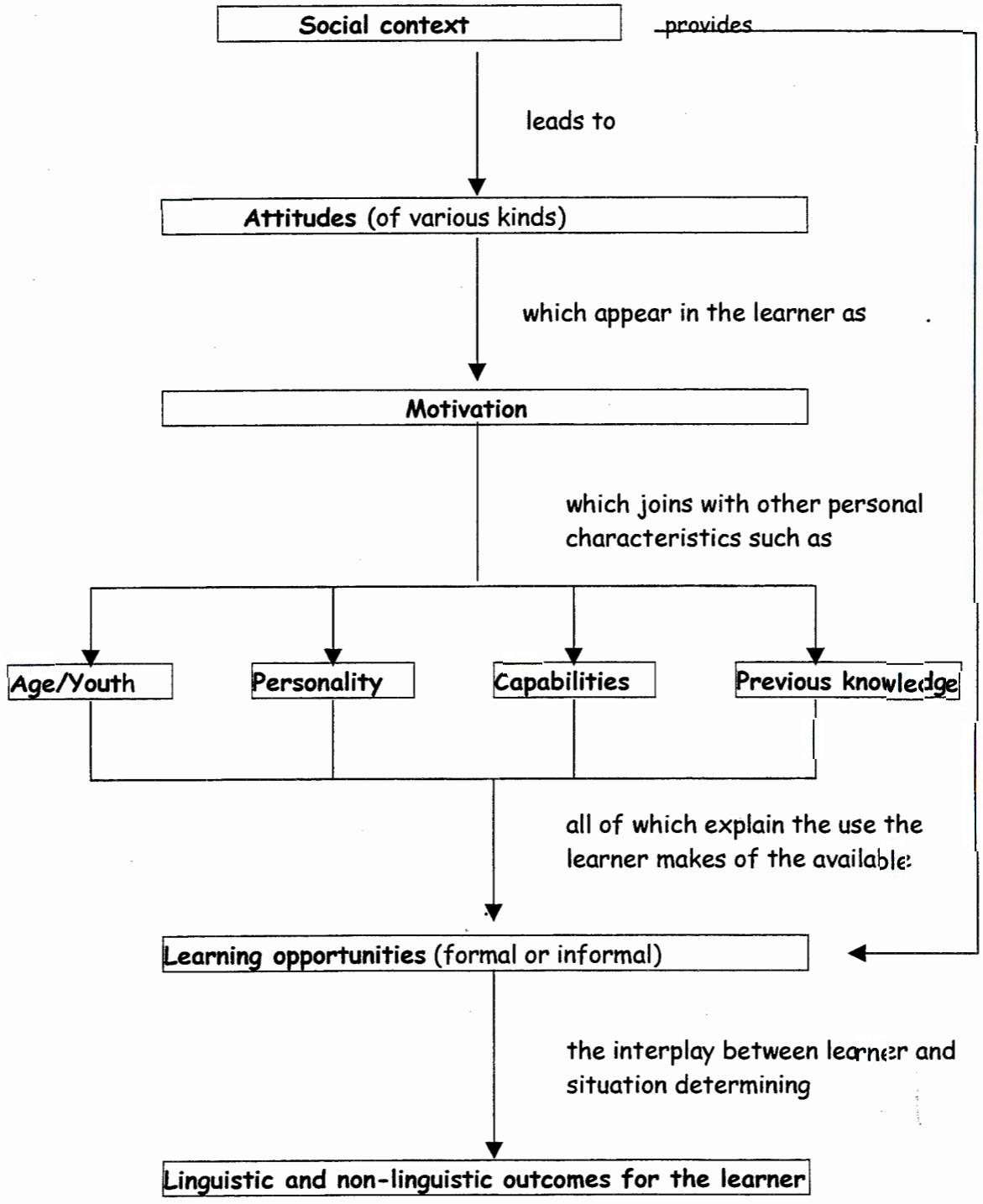
This section looks at the social context of classroom ESL learning as well as input and interaction. The social context of learning is discussed in order to highlight the fact that students have experiences outside the classroom that they bring into the classroom, and

which will have an impact on their learning behaviours and on the learning process. Motivation to learn a second language can be influenced by the social context in which learning takes place. Availability of input is mandatory for learning to take place (Krashen, 1982); input can be regarded as one of the starting points of language learning. Interaction in the classroom provides an opportunity for observable learning behaviour. More importantly, interaction can be an indication of the motivational states of students as it presupposes participation, personal involvement, and a taking of initiative in some way (Van Lier, 1988:91).

### *2.3.1 Social context of ESL learning*

This section looks at three social contextual factors that can affect ESL learning motivation, namely language attitudes, communicative styles, and age. 'Age' in this context is used to refer to the adolescent stage in social development (i.e. youth), and not the age (viz. chronological years) commonly referred to in discussions of individual differences that affect L2 learning and acquisition (e.g. Krashen, 1985; Skehan, 1989). South Africans' language attitudes and language usage are characterised by contradictions that can make the learning of ESL awkward for some. Communicative styles which are influenced by, amongst other things, the myriad of cultural backgrounds that students come from, may not be immediately obvious to teachers as factors that influence classroom communication. Teachers can, for example, incorrectly label students as quiet, uncommunicative and slow. The average secondary school student is at a stage (that of adolescence) which affects the behaviour as well as perceptions of the student. For these reasons, these factors are considered important in understanding external factors that can influence classroom learning motivation. Diagram 5 indicates the relationship between these variables and motivation, as well as the interrelationships with each other.

**Diagram 5: Social contextual variables in second language learning**




**(Spolsky, 1989:28).**

### *2.3.1.1 Language attitudes*

Dyers (1997:29) defines language attitudes as "strong positive or negative emotions experienced by people when they are faced with a choice between languages in a variety of situations or are learning a language." Language attitudes tend to be difficult to assess because they are private and deep-seated. Factors that influence language attitudes include: choice and preference of languages (e.g. status and association made with a specific language), and use and functions of languages (e.g. forced or voluntary use of language) (Dyers, 1997). South Africa provides a perfect example to view language preference and use, as they are very distinct from each other; languages preferred are not necessarily the languages that are used. Gough (1994) shows this contradiction: among white South Africans, conservative Afrikaans farmers reveal the greatest knowledge of African Bantu languages, which most probably could not be said of white supporters of more progressive parties. Speakers of African languages may reveal strong negative attitudes towards Afrikaans because of its past political connotations but may actually be highly competent users of the language. In comparison with Afrikaans, attitudes towards English tend to be positive, but when pitted against African languages, attitudes towards English tend to be negative.

More importantly, language attitudes can influence the extent of success in learning a language (Roos, 1990:27). The purpose of this section is to relate the social context of language learning to the possible influences on language learning motivation. Specific focus is directed towards students' reactions to language attitudes with regard to English.

With language being one of the tools of self-identification, English in South African Black communities carries more baggage than simply being a means of communication. There is a distinction between those who speak the language, and those who cannot. Beard and Gaganakis (1991) conducted a study on the perceptions of Black students towards English in non-racial private schools, and the extent of the students' alienation. The results of their study indicate that:

> Many students consequently developed strategies of "concealing affiliation" by absenting themselves from school during boycotts, changing out of school uniform before arriving home, avoiding speaking English and carefully censoring their conversation.
>
> Their situation is best understood as that of a transitory and intermediate group in the process of becoming an elite. The contradictions which flowed from this were reflected in central themes in the interviews such as "the future", "being sell-outs", "being English speakers", "being free", or the theme of "the poor".
>
> (Beard & Gaganakis, 1991:117).

The implication of the findings of Beard and Gaganakis (1991) is that language usage is greatly influenced by language attitudes prevalent in the society. A negative attitude towards English will not have a positive influence on learning it.

Gaganakis (1992:51) conducted a study on the complexities and challenges faced by Black students in multi-racial schools. The focus is on the link between ethnic identity and the perceived prestige of the English language. This is part of what his research revealed on interviewing Black students:

> English is perceived as the language of education, the medium of upward social mobility and carries greater prestige than the vernacular at home. As a result of such perceptions, English has a doubly alienating effect in the township. Some students refuse to speak in the vernacular, while others conceal their fluency in the language connected with middle-class power and privilege.

While it might be accepted that knowledge of English could be instrumental in accessing jobs, etc., it still might not diminish the negativity with which Black speakers of English are viewed. For these students not to feel alienated in their communities, they are conscious of their use of English, and aware that speaking English could draw unpleasant attention to them. Use of English is guarded.

Students can pick up on these attitudes which are prevalent in their communities, even if they are subtle, and could possibly internalise them. These attitudes could affect their motivation to learn, not necessarily negatively, but not always positively either.

### *2.3.1.2 Communicative style*

Communicative style is defined as "the way language is used and understood in a particular culture, which both reflects and reinforces fundamental cultural beliefs about the way people are and the nature of inter-personal communication" (Johnson, 1995:59). Classroom engagement can be affected by a student's communicative style. Culturally and socially learned ways of communicating tend to be different from those expected in the classroom. If, for example, a student comes from a background where a person does not answer a question unless it is directed to him, he/she will not volunteer to answer questions that are directed to the entire class. The student will appear withdrawn as opposed to students who come from a culture where a person has to respond even if the question is not directed to him/her, and who behaves in the same manner in the classroom. Not being able to voice opinions, or to be part of the general classroom communication can be alienating and excluding. This could manifest itself as a motivational issue.

### *2.3.1.3 Age/youth*

Age as a factor that affects learning has been extensively researched and discussed under individual differences (e.g. Ellis, 1985; Skehan, 1991). Attention has been focused on the effect of age on the rate of learning. However, this section looks at age from a social context. The focus is on the student as an adolescent, and how this affects learning motivation. According to Cummings (1995:493), classroom engagement, academic effort, and the degree of success or failure are not only influenced by individual differences in skills, abilities, and predisposition, but also by situational and contextual factors, including social contextual variables.

Adolescence is a stage where formation of identity takes place, when the adolescent begins to develop a sense of self (Cummings, 1995:234). Physical changes result in emotional and psychological changes; the manner in which the teenager views him/herself, the opposite sex, family, and the community changes. This is a stage in their lives when they have intense experiences at home and outside the home. Adolescents also tend to base their views of themselves on what others think or say of them. There is also an awakening of feelings such as confusion, pride, self-respect, disappointment with one's self, personal standards, ideals, as well as the emergence of a philosophy of life (Cummings, 1995). With regard to the classroom, teachers' views of them, for example, communicated through comments, and other students' views about them could have a profound effect on their views about themselves and their ability in the classroom. This is not to say students have to be cushioned from these possible unpleasantries, for that is not possible. But an understanding of the student as an adolescent arms the teacher with knowledge for making provision in how they handle teaching.

Belongingness, highlighted by Maslow (1954) as one of the basic motivational needs of humans, is especially important to students of this age. Studies (e.g. Goodenow, 1993) have shown that a sense of belonging and of being supported in a particular social context encourages motivation and engagement. The extent to which they feel accepted, respected, included, supported by others is important for effective functioning in classroom activities.

