

**MOTIVATION AND LEARNING PREFERENCES  
OF MOROCCAN HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS OF  
ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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## *Abstract*

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The main aim of this study was to explore the motivation and learning preferences of Moroccan high school learners of English as a foreign language. More specifically, the study sought to investigate the following three areas, and their interrelationship:

1. Students' preferred ways of learning in relation to a number of instructional practices,
2. Students' sources of motivation (in relation to three dimensions: intrinsic, instrumental and integrative) and strength of motivation (both self-reported and teacher-rated),
3. Teachers' views about the usefulness of different instructional practices.

The study involved two phases. Phase 1 was largely exploratory, and the main method of data collection used was self-report questionnaires. Phase 2 was the main study, and this employed both questionnaires and interviews. In total, 445 students and 26 teachers completed the questionnaires.

The results indicated that the intrinsic motive was the most powerful source of motivation. It was highly endorsed by students and showed high correlations with students' strength of motivation, levels of classroom motivation and a wide range of learning preferences. A factor analysis revealed that the instrumental orientation was split into short-term and long-term goals for learning English, and the integrative orientation was divided into social and cultural dimensions, with the cultural integration as the least important reason for learning the language. Students' motivational orientations seem to be context-specific, in the sense that models developed in a particular social and educational setting may not fully apply to a different cultural and educational context. For example, the intrinsic motive which was played down in Gardner's (1985) model (developed in Canada) appeared to be particularly prominent in the Moroccan context.

The students had a well-defined and coherent pattern of learning preferences. They were highly visual and kinesthetic, but weakly auditory. They highly valued cognitively-oriented activities which involved grammatical awareness, guessing and discovering, communicative practice through class discussion and also songs. They moderately appreciated reading and TV, but they rejected mechanical practice and the artificially contrived communicative procedures. Students' preferences seemed to be at odds with their teachers' views, according to which communicative activities were the most useful for learning. Such findings suggest

that there is a need to bring teachers and students closer together, in a learner-centred approach to teaching.

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## *Introduction*

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The main aim of this study was to explore the motivation and learning preferences of Moroccan high school learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). More specifically, the study sought to investigate the following three areas, and their inter-relationship:

- (1) Students' preferred ways of learning in relation to a number of instructional practices.
- (2) Students' sources of motivation (in relation to three dimensions: intrinsic, instrumental and integrative) and strength of motivation (both self-reported and teacher-rated).
- (3) Teachers' views about the usefulness of different instructional practices.

Given the large scope of the study, and the need for initial piloting and exploratory work, the research extended over two phases. Phase one was carried out in 1994, was largely exploratory, and the main method of data collection used was self-report questionnaires. Phase two took place in 1995; it was the main study, and it used both questionnaires and interviews.

My interest in exploring students' motivation and learning preferences was prompted by a concern to bring the learners to the centre of the stage by understanding their needs, interests, and motives for learning the language. This is considered to be the first step forward towards meeting students' needs and goals, and accommodating or extending their learning preferences in a way that is most conducive to success.

During my long experience with English language teaching (ELT), both as a teacher and teacher trainer in Morocco, I have been faced with a number of unanswered questions in relation to both students' motivation and learning styles and preferences. For example, I assumed that it was essential for a teacher to know what motivated students to learn the language in the first place: was it interest in the language, exam requirements, perceived instrumental goals, or perhaps socio-cultural orientations similar to the integrative dimension championed by Gardner and his colleagues? Uncovering students' sources of motivation for learning English can inform the teacher of what to expect from students in terms of interest and commitment, and what to offer them in order to satisfy their needs and expectations. In this respect, it seemed a useful idea to explore Moroccan students' reasons for learning English and at the same time to assess the extent to which Gardner's model applied to the

Moroccan context.