Cummings (1995:474) reports on a study conducted on secondary school students in the U.S.A. to find out what they would do if they were teachers trying to get students to become engaged in the learning process. These are some of their responses:

> *"I hope to design my instruction to make learning fun and relevant. I would like students to leave saying, 'What are we going to do tomorrow'."*

*"Make subject relevant, keep lessons interesting, get them involved, keep control of the classroom (as much as possible)."*

These comments show that students would like to have their interests incorporated into classroom learning and activities. This will make learning relevant, and will keep students engaged in classroom learning activities. However, the interests of adolescents are more likely to be outside the classroom than inside. To direct and focus their attention on learning requires patience and skill on the teacher's part. The second response makes an allusion to behavioural issues; there is potential for behaviour not to be conducive to a learning atmosphere. Behavioural problems could lead to problems between students and the teacher, and the conflict could give rise to a host of motivational problems. But it is necessary for students to understand that they are ultimately responsible for their learning. Too often students are exempted from taking responsibility for their learning; teachers are burdened with the sole responsibility of ensuring that students achieve success.

It is imperative that it is understood that schools do not operate in a vacuum; there are external factors that manipulate what happens in classrooms. The classroom is not an isolated entity; it is part of a larger community. But again, with full understanding of the wider context within which learning happens, the classroom is a whole unit, which makes it necessary that it be isolated to look at how various factors and components interact in order to bring about motivated learning.

### *2.3.2 Classroom learning*

The classroom exists for one purpose: to bring about learning. There are various factors that influence or determine the outcome of teaching processes, for example, factors pertaining to the student as individual, to the classroom as a place of learning, and to the relationship between student and teacher. Anderson and Walberg (1974:153) recognize that there are several components that make up the learning process. The environment, aptitude, instruction, and learning are the four interactional components that influence the outcome of classroom learning. Aptitude and the environment are

seen as relatively unchanging and general. Learning and instruction are dependent on other variables; that which is true of them today does not necessarily apply to other days. These four components are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Components of classroom learning**

| | RELATIVE CHARACTERISTICS | |
|---|---|---|
| *Locus* | *Specific, Intended, Temporary* | *General, Implicit, Enduring* |
| Student | Learning (or Achievement)- a change in (or state of) thought, feeling or behaviour | Aptitude (or Ability)- a characteristic of the individual that predicts learning |
| Context | Instruction- a stimulus intended to bring about learning | Environment- a stimulus, aside from instruction, that predicts learning |

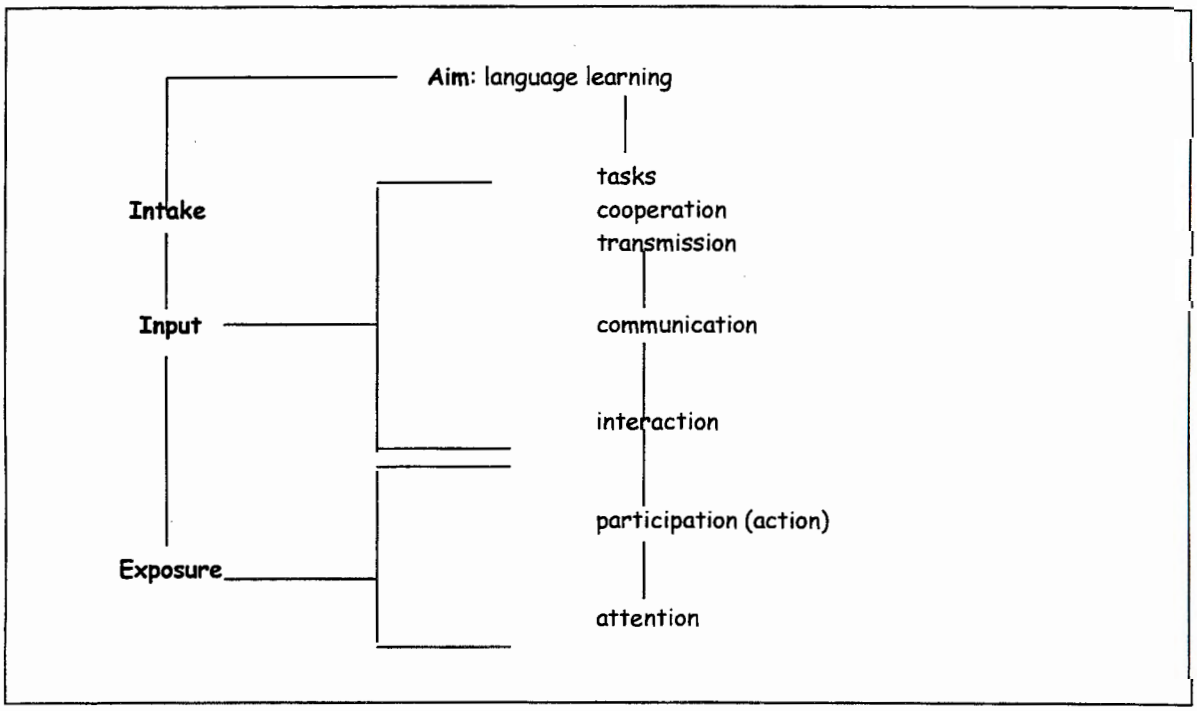
**(Anderson & Walberg, 1974:154).**

The general characteristics are not the main focus of this study, but rather the temporary and changing, specifically, instruction. While aptitude and the environment cannot be easily manipulated, instruction can be altered with the intention to bring about what can be regarded as optimum learning. In keeping with Anderson and Walberg's (1974) explanation of instruction (i.e. a stimulus intended to bring about learning), the following section is on input and interaction. Input can be regarded as the basic stimulus necessary for L2 learning to take place. Interaction is also integral to language learning. Input and interaction can influence motivation in the way in which input is provided, the type of input provided, who provides it, how it is presented to them, what students are required to do in the classroom in relation to the provided input, and how students can provide stimuli for themselves in order to learn. The following discussion focuses on clarifying why input and interaction are essential to L2 learning, which will link up with the discussion in chapter 3.

### *2.3.2.1 Input and interaction*

Input refers to the language data, utterances or texts, that the student is exposed to. It is "potentially processible language data made available to the student" (Smith, 1994:8). Krashen (1985:2) states that language is acquired by receiving comprehensible input, through understanding messages. Although comprehensible input is not sufficient, it is necessary for learning and acquisition. Diagram 6 illustrates the chain of order of the processes in language learning which are related to input and interaction.

**Diagram 6: *A hierarchy of classroom learning processes***




**(Van Lier, 1988:94).**

Instruction and learning are interactive processes, the effectiveness of which is determined by the quality and quantity of reciprocal interaction (Le Roux, 1990:426). While participation in the classroom is not equated with learning (Allwright, 1980), it can provide an indication of student motivation. It signals a willingness to learn. Interaction between students is as important as student-teacher interaction; different opportunities

for L2 development are provided by each. Interaction encompasses another aspect of classroom learning, input, which can affect the motivational states of students. Educational communication and interaction implies more than conveying content; it affects feelings, attitudes, inter-personal relationships, motivational levels, and more (Le Roux, 1990:427).

Chaudron (1988:5) points out that the student's task is threefold: making sense of instructional tasks that are posed in the L2, attaining sociolinguistic competence to allow greater participation, and learning the content itself. Stern (1983:397) lists three consequences of L2 learning which are affective, cognitive, and social. Affectively, the student has to deal with the frustrations of non-communication, whereas he/she is apt in the L1. Cognitively, the student has to contend with linguistic, semantic, and sociolinguistic aspects of the second language. Socially, the student is emotionally dependent on parent figures that provide the social norms that the child learns unconsciously. For Cook (1991:92), the uniqueness of the L2 classroom lies in the fact that language is involved in two different ways: the organisation and control of the classroom takes place through language, and secondly, language is the actual subject matter that is being taught. This turns the academic subject matter back on itself.

In a situation where students have almost no opportunities for direct contact with the language outside the classroom, the students' experience of the language is limited. Everything the teacher does provides the student with opportunities for encountering the language (Cook, 1991:98). Therefore, in the short period that is allocated to ESL learning in the classroom, the teacher will have to create an intensive English-speaking environment. There will have to be sufficient activities for listening, speaking, and reading opportunities that are not available outside the classroom. The situation that is becoming noticeable in many Black secondary schools in South Africa is the absence of sufficient input provided in the target language. Although official policy states that the exclusive medium of instruction is English, in practice, it is different. For example, studies by Amuzu (1992) and Meyer (1995) show that the tendency is to use the vernacular as the medium of instruction. The usual reason given by teachers is that

students will not understand if English is used exclusively. The implications of this are that students are deprived of opportunities to practise target language structures, negotiate meaning in English, and to incorporate newly learned structures into their speech. Since proficiency is closely related to practice, it is reasonable to assume that L2 achievement and practice are related.

An equally important aspect is that students cannot only be recipients of input, they have to generate input themselves (Chaudron, 1988:100). Students have to initiate interaction and cause input to be directed at them. This they can do through requests for information or assistance, initiation of new topics, and being responsive to the teacher and other students. Interaction between the students is also important, because fellow students also provide input, and give other students a chance to respond to it. Student-student interaction will inevitably give rise to conflict, but cognitive conflict is to be encouraged, although managed by the teacher (Johnson & Johnson, 1979). Students who are exposed to alternative or contradictory viewpoints are often encouraged to seek more information or to take on alternative perspectives. This can lead to higher cognitive development and moral reasoning, which is constructive, and can increase students' motivation. Other benefits of student-student interaction include influencing educational aspirations and achievement, development of social competencies, and encouraging students to take on the perspectives of other students (Johnson, 1981:5).

Classroom interaction can be looked at in terms of quality and quantity (Van Lier, 1988:92). Quality can include the different ways in which students participate, the intensity of participation, and spontaneity. Quantity can include the time available and time allocated for groups and individuals. Ellis (1990:95) states that interaction can be hypothesised to contribute to learning in two ways: through the student's reception and comprehension of the L2, and through the student's attempts to produce samples of the L2. As much as input is necessary for L2 acquisition, so is output, to give an indication of how much the student has understood and learnt, and is acquiring.

The motivational value of interaction lies in input, questioning behaviour, feedback, and student-teacher relations. There are several issues that arise: matching the proficiency of the students with input they receive, the quality of that input- interest and relevance, and methods and techniques used to present that input. These are discussed in the following chapter.

## *2.4 Conclusion*

In this chapter, motivation theories that are thought to have direct relevance for classroom learning were discussed. Practical classroom implications of the theories were highlighted. The social context of ESL learning provided a broader understanding of classroom learning, of which input and interaction were given special mention because of their motivational potential.

ESL learning in Black South African secondary schools requires a transformation of diverse components, both inside and outside the classroom. This study hopes to contribute by drawing attention to motivating practices in the classroom. The following chapter looks at specific classroom components and their relationship with language learning motivation.

# Chapter 3

# Learning-specific motivational components

## 3.1 Introduction

Classroom second language learning is distinct from natural or foreign language learning. Conditions that exist in the classroom are unique; motivational situations will, therefore, be unique. The importance of L2 classroom research rests in identifying the phenomena that promote or hamper learning in the classroom (Van Lier, 1988:71). It is in knowing the causes of success and failure that corrective and enhancing measures can be thought out and applied practically. In the case of classroom motivation, not much research has been conducted that is specifically related to factors that are specific to the learning situation. While literature on promoting student learning and motivation is extensive, findings are not easily translated into classroom practice (Brophy, 1983:283). Much less research has been carried out in a South African context, particularly in Black schools.

The picture of classroom ESL learning, painted by Amuzu (1992:132), is not entirely uncommon:

> What is done in the name of teaching consists of a few minutes of reading aloud to the class by the teacher and in some cases by one or two students. This is interspersed with brief explanations in the mother tongue. The lesson normally ends with a set of exercises copied on the board for the students to write in their exercise books. Very little attempt is made to teach the mechanics of the language or to give the students any meaningful practice in the use of the language. And since the students have little opportunity outside the classroom even to acquire spoken English, quite a large number of them leave school with only a smattering of the language.

This research is carried out with this type of ESL learning experience in mind. It describes a classroom scenario in which the motivational potential of the teacher, the teaching method, and that of the learners could be further tapped. In such situations, to develop and maintain motivation could prove difficult. Teaching practices that will promote classroom motivation are essential. This chapter looks at L2 learning motivational components peculiar to the

classroom, namely, course-specific, teacher-specific and group-specific motivational components.

## 3.2 Course-specific motivational components

Components relating to the course that are discussed are the content, the teaching method and the learning tasks. These three components are part of the core of classroom L2 learning: the content as the specification of what is taught, the teaching method as the mode through which L2 learning is brought about, and tasks which facilitate learning and provide demonstration of that which has been learnt.

### 3.2.1 Content

Content refers to what is being taught, the subject matter. It is prescribed in a syllabus, which also dictates the order in which the subject matter is to be taught. According to Linskie (1977:197), the content and the sequence of the curriculum itself act as a motivator, either encouraging or discouraging further effort. If the content is dull, insignificant and irrelevant, there is little learning motivation. Content is presented in the syllabus as grammatical structures, situations, topics, functions, or exchanges (Richards & Rodgers, 1985:21), depending on the approach favoured by authorities. Curriculum 2005 bases its content on the desired outcomes that students should be able to demonstrate.

OBE in South Africa has led to a redefinition of the syllabus. Traditionally, the syllabus was content-based, where specified subject matter was to be taught and mastered. With OBE, the chosen outcomes decide the content that is to be learnt. Spady (1994:18) defines outcomes as "high-quality, culminating demonstrations of learning in context". Outcomes are a result of learning and an actual visible, observable demonstration of knowledge combined with competence and the attitudinal, affective, motivational, and relational element that make up a performance (Pretorius, 1998:ix).

OBE places importance on making learning interesting and relevant, to make it useful for when learners leave school and are part of productive society. The following discussion is on the importance of students' interest in and the relevance of content, and the relationship of these to L2 learning motivation.

### *3.2.1.1 Interest*

Interest as a motivational variable encompasses curiosity and arousal (Keller, 1983:398). Interest exists where there is an unexpected or inconsistent event in the perceptual environment, or when there is a gap between a given and desired state of knowledge. The significance of interest in learning cannot be overestimated; it concentrates our attention, vivifies our impressions, ensures repetition, and favours a wealth of associations. In learning, interest does not come readily or freely, it might often be necessary for the teacher to arouse learners' interests through certain strategies. Factors that determine the level of interest in learning include the interests of the learners, identification with learning goals, and level of difficulty of the content. Manipulation of these could prove successful in increasing learners' interest in the subject content.

Accommodating the varied interests of adolescents could prove a difficult undertaking, especially in the short time periods allocated for lessons. Lindeque (1996:154) states that affective or emotional development goes hand in hand with cognitive development. Catering for the interests of learners could contribute to this development. Lindeque (1996) suggests that instead of giving learners the same topic for a writing assignment, students could write about what interests them the most. It is their writing skills that are under scrutiny as well as their ability to express themselves and their ideas. A variety of activities and materials will also cater for different interests. Another suggestion is to allow students to choose what they want to read, or which activities they want to take part in. Besides creating student interest, a democratic participatory approach towards classroom work is created as students have a say in determining how the work should be done (Lindeque, 1996:154). Engaging the student in critical and mutual learning is another way in which interest can be fostered (Lindeque, 1996). Problem-posing is an example of achieving this goal. Teachers could ask students questions like: "Do you think there is a way of decreasing the level of crime in this country?" The students' critical thinking abilities are improved in the process as well as holding their interest and involvement in learning activities.

The identification of oneself with a certain goal is enough to cultivate interest in activities that will lead to the attainment of that goal. Firstly, the goal of ESL learning should be to communicate effectively with speakers of other languages. In South Africa there are 11 officially recognised languages. However, the practical reality is that English is the lingua franca, and lack of proficiency in it is a disadvantage (Lemmer, 1995). Therefore, attainment of this goal should be regarded as important. Secondly, the aims of the syllabus should be made clear to the learners; an understanding of the larger picture might be instrumental in

keeping them focused and involved. Thirdly, understanding the goals of each lesson means that learners know what is required of them, and does not cause them to be listless, confused and bored.

Hunter (1979:63) points out that it is the teacher's duty to determine the appropriate level of difficulty for a lesson, and to decide when to move on to a higher level of difficulty. To do this the teacher has to take into account that some lessons are dependent on understanding previous lessons, and are a continuation thereof. Some lessons are independent of preceding lessons, and in this, interest, availability of materials and convenience should provide the guiding lead. Hunter (1979) advises that to make successful content decisions, the teacher must be able to discriminate between dependent and independent sequences, to task-analyse more complex learning into its simpler components, and to diagnose students in terms of the components already possessed and those that remain to be acquired. In other words, the teacher should be familiar with levels of task difficulty that the students are comfortable with for successful task completion. What teachers gather in a lesson in terms of learners' ability, achievement and interest can be used as a basis for future lessons. For example, it could be that a majority of students need further practice with a particular lesson, but they are getting bored. Persisting with the lesson might prove to be a futile exercise, it might be better to change activities instead. The teacher has to implement teaching strategies as he/she sees fit, according to demands that arise in the classroom, at that moment.

Keller (1983:401-405) gives suggestions on ways of fostering interest in the classroom:

- Changing the normal way of presenting lessons or tasks would rouse curiosity; the unfamiliar and unexpected are intriguing. An example of a normal way of lesson presentation is for the teacher to open the classroom, introduce the topic, give a lesson on it, and then invite contributions from the learners. It would be a change if the teacher could sometimes let the students give the lesson themselves; it would provide an opportunity for increased participation of all students, provide an opportunity for meaningful negotiation and practice of the language, and could increase their confidence. Most importantly, it would be a chance to do things differently.
- Introducing a personal and emotional element into standard material and learning. Social community happenings, whether in the form of debates or role plays would be one way of making learning personal. Learners could also be given tasks of keeping diaries of English lessons and tasks, both at home and in the classroom, not necessarily for lengthy periods. This would give both students and teacher an idea of learning and studying habits.

- Using real people and events in lessons; this would generate more interest than abstract and hypothetical events.

Interest is both the result and cause of motivation (Bernard, 1972:225). Interest sustains participation and persistence, which are indications of motivated behaviour. Interest also promotes intrinsic motivation, which sustains learning in the long term. If learning is made interesting, it could take on personal value, and not be so remote to the student's learning and personal goals.

#### *3.2.1.2 Relevance*

As with interest, relevance has to apply at all the levels of learning, from the wider level of curriculum specification, to the level of the learner. Content that is relevant motivates the learner because it assumes personal importance and meaning. By feeling that it relates to personal needs and interests, the learner is motivated to persevere and achieve success. Relevance is discussed in relation to Outcomes Based Education in South Africa, satisfaction of personal needs, and everyday life situations.

Black schooling in South Africa has been seen to be inadequate in fulfilling the requirements of the sphere of work and possible future needs of the learner and the wider community (Pretorius, 1998; Hartshorne, 1992). The education model has been inclined to emphasise an academic value system instead of skills and the attainment of suitable vocational qualifications (Pretorius, 1998:ix). OBE proposes to make learning relevant for learners by equipping learners with demonstrable skills that will place them in a position to function effectively in the world outside the classroom. Outcomes are related to the needs of the community and the requirements of job markets. In the place of a variety of widely differentiated subjects, OBE has learning areas that will provide a strong foundation in general education to equip people for flexible movement between various vocations (Pretorius, 1998:viii). OBE is also based on the principle of lifelong learning (RSA, 1995). Learners should have the desire and the ability to continue to learn, to adapt and to develop new knowledge and skills, and to take responsibility for personal performance. Learning should provide informational opportunities that extend beyond school. To receive an education that will be beneficial for years after leaving school has significant motivational merit.

With regard to the learner, relevance could be viewed in terms of satisfying a personal need. Personal motivation will increase with increases in the perceived likelihood of a task satisfying a basic need, motive or value (Keller, 1983:407). If the need for achievement is strong, it

follows that a learner will be motivated to perform in order to achieve his/her goals. It is also important that the level of challenge should be equal to the students' level of skill; if the challenge is too high, the result is anxiety, if too low, boredom (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991:488).

Content could also be taught and presented in such a way that learners can relate it to their everyday lives. Literature texts easily deal with universal themes, for example, love, joy, suffering, which students can relate to. The teacher can draw their attention to parallels with their own lives. An important condition, though, is accessibility of language; students have to understand the text before they can identify topics and themes similar and relevant to their life experiences (Moyo, 1996). However, the language of text (literary and poetic) can prove problematic; if the teacher spends most of the lesson translating and explaining vocabulary and the text, the lesson is likely to be dull and boring. The text will lose appeal. Learner participation is important to maintain interest, but in a lesson dominated by explanation and translation there is little scope for meaningful participation. To make learning interesting calls for creativity and flexibility on the teacher's part. It demands knowledge of content, and proficiency in the language. It also calls for teachers to be informed about the experiences, knowledge, developmental level, and preference of students.

### *3.2.2 Teaching method*

Richards et al. (1985:176) define teaching method as a way of teaching a language which is based on systemic principles and procedures. It is an application of views on how a language is best taught and learned. Anthony (1963:63-7) differentiates between approach, method, and technique, where the approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning (and) describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught, the method an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material based on the approach, and the technique refers to a specific stratagem used to accomplish an immediate objective. Richards and Rodgers (1986:16) believe that Anthony's definition of a method does not give ample consideration to the make-up of the method, which would include some commentary on the roles of teachers and learners, the role of instructional materials or the form they are expected to take. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), 'design' is the level that connects theory and practice, the level at which questions concerning method are addressed. A method consists of an approach, design and procedure, where approach refers to the theory of the nature of language and the theory of the nature of language learning, and

procedure refers to classroom techniques, practices, and behaviours observed when the method is used. The components of a design are presented in Diagram 7.