Throughout my teaching experience, I have been confronted with the view that there is no single or one best method for teaching a foreign language (FL) (Prabhu, 1990), and that the plethora of methods that superseded, and competed with, one another were but the result of a cyclical swing of the pendulum, and were part of a recurring pattern of 'changing winds and shifting sands'. The explosion in the variety of teaching methods and techniques that have invaded the classroom was, as Brown (1994) put it, "symbolic of a profession at least partially caught up in a mad scramble to invent a new method when the very concept of method was eroding under our feet" (p. 73). The 'post-method' condition (Kumaravadivelu, 1994), which suggested a disillusion with the concept of method, was accompanied by the emergence of various approaches to FL teaching, the most influential of which 'the communicative approach' came to be seen as more of a commercial slogan for a prosperous publishing industry. By and large, since few consistent global conclusions have been drawn about the effectiveness or superiority of any particular instructional practice, be it traditional, like reading aloud, or more communicative, such as an 'information gap' and 'problem-solving' exercise, 'eclecticism' is often suggested as a safe way out (Nunan, 1988). However, eclecticism can be a problem if it is unprincipled and haphazard. Enlightened eclecticism has to be grounded in information and knowledge about the learners. In this respect, my contention is that students' motivation and preferences are key factors in making informed choices about the nature of an eclectic approach to FL teaching.

The view of putting the focus on the learner is in line with recent developments in learner-centred education and individual variation in learning. In recent years, there has been a shift of emphasis away from teacher-centred to learner-centred curricula (Nunan, 1988). In a learner-centred curriculum, all key decisions about what to teach and how to teach it are made with reference to the learner. One of the major contributions of learner-centred instruction is that it does not make any assumption about what motivates students to learn or how they prefer to learn. It is based on consultation with and input from students, and its ultimate aim is to optimise learning by making the right decisions about how to meet students' goals and needs. It is argued (see particularly Brown, 1994) that a learner-centred classroom which offers students choices and gives them a sense of autonomy and ownership of their learning enhances students' self-esteem and motivation.

Parallel to the move towards learner-centred instruction, there has been a shift in

research away from teaching methodology towards learning strategies (Wenden and Rubin, 1987; Oxford, 1990), and learning style (Willing, 1988; Ellis, 1993). Learner characteristics and factors were thought to play a crucial role in the process of acquiring a second language (L2) or a FL. Because of individual differences, learners were claimed to differ in their routes to success (Skehan, 1989; Ellis, 1994). Some writers like Willing (1988) proposed that FL learners have preferred ways of going about the task of learning, and that their preferences reflect deeply ingrained cognitive ways of functioning. This implies that students' preferences could be indicative of underlying cognitive and personality factors, suggesting that different learners require different treatments depending on their needs, goals and preferences.

In summary, my interest in exploring students' motivation and learning preferences arose out of a concern to put greater focus on the learners and to take into account their needs, goals and interests in an instructional context where there seems to be no best method for all, and where teachers need to adopt an eclectic approach particularly adapted to their students. In the following section, a brief overview of the chapters included in the study is provided.

Chapter One sets the context of ELT education in Moroccan schools, 1) by placing the development of English and its culture in Morocco in a historical perspective; 2) by describing the socio-linguistic and instructional environment; and 3) by providing an overview of the approaches, procedures and teaching materials that are part of the national curriculum.

Chapter Two reviews some of the major developments in second language acquisition (SLA) and FL teaching methods. The objective is twofold: 1) to highlight some of the major processes and learner factors that account for how foreign languages are acquired; 2) to show how FL language teaching methodology is informed by SLA research and educational psychology theories. The implication is that, in FL education, the act of teaching is not carried out in a vacuum. It involves human beings who are learning a new code or system of communication. The more FL educators know about learner factors and the mechanisms involved in the learning task, the better the position they are in to make the right decisions about what to teach, how to teach it, to whom and in what context. Insights into the processes and factors involved in FL teaching enable FL educators and researchers to appraise the potential value of the current instructional practices and the implication of their

use in the classroom.

Chapter Three reviews the literature on learning style and learning preferences in different educational contexts and provides reported evidence that learners differ in their approach to learning, depending on their psychological make-up and their personality, the implication being that the teaching/learning practices that work for some learners do not work for others.

Chapter Four discusses the two main approaches to motivation: first, the social-psychological approach championed by Gardner and his colleagues, with its emphasis on the integrative and instrumental aspects of motivation; second, the educational-psychological approach which draws on various fields of psychology, and which is considered to be more congruent with teachers' conceptions of motivation (e.g. by Crookes and Schmidt, 1991). The chapter discusses how Gardner's model has recently been challenged on the grounds that first, it does not reflect all the potential types of motivational orientations of FL learners, and that second, it needs to be expanded to include new components of motivation derived from various fields of psychology.