**Diagram 7: Elements of design that constitute a method**

**Design**

↓

a. **The general and specific objectives of the method**

b. ***A* syllabus model**
   -criteria for the selection and organization of linguistic and/or subject-matter content

c. **Types of learning and teaching activities**
   -kinds of tasks and practice activities to be employed in the classroom and in materials

d. **Learner roles**
   -types of learning tasks set for learners
   -degree of control learners have over the content of learning
   -patterns of learner groupings that are recommended or implied
   -degree to which learners influence the learning of others
   -the view of the learner as a processor, performer, initiator, problem solver, etc.

e. **Teacher roles**
   -types of functions teachers fulfil
   -degree of teacher influence over learning
   -degree to which the teacher determines the content of learning
   -types of interaction between teachers and learners

f. **The role of instructional materials**
   -primary function of materials
   -the form materials take (e.g. textbook, audiovisuals)
   -relation of materials to other input
   -assumptions made about teachers and learners

**Adapted from Richards and Rodgers (1986:28).**

These different elements of a design (i.e. learning and teaching activities, learner roles, teacher roles) are incorporated into the method. The approach to teaching (i.e. theories of the

nature of language and the nature of language learning) and the teaching procedures (i.e. teaching techniques) are incorporated into the design of and the choice of learning materials. For this research, to determine the motivation of students towards the teaching method, teaching and learning materials were chosen because they are most visible and tangible, particularly for students.

In general, South African schools can be said to be negotiating instruction through two teaching methods, namely, the Traditional Methods (e.g. structural and audiolingual methods) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The majority of Black schools still use traditional teaching methods rather than implementing CLT (Malindi, 1996). The focus of CLT lies for the greater part in the opportunity it offers students of linking language learning to the everyday life and interests of learners and their future communicative needs (Edelhoff, 1981:51). The aim of CLT is to enable students to accomplish functions that they carry out with language everyday, such as arguing, promising, describing, and requesting. Students should also be able to distinguish between language use in different contexts, registers, and varieties, such as appropriate forms for formal situations, and the differences in spoken and written language. They should be able to integrate all four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking).

Williams (1983:173) claims that there appears to be three major characteristics of CLT and that they are related to syllabus design, methodology and materials. At the level of syllabus design, the dominant feature is relevance to the learners' needs. At the level of methodology, the concern lies with meaningful communication. At the level of materials, it is authenticity. These characteristics and concerns can be represented and consolidated in teaching materials; it is possible to examine these concerns by examining teaching materials. They are the most visible and tangible aspects within the curriculum (Harmer, 1991:208).

### *3.2.2.1 Teaching and learning materials*

Tomlinson (1998:2) describes language learning materials as "anything that is used by teachers or learners to facilitate the learning of a language. Materials could obviously be cassettes, videos, CD-ROMs, dictionaries, grammar books, readers, workbooks or photocopied exercises. ... they can be anything which is deliberately used to increase the learners' knowledge and/or experience of the language." The functions of materials are: to specify content, to define or suggest the intensity of coverage for particular syllabus items (the amount of time, attention, and detail devoted to specific language items), and to define the daily learning objectives that should constitute the goals of the syllabus (Richards & Rodgers,

1985:25). Particular attention is focused on textbooks, which can be regarded as the mainstay of classroom learning in South Africa, and also on authentic texts, which are integral to CLT.

#### *3.2.2.1.1 Textbooks*

Textbooks come as a complete product with the material to be learned already laid out for the teacher and students. They present the grammatical items to be learned, give illustrations of its functions and uses, and provide opportunities to practice the use of the item (Bell, 1981:43). The entire language course could be dependent on a textbook; other materials would supplement it. Even though a textbook could be the basis for all classroom teaching, there is no need to follow it slavishly. The teacher could choose the suitable lesson for a particular situation. Another option is to adapt textbook material for specific aims, and to suit specific needs.

Adaptation of teaching materials can also provide a means to engage learners in meaningful activity (Clarke, 1989). This will cause an externally imposed text to have personal meaning; commitment and purposeful activity will be fostered. One of the examples Clarke (1989:138) gives for materials adaptation is with comprehension exercises. He writes that students could ignore the questions given at the end of the comprehension text. The learners could rather formulate questions based on what the text communicates to them, working in pairs and groups. Chances for a wider variety of questions exist, and student involvement is greater.

Advantages of using textbooks include having a sensible progression of language items (Harmer, 1991:257). Work that has already been completed can be used in the following section, based on the information that learners are supposed to have mastered. Textbooks also allow students to study without the help of a teacher. They follow the same format from one unit to the next, and this could make handling easier for the teacher and learners. Textbooks present ample opportunities for meaningful learning, but are not without disadvantages.

Nunan (1991:209) states that one of the problems with a textbook is its lack of catering for the diversity of needs that exist in most language classrooms. He admits, though, that the use of a textbook does save teachers from burden and time involved in creating materials from scratch. There is also the possibility that a teacher might rely too heavily on the textbook, thus depriving learners of material adapted specifically for their needs (Harmer, 1991:257).

In South African schools, textbooks have become an almost inseparable part of the learning system; they are the most commonly used medium for instruction (Van Rooyen & Van der Merwe, 1996:247). They have also been the most misused in that learning has become textbook-centred. There has been no major move to supplement textbooks with other materials, or to adapt it to suit the specific needs of the learners. A tendency that has developed is for learners to go through textbooks without any proper understanding or real learning, only memorising where possible (Van Rooyen & Van der Merwe, 1996). This is true of content subjects which have to be learnt in English (e.g. history), as well as for language learning.

OBE decrees that textbooks are not to be central to classroom teaching and learning activities. Teachers are to draw from a wide pool of resources, namely, supporting materials. To get to a point where a teacher does not use a textbook exclusively but uses supplementary learning material requires confidence in one's ability to use English, and extensive knowledge of subjects. With time the teacher will develop a feel for the types of material to use for different lessons.

#### *3.2.2.1.2 Authentic materials*

Tomlinson (1998:viii) defines authentic texts as "not written or spoken for language teaching purposes." It could be a newspaper article, a novel, or a song. In this section the advantages of using authentic materials, as well as the relativity of authenticity of material, are discussed.

Texts like newspapers and magazines contain current news and events, as well as familiar topics and people. Students will have opinions on some of what is contained in these sources, and will have an interest that comes from what is familiar and relevant to their lives. Authentic texts are varied and rich, in style, in mode, medium, purpose, and are characteristic of authentic discourse in the target language (Tomlinson, 1998:viii). Authentic materials present learners with a chance to see how language functions outside the classroom, especially when they do not have comprehensive access to it other than in the classroom.

Breen (1985:60) is of the opinion that authenticity should be approached from the perspective of the reader of the text. He argues that an authentic text produced by a fluent writer is useless to a non-fluent reader or speaker. A text produced for the use of banks might not be authentic for school learners whose familiarity with technical terms makes it incomprehensible. This view seems to suggest that an authentic text does not necessarily facilitate authentic language use because it was intended for communicative purposes other

than language teaching. Yet, if students learn for the purpose of using language communicatively outside the classroom, it is imperative that they have access to varied types of texts, and authenticity will be negotiated as they go along. An additional issue is whether a text will engage the reader's curiosity, interest and knowledge. If it does not, then authenticity is worth little in such an instance.

For Widdowson (1978), authenticity is a characteristic of the relationship between the passage and the reader, and it has to do with appropriate response. Widdowson (1978:80) states that the presentation of units in detachment for the purpose of language learning is bound to reduce their naturalness as discourse. Articles, letters and newspaper reports are related to the context of our own social and psychological reality. We read a newspaper article because we are interested in its topic, and we associate the contents with our existing knowledge. We do not bother with what is remote from our particular world. Thus, making a learner read an extract and deal with it in a way that does not correspond to his normal communicative activities is not an authentic case of use.

Authenticity can, therefore, be seen as being multi-faceted. The purpose and use of the text, as well as the perspective of the reader have to be taken into consideration in the selection of teaching materials. Learner preferences, and especially the teacher's own experience and insight will provide guidance as to the appropriate materials to use for language learning.

### *3.2.3 Learning tasks*

A task is goal-directed by nature; it is an activity carried out as a result of processing or understanding language (Richards et al., 1985: 289). The aim is for students to demonstrate how much they have learnt. In performing a task, there is a cognitive and affective involvement (Wright, 1987:35). Cognitive involvement is related to task difficulty matched with the learners' ability to successfully complete the task. Affective involvement includes attitudes towards the task itself, the content, or people with whom the task is being done. Tasks place three kinds of demands on learners: learning demands, content demands, and action demands (Candlin, 1987). Preferably, tasks should maintain a balance between these three demands. If learning demands are high, familiar content might be chosen, or demands for action might be decreased. For Ralph (1963:41-2), task features which affect the rate of learning include the perceptual clarity of the task, the meaningfulness of the material, and the difficulty of the material.

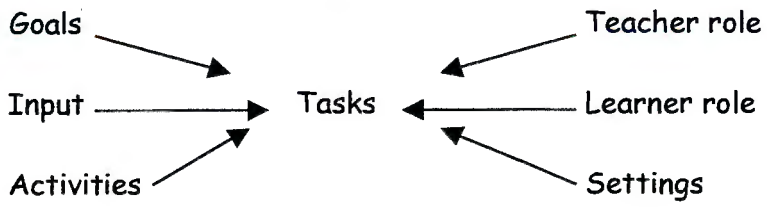
Motivational states with regard to tasks involve task-involvement/task-focused goals and ego-involvement/ability-focused goals. Task-focused goals are concerned with learning for the sake of learning; satisfaction is derived from problem solving, from challenge, and from encountering novel situations. According to Maehr (1976), learners tend to be more positive towards a task that they do for intrinsic reasons (task focus), and they show an interest which continues outside the classroom. With ability goals, the motivating force is the desire for success and to achieve higher than other students. This is most probably the more common type of task motivation since the preoccupation in learning is with getting good marks. This goal orientation leads to competition, which is not necessarily negative, but students are seen in terms of those that win and those that lose.

### *3.2.3.1 Task type*

Swales (1991) puts tasks into two categories: mechanical exercises and communicative tasks. Mechanical exercises are associated with formal grammar, and with classroom language usage. On the other hand, communicative tasks are those that enable or support communication. Nunan (1989:40) further classifies communicative tasks into real world and pedagogic tasks. Real world tasks relate to language as it is used outside the classroom, whereas pedagogic tasks would generally not be used outside the classroom. But they do assist in stimulating internal processes of acquisition. Nunan (1989) states that this distinction is not absolute; it is a continuum. Regardless of the type, language learning tasks are designed with the aim of making learners produce language in written or spoken form.

A view that forms the basis of communicative language teaching is that there needs to be a distinction between knowing grammatical rules, and being able to use them effectively and appropriately (Nunan, 1989:12). Diagram 8 outlines the structure and construction of communicative tasks.

**Diagram 8: *A framework for communicative tasks***




**(Nunan, 1989:48).**

Communicative tasks formed the basis for the Bangalore Project, based on the belief that tasks should be the unit of teaching and learning (Prabhu, 1987). Tasks were structured around everyday situations that learners were familiar with. The few examples in Table 2 show that it is possible to include a variety of topics within this framework.

**Table 2: Communicative tasks**

| Task type | Examples |
|---|---|
| 1. Train timetables | -Interpreting train timetables<br>-Selecting trains appropriate to given needs. |
| 2. Money | -Working out the money needed to buy a set of things (e.g. school stationery, vegetables). |
| 3. Rules | -Interpreting sets of rules e.g. those for concessional bus tickets for students. |

**(Prabhu, 1987:138-143).**

In carrying out these tasks students used language in situations which can be deemed to approximate authenticity in that they are activities which they have to do in their daily lives. Thus, the tasks bear a relevance to them and provided practice in everyday language use.

### *3.2.3.2 Task presentation*

Learners could have a problem completing a task, not because they are not motivated to work on the task, but because of the manner in which the task is presented. Winne and Marx (1989:231) list three clusters of variables that describe presentation: the medium of presentation, the description of a goal for the task, and cues about how students should perform the task.

Information and instructions should be presented such that it registers in the learner's memory, for example, writing down instead of oral presentation. Kumaravadivelu (1991:101-106) identifies problems of a mismatch between teacher intention and learner interpretation that interfere with task completion, and these include:

- *communicative*: because of a lack of communication strategies to get meaning across (on the learner's part), there could be miscommunication between teacher and student.
- *linguistic*: the learner should have syntactic, semantic and pragmatic knowledge of the target language.

- *cultural:* this refers to prior knowledge of target cultural norms where the problem would not be textual, but cultural.
- *procedural*: this refers to problem-solving strategies that learners are intended to use; they should be stated clearly.
- *instructional*: for example, a teacher could present a task to students and tell them to read and remember items, and students could take that statement to mean they should memorise, whereas that is not the intention of the teacher.
- *attitudinal*; for example, the belief that the teacher is the absolute authority, and going along with the views of the teacher, even if the learner has other views.

Mismatches are almost inevitable, but if identified and handled well, they need not be negative. Some of the ways in which teachers can help their students is through goal setting and self-reinforcement (Hamilton & Ghatala, 1994:316). Goals have to be specific, proximal and challenging. Specific goals, as opposed to general, indicate the type and amount of effort needed to complete a task as well as providing information as to how performance will be judged. An example: "Complete one page of the grammar exercise with no spelling errors" rather than: "Complete the grammar exercise, and do it well." Proximal goals refer to instant performance on a task rather than focusing on future goals. Example: "Finish the grammar exercise before the end of the lesson", rather than focusing on receiving a good mark at the end of the school year. Challenging goals should be difficult but attainable; not too easy and not too difficult. The result is that learners know what is expected of them in performing the task, and what constitutes good performance. Focusing on immediate goals is a way of being steadfast in the course, where it is easy to put work off till the last minute before major examinations. The successful completion of challenging tasks gives learners a feeling of accomplishment, which is motivating. Taking credit for an achievement is reinforcing.

Tasks are more than a demonstration of input learned, for example, if a task is not completed satisfactorily it is assumed that the learner is not capable of performing it. Several factors are all acting on the learner at once; it helps if teachers know and understand this. Learning tasks need not be a thorny issue for teacher and learner.

## *3.3 Teacher-specific motivational components*

The teacher is entrusted with various duties in the classroom. As the supportive and motivating adult, he/she is the main figure. Everything that is done and said in the classroom is an instrument of encouragement or defeat (Bestes, 1987:162). Students react to the

various facets and characteristics that make up the teacher. This section discusses the roles of a teacher and teaching style. These factors play a part in determining the nature of teacher-student relationships, which can either result in negative relationships or motivate the student towards achievement.

### *3.3.1 Roles of the teacher*

A teacher is generally understood to be one who imparts knowledge in a learning situation, yet there are other roles, not so implicit, that are obligatory. Duties that a teacher carries out in a classroom call for different kinds of skills, some of which they are trained for, and other kinds of skills they need because of the interactive nature of classroom learning (Skinner, 1990).

As trained and qualified practitioners in the field, there are expectations of teachers that are in keeping with their positions. Skinner (1990:72-75) lists requirements for effective teaching necessary in a "skilled teacher":

- *A personal philosophy* to have a strong belief in why one is teaching, and where one's actions are leading; student skills, in order to lead students to high order skills in their quest for information.
- *Communication skills* to create interaction between child and teacher, and to create an environment in which learning can take place.
- *Organizational and administrative skills* which include planning the curriculum, setting and evaluating tests, balancing registers, convening and attending meetings, delegating responsibilities, inventing novel opportunies, and more.
- *Technical skills* to use teaching aids, equipment and apparatus, to vary child experiences through listening, looking, and being practically involved in learning.
- *Personality skills* that make a difference in the teaching environment; evaluation skills.
- *Classroom skills* which include being creative, solving problems, explaining, being well prepared, maintaining discipline, and to give everyone recognition and a fair chance.
- *Motivating skills* to generate enthusiasm, to instil the need to learn and apply new acquired knowledge.

Training alone does not ensure that these duties are carried out effectively. Modiba (1996) conducted a study to ascertain South African Black teachers' perceptions about their profession. The teachers in the study revealed the frustrations they experienced in carrying out classroom teaching duties which are directly related to the hierarchical structure of the education system in South Africa. Teachers are part of the lower echelon of authority; heads

of department and principals dictate what is to be done, and subject advisors do the basic planning for them. Interviews and questionnaires in Modiba's (1996:123-126) study bore the following sentiments:

> *You start with something in mind about teaching and learning, but the manner in which the heads of department and the principal dictate what to do compels you to obey without questioning. ... The way the conditions of our work have been laid out is almost worrying. When you question what is at times in contradiction with what you were taught at the college, then people think you are difficult and don't want to work.*
>
> *You know, being in a D.E.T. school is different from Catholic schools, you work under more stressful conditions because the main preoccupation is satisfying those who are in charge. In Catholic schools we attend seminars and we are encouraged to teach creativity and originality ... now I am in a government school and everything is so different ... I have been labelled a revolutionary who wishes to make it difficult for the students to cope with life when they get into the adult world. I must say, it is difficult to implement the ideas acquired from my Catholic background.*
>
> *Firstly I am mindful of the fact that I should co-operate with people in leadership positions, that is, the principal, subject-advisers, inspectors and all others. In a way, it does not advance one's course to just oppose everything. You have to consider carefully the merits of everything that is said - it really depends on whether you are adequately knowledgeable to be aware of how to cope especially when you disagree with those in charge. I believe the solution lies in the teachers' co-operation. It's difficult not to comply if you are not well-informed about what your job involves. I am doing my best to do so because I do not wish to be made to do things I can easily avoid.*

The fact that teachers are frustrated with the conditions they teach under does not bode well for classroom learning. Lack of enthusiasm about the job on the teacher's part can find its way into classroom teaching activities, which learners can pick up on. This will, in turn, affect the motivation of learners. From Modiba's (1996) study, it appears as though the creative initiative of teachers is restricted. This does not mean that there is no way for the teacher to put a personal stamp onto what he/she does. Duties performed in the classroom call for particular skills from the teacher in which the scope for creative and motivating behaviour is not restricted.

The manner in which each teacher acts in these roles will differ; learners' motivation will be a result of their reactions to the teacher in these roles. Table 3 gives a list of roles that a teacher assumes in a classroom.

**Table 3: Roles of a teacher**

| Activity | Role |
|---|---|
| The teacher gives instructions for students to get into groups | Manager |
| The teacher asks students to repeat a sentence for pronunciation practice | Model |
| The teacher goes round listening to pairs practising a dialogue | Monitor |
| The teacher advises students on how best to approach a task | Counsellor |
| The teacher explains when the present tense is used | Informant |
| The teacher provides material and guidance to enable students to work on their own | Facilitator |
| The teacher stays behind after class and discusses pupil's personal problems which are affecting their work | Social worker |
| The teacher chats with students over coffee or arranges a cinema visit with the class | Friend |

**(Prodromou, 1994:35).**

## *3.3.2 Teaching styles*

Teaching styles are a combination of teachers' personalities, their competence and teaching expertise (Lindeque, 1996). Each aspect of a teacher's style has important motivational consequences for learners; it can either enhance or hinder motivation to learn.

### *3.3.2.1 Matching teaching and learning styles*

It has been the finding of a number of studies (e.g. Kinsella, 1996; Oxford & Green, 1996; Sullivan, 1996; Dreyer, 1998;) that when students' learning styles are matched with teaching styles, there is a positive relationship between learning and achievement. There are students who are readily able to adapt their learning styles (i.e. who have a versatile style of learning), but there are also students who have a preferred way of learning, and who have to contend with a method of teaching that is not related to their own style. These students are likely to show little interest and be poorly motivated to partake in classroom learning activities. It is not possible to match all the students' styles with teaching styles; an array of teaching styles is necessary. The following section focuses on a classification of teaching styles, learning styles, and style conflicts that occur as a result of mismatching.

#### *3.3.2.1.1 Classification of teaching styles*

Teaching style refers to general patterns of teaching behaviour. The importance of teaching styles lies in the recognition that students have individual differences in the way they learn. Teachers need to be aware of their own learning and teaching styles, as well as the learning

styles of their students. Awareness of teaching styles leads to conscious attempts at improving the learning of students, the teacher is thus able to structure the teaching process in such a way that it promotes learning motivation through participation, also to be reflected in achievement in tasks. The awareness also makes teachers mindful of the differences students bring into the classroom; it can serve as a guide to the design of learning experiences that match or mismatch students' style, depending on the intention (Claxton & Murrell, 1987:77).

Conti (1989:3) describes teaching styles as "the overall traits and qualities that a teacher displays in the classroom and that are consistent for various situations." A teaching style, according to Cook (1991:132), is "a loosely connected set of teaching techniques believed to share the same goals of language teaching and the same views of language and of L2 learning." Teaching style refers to the structuring of the teaching process. Any number of classroom behaviours could be included as part of a teacher's overall teaching style. Different ways of classification are discussed to show that style encompasses several aspects of teaching behaviour.

Shumsky (1968:87) differentiates between being demanding or permissive, critical or supporting, whether emphasis is on factual, convergent, or divergent thinking, and whether emphasis is on individual or group work.

Katz (1996:62-3) compared the teaching style of four teachers on the following points: how they begin the lesson (roll call, chat a little, gives assignments), how they handle late comers, how they took the roll (calling student's names, passing sheet around), how the teacher uses space (moves around, stands in front of students), whether they gave quizzes, structure of talk in class (question-answer type, lecture, group work), turn selection (directs question to entire class, selects students to answer), use of narratives, and use of rhetorical questions.

Cook (1991:133-152) gives the following classification of teaching styles:

- The academic style, which is characterised by teaching techniques of grammatical explanation and translation, and a reliance on texts, and teacher domination of classroom activities.
- The audiolingual style, where the emphasis is on teaching the spoken language through dialogues and drills, also in a teacher-controlled environment.