Chapter Five states the goals of the study in detail, describes the research methods and instruments used in the two phases of the study and discusses issues related to validity, reliability and the nature of research in education.

Chapter Six reports on the preliminary exploratory study which sought to obtain an overview of students' preferences relative to four dimensions:

1) students' instructional preferences; 2) students' perceptual modality preferences; 3) their preferred modes of teacher behaviour; 4) their affective orientations towards learning the language.

Chapter Seven reports on the second preliminary study, and aims at pulling together the two main themes of the research. This includes: 1) students' motivational orientations with respect to three dimensions (intrinsic, instrumental and integrative); 2) students' levels of motivation as rated by their teachers; and 3) students' learning preferences in relation to a selected number of traditional activities and communicative activities.

Chapter Eight describes the phase two research, which investigated: 1) students' motivational orientations (intrinsic, instrumental and integrative) and strength of motivation, 2) students' preferences for a selected number of activities, and 3) teachers' views about the usefulness of a number of instructional practices. This chapter also reports on follow-up

interviews conducted with both teachers and students.

Chapter Nine gives a brief summary of the conclusions derived from the study, and suggests a number of pedagogical implications.

This study was the first of its kind, conducted in a Moroccan context, that sought to explore what motivates students to learn English and how they prefer to learn it. The results that emerged contribute to our understanding of FL learners and FL learning in a number of ways. In the first place, it shows that FL learners may exhibit a coherent pattern of articulated learning preferences that they perceive as both enjoyable and useful. Their preferences do not stem from any informed knowledge about any theoretical or methodological trend, they are probably determined by factors such as their perceived goals and needs for learning the language, and personal belief about how languages are learnt based on every day experience with learning. This is perhaps the reason why the pattern of students' preferences is at odds with what their teachers think is most useful for them. This discrepancy in perspectives between teachers and students suggests that the gap between learning and instruction may be bigger than one might imagine.

Another important contribution concerns our understanding of FL motivation. Students' motivational orientations are clearly context-specific, in the sense that models developed in Canada, India or the Philippines are not likely to apply fully to other contexts in other parts of the world. Not only can learners differ in their motives across boundaries, but the same language can be perceived differently by learners from different countries. For example, English may be perceived quite differently by learners in India, Morocco or Quebec. The results from this study revealed that, in contrast to the Canadian context where the integrative motive was most powerful, or the Indian setting where the instrumental orientation was pervasive, in the Moroccan context, the intrinsic motive was an important source of motivation for learning the language and also a significant predictor of strength of motivation.



## Chapter One

# *English Language Teaching (ELT) Background in Morocco*

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### 1.1 The place and status of English in Morocco

Morocco's history and geographical position have always facilitated contacts and relations with both the USA and Great Britain, and have as a result contributed to the introduction of English and its culture in Morocco. In recent years, the cultural and economical rapprochement between Great Britain and Morocco has been on the increase, and this was marked by the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to Morocco, in March 1995. On this occasion, Ahmed Alaoui (15 March 1995) reported on the long standing relations between the two kingdoms, which date back to the Elizabethan era:

*Depuis l'époque saâdienne où la Reine Elisabeth 1ère a sollicité de Moulay Abdelmalek Essaâdi l'alliance avec le Maroc, les relations n'ont cessé de s'affirmer au point de faire du Royaume-Uni le premier partenaire commercial du Maroc à l'aube du XXème siècle... L'influence britannique ne s'est pas circonscrite à l'introduction de certains sports comme le tennis ou le golf (celui de Tanger remonte à 1915) ou encore du bridge, mais elle a profondément façonné l'engouement des Marocains pour la "qualité". De l'argenterie de Richard Wright aux étoffes, Manchester rayonnait dans les intérieurs bourgeois. Le mode de vie anglais, et son célèbre "high-tea" ont profondément imprégné des villes comme Mogador et Tanger (au-delà de la fin de son statut international), bien que l'élan historique allait être freiné par "l'Entente Cordiale" et le protectorat subséquent de la France sur le Maroc.*

*Réactivées après l'Indépendance du Maroc, les relations entre les deux Royaumes allaient être relancées, au plus haut niveau, par les visites au Maroc de S.M. la Reine Elisabeth II (octobre 1980) et à*