- The social communicative style, where communication between people is regarded as the main function of language, and is the basis for learning and teaching activities organised, and not controlled, by the teacher.
- The information communicative style, where language is taught through comprehending, and then producing in a teacher-controlled environment.
- The mainstream EFL style, where language is organised around the language of real-life situations common in students' lives, and teachers dominate for the most part, although there is some group work.
- Other styles of language teaching, which include Communicative Language Learning and self-directed learning; mostly, learning by doing is suited for students with individual motivation, and classroom activities are not dominated by the teacher.

These styles are classified along the lines of teaching approaches or teaching methods.

Lindeque's (1996:162-163) outline of teaching styles include:

- Direct teaching style: the teacher tries to give the learners insight into the topic by direct telling or showing. An example is teaching the preposition "on" where the students observe a demonstration of a pencil **on** the table, **over** the table, and **under** the table.
- Indirect teaching style: the students are encouraged to search for information and figure problems out for themselves rather than the teacher providing all the information. It is possible to use the indirect style jointly with the direct style, depending on the lesson.
- Proactive, reactive and overreactive teachers: proactive teachers set realistic goals for their students, and move their students towards fulfilling the expectations associated with the goals. The teacher makes sure that the students know exactly what is required of them, and that it is consistent with their capabilities. Overreactive teachers develop rigid, stereotyped perceptions of their students based on previous experiences or on first impressions of student behaviour. This might not allow the teacher to fully know the peculiarities of a specific group of learners, nor of individual learners, which could provide grounds for conflict. Reactive teachers change expectations in accordance with new information, emerging trends and unexpected events. A reactive teacher is most likely to be prepared to deviate from a structured lesson plan and continue with a topic that comes up in the course of the lesson.

This discussion has shown that teaching style embraces various types of behaviours, ranging from those that are influenced by individual personality traits, to those that conform to established teaching methods and approaches.

### *3.3.2.1.2 Classification of learning styles*

A learning style refers to the characteristic way in which individuals orientate to problem solving. It is related to one's personal manner of sensing, responding, organising, and interpreting the world (Linskie, 1977:63). Richards et al. (1985:45) use the terms 'cognitive style' and 'cognitive strategy' interchangeably to refer to learning style. Using 'cognitive style' is slightly limiting in the sense that it is not as inclusive as 'learning styles.' Some researchers (e.g. Cornett, 1983:9) differentiate between different aspects of learning styles, namely, the cognitive, the affective, and the physiological (cf. Keefe, 1979). Cognitive aspects include the manner in which information is decoded, encoded, processed, stored, and retrieved. Affective aspects include personality and emotional characteristics which are related, amongst other factors, to motivation, interests, attention, persistence, responsibility, and sociability. For example, a student with a lively sociable personality might function better in contact activities where there are ample occasions for engaging with other students. The physiological aspects include sensory perception, environmental characteristics, and times of day for optimal learning. Factors such as the physiological might affect a student's will to pay attention, even if the teacher employs teaching styles that are in accord with the student's learning style.

Dunn and Dunn (1978:4) classify factors that influence learning as: the immediate environment, the students' emotionality, sociological needs, and physical needs. The immediate environment includes factors like sound (noise and silence), light (dim and well-lit places), temperature (warm and cool surroundings), and design (study desk, bed, floor, lounge). Emotionality includes motivation (assign tasks according to interests, abilities, and preferences), persistence (e.g. attention span), responsibility, and need for structure (specific rules for task and activities) or flexibility (availability of options). Social needs refer to issues relating to the self, pair, peers, team, adult or varied between these. Effective learning could be affected by individual learning, variations of group work, and authority-dominated instruction. Physical needs include perceptual strengths (learning through different senses-auditory, visual, tactual, kinesthetic, or a combination), intake (inclination for nibbling or some form of eating), time (some learners achieve better results when working during the night, others function better during the day), and mobility (varying posture and location). Understanding the influence these factors have on learning could help teachers answer frustrating questions concerning boredom, listlessness, inattentiveness, lack of progress, and a learner's not living up to his/her potential.

Prokop (1989:5-16) has identified the following learning styles:

- *Field dependence (FD) and field independence (FI)*:FD refers to learners that rely on their external learning environment in order to successfully cope with learning; characteristics of the task at hand and available cues are likely to be determinants of successful task completion. Conversely, FI learners rely on their own resources and abilities.
- *Global and analytical*: Global learners work within a larger frame of reference; they integrate, and work through several related concepts when completing a task. Analytical learners break down their work into component parts, work through their work in step-by-step progression, and in isolation from each other.
- *Closure-oriented and open:* Closure-oriented learners prefer a definite sense of direction as to what a task entails, and where it ends; they plan, and are likely to cope in structured situations that call for adherence to regulations. Open learners adopt a more relaxed approach to their work and do not necessarily follow a planned program; they are more likely to cope with unstructured situations.
- *Intuitive-random and concrete-sequential*: Intuitive-random learners handle loosely structured material well and are apt to act on their initial responses with little reflection about accuracy. Concrete-sequential learners prefer are more reflective, well-organised, work better with textbooks and are likely to be authority-oriented.
- *Extroverted and introverted*: Extroverted learners enjoy interaction, while introverted learners prefer studying alone, resolving their difficulties, and completing tasks on their own.
- *Visual, auditory, and hands-on*: These learners prefer sensory stimulation: for example, watching videos, having transparencies and notes for visual learners; auditory learners prefer listening to the teacher talk, to recordings, and readings and discussions; and hands-on learners prefer to be actively involved, for example in a play, field-trips and discussions.
- *Tolerance of ambiguity*: Tolerant learners resolve uncertainty through use of strategies, and do not see ambiguity as potential problems that are difficult to resolve.

These classifications show that it is not possible to have rigid lines along which to pigeonhole learners, there is a tendency to overlap. While diversity is acknowledged, research (e.g. Dreyer, 1998) has shown that the trend in South African schools has tended towards mismatching, and it has not been deliberate.

#### *3.3.2.1.3 Style conflicts*

According to Hartshorne (1992:60), there has been a particular style that has dominated secondary education in South African Black schools in the period 1975-1990. This style

tended to be authoritarian, teacher-dominated, content-oriented and knowledge-based. It was concerned with survival of the teacher in the classroom. Hartshorne (1992:79) states that:

> These styles were typified by authoritarian discipline, dependence upon the security of a single textbook, class notes that were to be learnt off by heart. The major driving force was the examinations and what they were perceived as requiring from the students. Students were given very little time for questions, discussions, active participation, group work, and hands-on experimentation, because all these were seen as being threatening to the position and authority of the teacher.

The emphasis was not on learners acquiring knowledge, nor on the development of independent creative thinking. The teacher was the first consideration, rather than the student. There has been a realization that education has to be focused around the learner. The teacher's authority is based on respect and acceptance, knowledge and shared skills, instead of the authoritarian style of old (Hartshorne, 1992:96). Also advocated is a change of learning styles from passive, rote-learning, single-textbook, examination-oriented approaches to creative learning and problem-solving through active participation and involvement of students in the learning process (Hartshorne, 1992:345). While this realization has come to light, there is no significant evidence that teachers are aware of the importance of and differences in teaching and learning styles.

A study by Dreyer (1998) into style conflicts revealed that misinterpretation and misunderstanding resulted because of differences in the teachers' and students' styles. The study also found that socio-cultural factors (e.g. child-rearing practices) affect learning styles. A learner from a rigidly structured environment tends to be dependent on the teacher for direction. This dependency could be influenced by a culture where adults provide guidance to children. Therefore, learners from this background could have a preference for structured and guided learning rather than being independent learners.

Felder and Henriques (1995:27) argue that the aim is not to place all students in a specific category and to teach each student exclusively according to the preferred style. The aim is towards a more balanced teaching style; learners need to be encouraged and trained to react to stimuli of all kinds in order to develop well-rounded language learners (Kilfoil, 1995:63). Felder and Henriques (1995:28) acknowledge that it cannot be an easy task for teachers to undertake; teachers have styles with which they feel most comfortable. Changing their styles would mean unfamiliar, awkward and uncomfortable methods, most likely with unsuccessful

results. But they are also quick to add that accommodating various learning styles need not necessitate drastic changes from a preferred teaching style; a teacher need only incorporate some instructional techniques that will cover most, if not all, learning styles. Their suggestions are summarised below:

- Teaching new material (whether it is vocabulary or rules of grammar) in the context of situations to which the students can relate in terms of personal experiences, past and anticipated, rather than simply more material to memorise. This will suit intuitive, global, and inductive learners.
- Concrete information (preferred by sensory learners) like word definitions, rules for verb conjugation and adjective-noun agreement should be balanced with conceptual information (preferred by intuitive learners), such as syntactical and semantic patterns, comparisons and contrasts with students' native languages.
- Structured teaching approaches that emphasise formal learning (preferred by deductive and sequential learners) should be balanced with open-ended unstructured activities that emphasise conversation and cultural contexts of the target language (preferred by inductive and global learners).
- The teacher could make use of visuals, such as photographs, cartoons, photographs and drawings to illustrate and reinforce the meanings of vocabulary words. Videos and live dramatisations could be used to illustrate lessons in texts (suitable for visual and global learners).
- Teachers should provide intervals between lecturing and writing on the board for students to think about what they have learnt, and to work on some exercises (preferred by reflective learners). The teacher could also facilitate small groups to work together on tasks, dialogues, and minidramas (suitable for active learners).

Matching can take place in the several ways, between students and teachers of the same learning and teaching styles (cf. Claxton & Murrell, 1987:12), level of task difficulty could be matched to students' abilities, and the form of presentation can be matched to students' cognitive, affective, and psychological styles. Also to be heeded are sequence, scope, quantity, structure, schedule of repetitions, pace, goals, which can be matched to corresponding aspects of students' styles (Cornett, 1983:38). Matching is clearly not a simple pairing of similar styles, rather, several aspects of classroom learning have to be taken into consideration, in order to achieve a well-balanced repertoire of styles.

### *3.3.2.2 Style of presentation*

Style of presentation refers to how a teacher presents lessons and tasks to students. Presentation engenders feelings of interest, anxiety, boredom, and various other kinds of feelings. So it is necessary that teachers are aware that even their comments, however slight, have the potential of influencing student feelings, thus making them prejudiced in their approach to the lesson or to the task. Students find their teachers credible as sources of information and model their behaviour on their teachers' behaviour. This discussion centers on teacher comments, teacher expectations, feedback, and teacher instructions.

The teacher might comment on how interesting, challenging and valuable the tasks are, which immediately causes the students to develop expectations and beliefs about those tasks based on the teachers' comments.

Brophy et al. (1983) found that teacher expectation, communicated to students through their comments, has an influence on how students view the tasks and their engagement in them. Students had a higher task engagement when the teachers did not begin with comments than when they did, even if the comments were supposed to be encouraging. Therefore, the students' expectations and attitudes about academic tasks are likely to affect their motivation, and the nature of their engagement, level of effort, sustained concentration, persistence, enjoyment, and goal setting will be affected (Brophy et al., 1983:545).

Butler and Mordecai (1986) researched the relationship between feedback about students' competence and success in a task and task motivation. They found that the interest and motivation of students who did not receive either written comments or grades was not enhanced nor sustained. The interest and motivation of students who received comments, both negative and positive, and who were allocated marks, was enhanced. Students are also perceptive about teachers' opinions about their level of ability, and some might resign themselves to that view. A study by Graham (1991) found that teachers' reaction to their students' success and failure is a subtle cue of their views of student ability. If teachers respond angrily at failure, that means the student has the ability to perform better. If the teacher's reaction is of sympathy or pity, the implication is that the student did his/her best according to his/her ability, and could not do more.

A study by Tsui (1996) found that student's participation and response in the classroom was also affected by the way teachers presented or asked the questions and tasks. The teachers in the study admitted that after analysing their questions they found them to be vague and difficult to understand, when before they thought them simple. Sometimes students asked for

clarification, sometimes they kept silent. This miscommunication is frustrating for teachers as well, since they are not aware that students do not know what is required of them.

### *3.3.2.3 Teacher's personality*

A teacher's style encompasses individuality and personality. Personality is the integration of a person's traits, abilities, and motives as well as his or her temparament, attitudes, opinions, beliefs, emotional response, cognitive styles, character and morals (Gage & Berliner, 1984:165). Personality is largely manifested in the daily activities that are part of teaching. Letshufi (1988) asserts that the personality of the teacher can be studied by watching the attitude of his students towards him. The students' attitude towards the teacher in turn affects the motivation to learn.

The teacher's personality traits are basic to effective classroom teaching. This includes demonstrating that they like students and have their interests at heart, as well as displaying concern for each pupil's welfare (Maphumulo & Vakalisa, 1996:348). The tone of voice, facial expression and general behaviour convey their attitudes towards students. Students are very likely to cooperate with teachers who display empathy, are warm and genuine (Maphumulo & Vakalisa, 1996:348). Teachers have to cultivate accomodating personalities. They should be approachable, otherwise students may be afraid to seek help when they do not understand. A teacher who arouses fear among students is unlikely to create a democratic classroom climate which encourages all students to participate.

Letshufi (1988:1) claims that it is an accepted fact in psychological research that a learner's ability to understand what is being taught is determined not only by his intellectual ability, but by amongst other factors, the disposition of the learner towards those who instruct him/her. Letshufi (1988) conducted a study to find out the attitudes of Black secondary students towards their teachers. He maintains that trust, understanding and sympathetic authoritative guidance is the essence of pedagogical togetherness and yields a positive attitude in a teaching-learning environment. The following comments from students in Letshufi's (1988) study indicate that personality is one of the important factors that motivate student learning:

> *He can understand my individuality. He is kind. We are all free to talk to him.*
>
> *Our teachers do not teach the way we want them to. I feel very worried because they are not learning us to be something in future.*

*Teachers should stop joking in class. They should teach us so that we pass at the end.*

*I don't like the teacher because he is negative towards students. He does not know how to approach them. In fact, students leave school because of him.*

*I like a teacher who gives me knowledge of many things, who gives me education about happenings (teachers to unlock reality for pupil).*

All these actions have a profound impact on learners. Chances are that teachers are not aware of the effect they have on learners. It is also possible that their intentions could be contrary to how learners react to them. Awareness of the impact aspects of personality have on learners is the first step to conscious change. It is true that as adults teachers have personalities that are well-developed, but personality as a dynamic entity can be subject to modification and consolidation (Mwamwenda, 1995:333).

## 3.4 Group-specific motivational components

According to Bany and Johnson (1964:31), a group exists when two or more persons have as one quality of their relationship some interdependence and possess some recognisable unity. The classroom as a whole is a group with its own character. The nature of classroom groups is influenced by the time students spend with each other (e.g. being together from previous grades), and the relationships that are formed as a result of that association. A bond of common interests and affection develops. These relationships affect learning motivation (Bany & Johnson, 1964:40).

Group dynamics are examined from the perspectives of group cohesion and reward structures that influence classroom activities, and how they shape student motivation.

### 3.4.1 Group cohesion

Bany and Johnson (1964:53) describe group cohesion as "a condition where children in the class are strongly motivated to become involved with group activities and group affairs." They point out that it is difficult to give a precise definition of group cohesion as any number of abstract qualities might be absent from the definition. Because of problems with definitions, researchers tend to focus their investigations on individuals who are the tangible parts of the

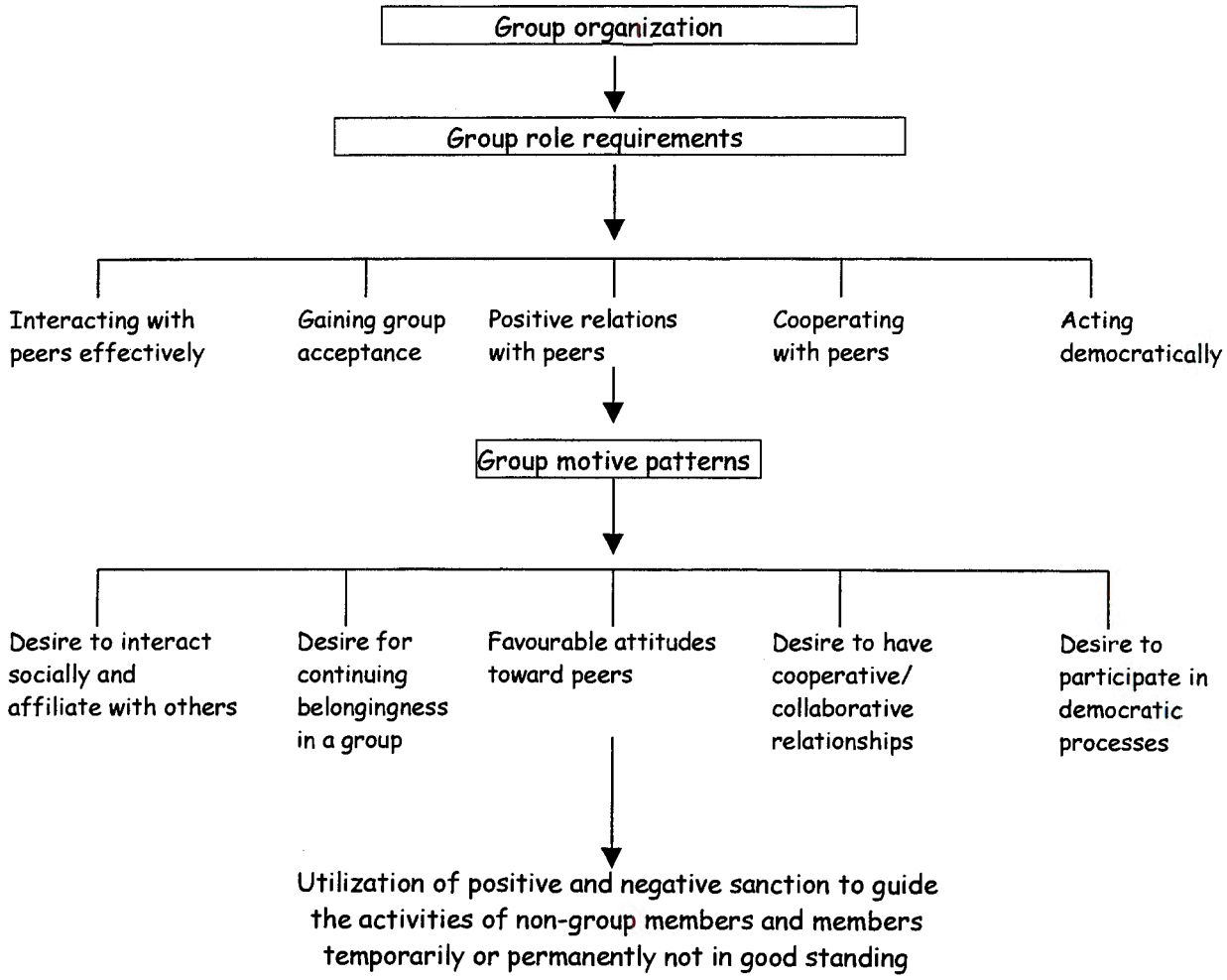
group (Mudrack, 1989:38). However, there is consensus as to what group cohesiveness represents: connectedness (O'Reilly & Roberts, 1977), strong ties within a group (Granovetter, 1973), desire of members to remain in the group (Zander, 1979), and commitment to the group (Piper et al., 1983).

The primary factor that keeps classroom groups together is their goals. In a classroom the entire purpose of being put into groups is to work around a task, and working towards a common goal. If a member receives a desired resource in a group, it is likely that he will want to keep things as they are by helping to maintain the group or by working to ensure its effectiveness (Cartwright & Zander, 1960:88). In a classroom, the 'resource' is likely to be task achievement. If a student is part of a group that works well and completes tasks successfully, then that student will be motivated towards groupwork. There is also comparison with other groups. A group that performs better than other groups is likely to be regarded favourably.

A cohesive group is one that provides satisfaction for the members, or provides a high probability of doing so. Because it represents a source of satisfaction, the group takes on value for the members; their own needs are best served by serving the welfare of the group. Pressures toward uniformity are stronger in a more cohesive group because of the value attached to the group. Members accept these pressures because the standards are important for the group, and important to maintain their acceptability in the group (Cartwright & Zander, 1960:175).

Diagram 9 gives a schematic representation of processes which shape the character of groups, and it also illustrates the motives which affect cohesion in groups.

**Diagram 9: Outline of group roles and processes affecting motivation**




**(Miner, 1993:22).**

Group role requirements refer to characteristics that are necessary to promote group cohesion, and group motive patterns are the reasons why individual learners want to be part of a group. The positive attitudes of motivated groups can act as deterrents for those whose behaviours would not enhance group goals. Classroom learners already constitute a group where positive relations have to be fostered, but also when they are assigned group tasks (cf. Miner, 1993).

Group composition and pressure are factors that are likely to affect participation in group work. Sometimes the students are grouped by the teacher, and are likely to end up with people they would not have chosen for themselves, for any number of reasons. Joining a group voluntarily will affect the level of enthusiasm and effort a student puts into completing a given task because of personal choice. However, involuntary membership without the option of leaving the group if the association is not to one's liking will have a negative impact on

students' work as well as in the attitude towards that task. Groups can also exert untold pressure on members who do not meet standards set by others; the pressure could increase anxiety and cultivate a negative attitude towards groupwork (cf. Miner, 1993).

A positive group relationship impacts positively on other learning aspects, for example, discipline. It is easier to handle a group of students that have positive relations (acting democratically, considerately, and cooperatively) than students who are not used to being part of positive group processes.

### *3.4.2 Classroom reward structures*

The concern of most researchers of classroom reward structures is which reward structure leads to greater motivation and thus greater achievement. According to Ames (1984:189), the motivational processes within each goal structure can be analysed in relation to the dispositional factors that provide the basis for self-evaluation and attribution, which derive from different sources of performance information and result in different affective consequences. The most contrasted are competitive and cooperative reward structures, the third reward structure being individual reward structure.

Table 4 demonstrates the level of interpersonal relationships that are fostered by the different reward structures. The table also puts into perspective the discussion of the three reward structures that follow.