*Londres de S.M. Hassan II (juillet 1987)...(Le Matin, no. 8822, p. 1).*

The cultural link which characterises the relationship between Great Britain and Morocco was accompanied by a linguistic influence. English was introduced in Morocco in the 19th century, when Moroccans were offered English courses in Tangier and Gibraltar before being sent to Britain for military and technical training. At the turn of the century, Moroccan businessmen who had settled in Manchester, returned home with a considerable amount of practical English. When the British and American missionaries settled in Morocco, the English language was taught unofficially for better access to the Bible. During the protectorate period, a number of American bases in different parts of the country were established. This brought about a steady diffusion of the American variety of English through a variety of means. As a result there emerged an American English speaking group of Moroccans who benefited from different contacts and transactions with the Americans (for a comprehensive review, see Abu-Talib, 1985).

ELT was first introduced into Moroccan secondary schools during the era of the French protectorate, towards the 1940's, with French as the first language of instruction and Classical Arabic as a foreign language.

In the last two decades or so, after independence in 1956, a craze for learning English has dominated Morocco (see Abu-Talib, 1985). It was engendered by the view that English is a language of prestige, and of wider communication, which offers what is best in the field of development, know-how, and technology. This fever has affected people from all walks of life and age groups. Teachers of English are all too familiar with situations in which they are approached by people who, eager to learn English, ask two recurrent questions: (1) What is the best and quickest way to learn the language?, and (2) Which method is better, that of the British or American Centre?

Naive as they may seem, these questions not only show the popularity of English, but also give indications about the pedagogical approach to be adopted in response to society's needs, and about the educational policy to be followed.

In an unpublished survey that I carried out in 1993, investigating the linguistic needs of a group of 60 engineers and executives in Rabat and Casablanca, about 60% of the respondents thought that English should be given the same emphasis as French, in the

Moroccan educational system, and about 40% thought that it should be given more emphasis, with nobody thinking English should be given less importance than French, as is the case at present. A follow-up interview revealed that respondents needed English in their jobs and wished English could be introduced at an earlier age than it is at present.

The growing interest in English has been accompanied by an explosion of private courses, the most important of which are the American and British Centres, which register increasing numbers of students each year. A number of institutions where English is used as the medium of instruction are also available, such as the American primary and secondary schools, the Institute of Higher Education in Rabat, and Al Akhawayn University at Ifrane.

Language policy makers have always allocated a sizeable portion of time to English in school and university syllabuses. In secondary schools, English operates like any other academic school subject. In general, it is compulsory for all students from the fifth grade age onwards. Only a minority of students choose Spanish, German or Italian. It is also a required subject in the final secondary exam (Baccalaureate), and it is an important part of the curriculum. At the university, it is the medium of a substantial portion of the students' reading lists especially for science subjects, and knowledge of the language is set as a graduation requirement for students in a number of university departments or schools of higher education.

At university level, a degree in English studies seems to secure more job opportunities than a degree in French studies. For example, Sadiqi (1988) shows that the overall numbers and percentages of students in the English department far outnumber students registered at the French department at the Faculty of Fez. She predicts that:

*Given that the present young generation constitutes the professionals, high rank officials, administrators and researchers of the future, English, spoken or written, will soon start to assume some of the key functions which French used to fulfil (p. 73).*

English has certainly started to compete with French especially in science and technology. It seems to be making significant inroads into Morocco, infiltrating the educational system, socio-economic and political life. In contrast, French seems to be losing ground to Arabic which, through the process of Arabisation, is gradually assuming

many of the functions which used to be fulfilled by French. Sadiqi comments that "some people, like Elbiad, wonder whether Arabisation or the 'return to the origin' is complete or whether it is rather a reorientation based on a different linguistic option, namely that of English" (p. 74). Morocco's involvement with English seems to be an on-going process with increasing numbers of students pursuing their university education in Britain or the USA, instead of France.

## **1.2 Aims and objectives of ELT at secondary school level**

The aims of ELT at the secondary level, as set out in official Ministry texts (Documents Pédagogiques pour l'Anglais, 1994), are varied. The most prominent are as follows:

1. To help learners meet the requirements of the English Baccalaureate paper.
2. To enable learners to communicate with other users of English, either in speech or writing.
3. To develop students' awareness of the language system of English, and to enhance their awareness of the specificity of their own language.
4. To promote students' understanding of other cultures as well as awareness of their own cultural identity.
5. To enable the learner, in the course of post-secondary education to use reference material in English.
6. To meet the needs of the job market.