**Table 4: Reward structures and interpersonal processes that affect learning**

| Cooperative | Competitive | Individualistic |
|---|---|---|
| • High interaction | Low interaction | No interaction |
| • Effective communication | No, misleading, or threatening communication | No interaction |
| • Facilitation of other's achievement: helping, sharing, tutoring | Obstruction of other's achievement | No interaction |
| • Peer influence toward achievement | Peer influence against achievement | No interaction |
| • Problem-solving conflict management | Win-lose conflict management | No interaction |
| • High divergent and risk-taking thinking | Low divergent and risk-taking thinking | No interaction |
| • High trust | Low trust | No interaction |
| • High acceptance and support by peers | Low acceptance and support by peers | No interaction |
| • High emotional involvement in and commitment to learning by almost all students | High emotional involvement in and commitment to learning by the few students who have a chance to win | No interaction |
| • High utilization of resources of other students | No utilization of resources of other students | No interaction |
| • Division of labour possible | Division of labour impossible | No interaction |

**(Johnson, 1980:134).**

Table 4 might give the impression that individual reward structures are to be discouraged, and cooperation is to be given high priority. This is not necessarily the case; the table primarily draws attention to the level of contact between learners. There are factors that make each reward structure ideal for a particular type of learning situation.

### *3.4.2.1 Competitive reward structures*

Competitive situations exist when learners work against each other, and the highest achievers receive recognition for their effort. All learners work towards the same goals, but competition introduces a negative element (Johnson & Johnson, 1985:251). For a learner to attain his/her

goal of being amongst the highest achievers, other learners' achievements have to rank below his/hers. Researchers on this subject are divided about the desirability of competitiveness in a classroom setting; it can motivate just as well as it can demotivate learners.

Covington (1992:131) warns against encouraging competitiveness in and among students. He gives two arguments that are often given in favour of competition, but which are not to be taken at face value. Firstly, competition motivates students to do the best that they can; that for the dispirited and listless students, competition ensures at least minimum competency. Secondly, achieving under competitive situations builds character and enhances a sense of self-confidence. However, the conflict that can develop from competitive situations can be extensively demotivating. Covington (1992:131) cites the following reasons:

- Competition encourages individual goal settings; learners tend to focus on their own achievements with little concern for the classroom group. It might hamper learners from functioning effectively with other individuals or with larger groups.
- It elicits different reactions to failure and success. Those who succeed in competitive situations consider themselves smarter than others. This attitude could affect ability to work with groups. Failure might create self-loathing in students who consider themselves capable.

In this way, competition might motivate as long as students continue to succeed. When success wanes, the student might be discouraged. Covington (1992) states that competition narrows the base that individuals use in interpreting the meaning of their current successes and failures; in competition there is only winning and losing, and only the results of the moment count. Also, the emphasis is not on achieving, but on performing better than other students. Another negative consequence of competition is anxiety caused by fear of failure in highly competitive situations. One way in which anxiety could be manifested is in a negative reaction to the classroom, teacher, and subject. Smith (1975:136) suggests that competition should be used sparingly and carefully since it is an extreme form of group pressure and can backfire by causing some students to give up completely.

Competition is not necessarily totally undesirable. Russell (1971:74) claims that competition can be a stimulus to achievement if the conditions are right. Russell (1971) suggests that students should not be exposed to frequent failure in competitive situations. This can be achieved through shifting the emphasis away from how other students perform to self-established standards of excellence. Another way is to organise competitions between groups or classes, and rewarding the group. The emphasis in this type of situation is shifted away

from individual performance. Just as extrinsic rewards succeed in spurring learners to effortful behaviour, so does competition. And just as extrinsic rewards can cultivate an intrinsic interest, competition can lead to success, and a wish to sustain success.

Traditional South African education encouraged excessive competition (RSA, 1997) within and between schools. OBE, on the other hand, believes preparing students for life outside school where competition is indeed excessive, but where coexistence is imperative.

### *3.4.2.2 Cooperative reward structures*

Cooperative goals exist when members of the group work together to ensure success on a given task. Many cases have been made for the superiority of cooperative structures. Learners are motivated by the need to contribute to group success, and share in that success. Individual success is tied up with the success of the group. Johnson and Johnson (1985:253) sum up the elements of successful co-operative learning: "co-operative learning may be most effective when students clearly perceive positive interdependence, the task is structured so that the efforts of all members are needed for group success, face-to-face interaction in small groups is present, individual accountability is clear, and students have the necessary collaborative skills."

Cooperative learning reinforces task persistence (Johnson & Johnson, 1985:276). When confronted by difficulty, a student is more likely to attempt to complete tasks successfully instead of the exasperation of working alone without support of a person in the same situation. Cooperative learning also presents learners with an opportunity to engage in a language activity different from the normal, i.e. listening and responding to the teacher. They can receive and react to language produced by other students, and react to that input by negotiating meaning. However, cooperative learning gives some students an opportunity not to take part in activities. As much as member contribution is important, the teacher, as the absolute authority, is there to make sure that everybody participates equally.

Russell (1971:75-6) suggests that teachers create appropriate conditions for co-operation in the following ways:

- establish groups small enough to allow each student to be active and to share in the group effort,
- have each group produce a tangible output for its work,
- establish groups that will assure a place of importance for each participant,
- avoid having the same leaders each time,

- supervise group activities to make sure that cooperation is sustained, and that conflict is avoided, and
- give students enough opportunities to get accustomed to functioning as groups, and to be comfortable in groups.

Being accustomed to cooperative learning could encourage learners not to be totally dependent on teachers for direction. They would be able to share the responsibility of their learning, as well as be responsible for other learners.

### *3.4.2.3 Individual reward structures*

Where competitive and cooperative reward structures focus on external factors to measure success, individual reward structures are more internal. The individual's external standards of success are what count; there is less concern with the success of others. Learners work on their own, and they receive sole recognition for their efforts; the outcome affects only the individual.

Ames (1984:179) states that individualised structures where rewards are based on self-improvement, the emphasis is not on comparing oneself with others, but instead on comparing one's present level of performance with one's prior achievements. With individual goal structures task focus is stronger than in competitive and cooperative goal structures. Ames (1984:201) states that individualistic structures place more importance on effort, and develops achievement motivation. Thus, there are more opportunities for improvement than with the other two goal settings.

Individualistic reward structures are not to be encouraged to excess. Students could lose out on the benefits that are to be had from cooperation and competition. It is to be desired that a student be part of the classroom community; cooperative and competitive learning are instrumental in this regard.

Ames (1984:189) sums up the three goal structures by stating that, "a competitive structure promotes an egoistic or social comparative orientation, a cooperative structure elicits a moral orientation, and an individualistic structure evokes an achievement-mastery orientation." In the interest of developing well-rounded learners, it would not do to exclusively choose and promote one type of goal setting over the others. Learner-preferences should provide the cue for teachers as to how to structure activities; it will encourage flexibility in the learners so that they adapt and are able to cope in the different learning situations.

## 3.5 Conclusion

The aim of this research is to find out what learners' feelings are about the different components that make up classroom learning. This knowledge will assist in making teachers understand what their learners need from them, because dealing with huge classes and undertaking to motivate it could be a perplexing task.

The discussion in this chapter centred on motivational variables that are specific to the classroom situation. The course, teacher and group dynamics were examined to determine motivational characteristics for each component. The discussion was related to South African Black secondary schools as far as possible.

# Chapter 4

# Method of research

## 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe how the research project was designed and how the data were collected, arranged and analysed. The methodology employed in this study is discussed under five main headings: design, subjects, instrumentation, data collection procedure, and analysis.

## 4.2 Empirical Study

The empirical study comprised of the following: design, the selection of subjects, the instrumentation used in this study, data collection and administration, and data analysis techniques.

### 4.2.1 Design

A one-shot cross-sectional survey design was used in this study.

### 4.2.2 Subjects

The accessible population included Grade 10 pupils from three Black secondary schools in a city in the North West Province. In total there were 107 students from all three schools, each class chosen after consulting with English teachers. There were 44 students in School A, 36 students in School B, and 27 students in School C. Both male (n=41) and female (n=66) subjects were used in this study, ages ranging between 15-23. Grade 10 pupils were chosen for this study because it was felt that at this stage of their learning they should have preferences and opinions about their learning experiences.

Biographical information included:

- L1 of subjects: Tswana (n=77); Sotho (n=14); Xhosa (n=13); Zulu (n=2); and Tsonga (n=1).
- Other languages subjects were fluent in: besides other Black languages, English and Afrikaans.

- Preferred types of English reading: the prescribed text (Comfort Herself), magazines and novels.
- English TV programmes watched: soapies (Days of our Lives & The Bold and the Beautiful, Generations), talk shows (Felicia Mabuza-Suttle Show, Two Way) and educational programmes for the youth.

This information assists in giving an indication of the potential learning opportunities that learners have outside the classroom, and whether they take advantage of them.

### *4.2.3 Instrumentation*

A questionnaire designed by the researcher was used (cf. Appendix A). The questionnaire was checked for content and face validity by an expert in the field of research methodology. In drawing up the questionnaire special attention was given to the language since vocabulary could pose a problem.

The aim of this study was to determine ESL students' motivation towards components that are specific to the course, the teacher and to the learners as a group. The questionnaire was divided into the following sections:
Section A: Course-specific motivational components.
Section B: Teacher-specific motivational components.
Section C: Group-specific motivational components.
Section D: Self-rating of English language proficiency.

Different question formats were used, namely questions which required subjects to respond in the affirmative or negative by choosing Agree/Disagree. Open-ended questions were also used in order to give students the opportunity to express their opinions and points of view. Students were also asked to rate their own ESL proficiency on a four-point scale.

### *4.2.4 Data collection procedure*

The questionnaire was pilot-tested to ensure that the instructions/questions and format would be easily understood by the subjects. The pilot study was carried out in one of the schools that participated in the study, but on a Grade 10 class which was not taking part in the actual study. The following problems were experienced:

- Time: the duration of one period (30-40 mins.) was not sufficient for the completion of the questionnaire; respondents took double the time to hand in the questionnaires. Therefore,

after consulting with the teachers in each school, a double period was assigned for administering the questionnaire.

- Vocabulary: some terms were difficult for the subjects to understand, requiring some questions to be rephrased and some terms to be changed.
- Incomplete questionnaires: There was a tendency to leave some questions unanswered. Despite pleas, when the actual study was carried out, there still remained unanswered questions in almost all the questionnaires.

The actual study was conducted in three schools instead of the anticipated four; one of the schools was embroiled in strike action. The researcher was responsible for distribution and collection of questionnaires. The researcher was also present during the answering of the questionnaires.

### *4.2.5 Analysis*

The findings of the study are analysed by using descriptive statistics (freguency counts and percentages). The results are presented in tabular form for the Agree/Disagree type of questions. The responses of the open-ended questions were grouped into categories (post-hoc) according to similarity of response.

## *4.3 Conclusion*

This chapter laid out the manner in which the study was conducted. Frequency and percentages were calculated, and answers to open-ended questions were analysed. The following chapter presents and discusses the findings of this study, which will hopefully contribute valuable information regarding ESL learning in Black secondary schools in the Potchefstroom area. This study does not claim that the findings are generalizable.