At secondary school level, these aims have been translated into specific objectives described in terms of functions, structures, topics, and lexical areas, generating a multidimensional syllabus, organized along functional, structural, and topical dimensions. Such objectives are implemented through what seems to be a mixture of audio-lingual and communicative methodology. In the preface to the guidelines for teachers (Ministry of Education Report, 1994), it is stated that:

*The communicative approach is not a complete rejection of audio-lingualism, but often an extension of it... The teacher's skills as an audio-lingual practitioner are professional equipment of supreme importance (p. 1).*

The aims and objectives of teaching English in Morocco have been in constant flux. They are regularly assessed and adapted to the real needs of society, in accordance with new developments in applied linguistics.

### **1.3 The socio-linguistic and instructional context of ELT**

The socio-linguistic context in which English is taught is characterized by multilingualism. A variety of languages or dialects are used in everyday life for different purposes and functions. On the one hand, there are the native dialects including Moroccan Arabic and Berber dialects. On the other hand, there is Classical Arabic, the official language of the state, which stands in a diglossic (in the sense of Ferguson, 1971) relationship with Moroccan spoken Arabic. Arabic is in competition with French, the second language, introduced in primary school education. Thus, learners know at least three or possibly four languages (Moroccan Arabic and/or a Berber dialect, classical Arabic, and French), before they start learning EFL. They have internalized at least three different linguistic systems when they come to study English.

English is taught to secondary school students from age fifteen to eighteen, as part of their Baccalaureate studies. At fifteen, all secondary school students are streamed into Sciences, Arts or Economics groups, according to the discipline in which they want to major. All groups are taught the same subjects on the curriculum, but with different orientations and emphasis, depending on their field of specialization. Science students for example, study English for fewer hours (three hours a week) as opposed to four hours a week for Arts students. Class sizes in my experience are relatively large and vary approximately between twenty-five to forty students. To allow for more effective group work in English classes, one split-class hour a week is arranged for, and teachers are advised to use such class time for group work activities.

All teachers of English have undergone one year's training, normally after their university degree. Throughout their teaching careers, they have access to pedagogical advice from advisers and inspectors with whom they normally collaborate in a constructive way. Opportunities for in-service training and teacher development are provided by meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences, summer institutes or other available ELT courses. Teachers are encouraged to adapt to new approaches, to accept change, to have a critical mind and also to be creative.

## **1.4 ELT approach, procedures, and teaching materials**

The approach advocated by the Ministry of Education (see Documents Pédagogiques pour l'Anglais, 1994) is characterized by a number of underlying principles:

1. There should be a balance between accuracy-based and fluency-based activities. In fluency work for example, there should be no correction of errors or slips that do not interfere with communication.
2. There should be a balance between receptive learning, where students need only to understand the language in focus, and productive learning in which they need to use it in their responses.
3. Students' potentialities for both learning and acquisition are to be explored. In addition to language items which are presented to the class, and which are the focus of conscious learning, the learners are also expected to pick up new language through comprehensible input. Therefore, the classroom seems to be a place for both conscious formal learning and subconscious informal acquisition.
4. The various language skills are to be taught integratively such that students need, for example, to complete a listening/reading task in order to fulfil a written one.
5. Students should move from mechanical or controlled practice to a more meaning-oriented or communicative practice.

On the basis of such principles, various language skills are developed in the classroom, the most important of which are described below.

### *Teaching vocabulary*

The teaching of vocabulary generally consists of a quick presentation of the form and meaning of text-related new words, and whenever possible, vocabulary items are practised through the use of lexical systems, including word morphology, collocation and semantic fields.

### *Teaching structures*

The teaching of structures consists of a general preview of the new pattern followed by an inductive presentation, in which students are given examples, and are expected to derive rules as to the form and the meaning of the new pattern. Then, mechanical, meaningful and communicative practice is used to consolidate the pattern. Very often, the teacher is supposed to give students, or let them discover, some sorts of rules concerning the form, the meaning or the use of the structure. However, formulations which confuse students have to be avoided.

### *Teaching of communicative functions*

The objective is to make students aware that there is no one-to-one relationship between grammatical forms and communicative functions, and that different exponents could be used to express the same function depending on the context of use. Functions are taught inductively by giving the learners different exponents and asking them to identify the functions behind them, or deductively by giving a function and eliciting its exponents.

### *Teaching receptive skills*

The teaching of listening and reading aim at fostering language acquisition, developing particular subskills and allowing for the receptive practice of language items. Preparing the learner for a reading or a listening activity is considered to be crucial to understanding. Students are regularly given reasons for listening or reading, and a variety of tasks or questions are used for introducing the topic and activating students' schemata, and background knowledge. The emphasis is not exclusively on understanding the content of the passages, but also on identifying the rhetorical structure of the text,

inferring word meaning, interpreting cohesive devices and discourse markers through the use of text study questions.

### *Teaching of speaking*

For practical and pedagogical reasons, a large portion of class time is devoted to oral practice which includes, (a) full class work controlled by the teacher, (b) small group work independent of the teacher, (c) pair work using cue-cards and role-cards.

### *Teaching of writing*

Writing or the creation of written discourse involves functional writing tasks, (i.e. realistic types of writing such as the learners might one day need to use in real life like letters, postcards, and messages). The different genres of essay writing, like narrative or argumentation, are to be presented within a functional framework. Functional writing tasks specify the reason for writing and the audience addressed. The writing skills should be developed through different facilitating procedures like guided or semi-guided composition, accuracy-oriented tasks and fluency-based activities like 'quickwrite' in which the focus is on writing rapid short messages. Process writing is a way of training students to monitor their own writing through a process that consists of six integrated stages: getting ideas together    planning and outlining    making notes    first draft    replanning, redrafting    editing.

### *Teaching of pronunciation*

Comprehensibility, not a native accent is aimed at. The main objective is to minimise interference between pronunciation and spelling, and to maximise the positive transfer from spelling to pronunciation. Teachers are advised to develop students' pronunciation by giving models, rules, and using reading aloud, and dialogue learning.

### *Teaching materials*

In recent years, the French, British and American materials have been replaced by more suitable and relevant manuals. These are regularly updated and adapted to new developments in ELT by the Ministry of Education. Because of the requirements of the national curriculum, the same series of books are used in all schools. However, teachers



are encouraged to supplement textbooks by tasks or materials of their own, on condition that these are consistent with the prescribed syllabus.

The ELT approach used in Moroccan schools appears to be primarily text-based and subject-based, in the sense that a set of units and language items have to be taught within prescribed time limits to ensure that students will be adequately prepared for the formal Baccalaureate paper.

However, teachers are periodically updated with respect to developments in ELT. As advocated by official Ministry texts (*Documents pédagogiques pour l'anglais*, 1994), one of their major roles is to meet learners' needs, and also to help them discover the strategies which will allow them to become more effective learners and take on more responsibility for their own learning.

A major issue relating to ELT materials concerns the cultural dimension students should be exposed to. Whereas both teachers and learners claim access to the target language culture, it was decided by certain members of the textbook committee to deculturise the textbooks. Adaskou, Britten and Fahsi (1989), two of whom are ELT inspectors, wrote:

*Le lycéen marocain sera-t-il davantage motivé à réussir en anglais si cette langue lui est présentée dans le contexte d'un milieu social anglophone ? Restera-t-il aussi bien enraciné qu'avant dans son propre milieu ? Evitera-t-il des influences ésotériques d'ordre moral ? A toutes ces questions, en nous fondant sur les mêmes bases qu'avant (sondages, discussion, intuition), nous répondrons que non. On pourrait rétorquer, en ce qui concerne les effets aliénants de la culture étrangère, que l'anglais déculturé, l'anglais d'aéroport, est tout aussi aliénant pour l'élève lycéen à Tinghir et à Guercif, que l'anglais dans le contexte anglophone; mieux encore, que l'instruction elle-même est facteur d'aliénation. Mais, à notre avis, ce n'est pas la nouveauté en soi qui peut être préjudiciable, sinon ce qui incite à des comparaisons inégales entre le milieu de l'élève et le milieu étranger, par exemple, concernant les biens matériels, les espérances économiques, la liberté dans les mœurs (p. 35).*



In the quotation above, the researchers argue that introducing culture capsules in the textbooks might uproot learners, expose them to 'moral esoteric influences', and would not make them more motivated. They also concede that 'airport English', or instruction itself for that matter, might be alienating to learners who live in remote areas

of the country. In their view, it is not the novelty in itself which may be detrimental, as much as the fact that some learners may be incited to make unequal comparisons between their own milieu and the target language milieu, namely concerning material possessions, economic potentialities and moral standards. Such problems and frustrations might be a source of anxiety to learners and might as a result inhibit their learning.

Clearly, not all foreign language learners are expected to experience acculturation in a harmonious way. In a number of cases, acculturation has been at the origin of numerous social-psychological problems. More specifically, adolescents who, by their very nature, are prone to various personality problems, may also be susceptible to cultural alienation. Personal observation has suggested repeatedly that, in certain bicultural educational contexts, youngsters may become alienated to the point of having difficulty integrating into their own milieu. Some of them may also experience conflicts between their traditional values and the foreign culture values. Under certain circumstances, they may even develop complexes about themselves which may have negative effects upon their self-confidence and self-esteem.

However, foreign language education is not about cultural alienation, nor is it the major means for diffusing Western culture. The media are by far the most powerful channel for foreign acculturation or even material frustration. Generally speaking, youngsters in Morocco, as in any part of the world, are avid consumers of TV. Textbook writers are in my view unjustified in feeling fearful or reluctant about including cultural elements in the manuals. The process of cultural change has been going on for some time in Moroccan society, and it is precisely the role of educators to guide and help the learners understand the foreign culture as well as their own culture, and view cultural diversity as a fact of life.

Preliminary, exploratory interviews which will be discussed later on revealed that teachers and students alike feel frustrated about not having access to foreign language culture in the textbooks. The students seemed to be particularly curious to learn about the target language community's way of life. Likewise, teachers thought that foreign language culture will enhance students' interest and motivation by bringing about variety and authenticity in the classroom. Depriving students of knowing about other cultures may prevent them from widening their horizons and may promote parochialism and lack of tolerance towards others.

The introduction of foreign language culture through textbooks need not be alienating or cause frustration. Like any other educational matter, it simply requires skill and imagination on the part of teachers and materials producers. If introduced and handled adequately, it may contribute to making foreign language learning a more positive, constructive and productive experience for the learner as a 'whole person'.

### *Evaluation*

Evaluation is considered to be an integral part of the teaching and learning process. It includes continuous assessment and standardized examinations. Continuous assessment takes the form of quizzes, and class progress tests designed by the students' own teacher. They account for twenty-five percent of the student's global grade. The more formal examinations consist of a comprehensive test designed by an external board of examiners. This accounts for seventy-five percent of the global grade. The format of the formal exams generally includes a grammar and vocabulary sort of assessment, a reading comprehension task and a writing skill task, like writing a letter.

All these tests are in the written form, and for practical reasons, no oral exams are administered to the students. However, an informal assessment by the teacher has been introduced to account for students' degree of participation in class, willingness to practice the language and do homework.

## **1.5 Conclusion**

ELT in Morocco has evolved steadily throughout the years, and is very likely to continue to do so. Morocco's economic, educational and technical development appears to be more and more in need of English, especially as French, by itself, can no longer satisfy the linguistic needs of society (Sadiqi, 1988).

At the secondary and tertiary level, Morocco has deployed great efforts in training teachers and inspectors, and in providing learning opportunities for increasing numbers of students. Teaching methods and materials have been constantly revised and updated to respond to the learning needs of students and to be consistent with the recent developments in the field of foreign language education.

Yet, much remains to be done in order to make the language learning environment more responsive to teachers' and students' needs and expectations. More teaching materials need to be developed and more teaching aids, and facilities need to be provided in order to make the language teaching and learning experience more productive and more enjoyable. A step forward towards achieving these goals would be to explore learners' sources of motivation for learning the language and their preferred ways of learning it.

## Chapter Two

# *Background to Second Language Acquisition and Language Teaching*

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*"Without methods, without a book, without grammar or rules, without a whip and without tears, I had learned a Latin as proper as that of my schoolmaster"*  
(Montaigne in Richards and Rogers, 1986: 68).

### 2.1 Introduction

Since the early 1970s, the field of second language acquisition (SLA) has been characterized by two major traditions. One tradition is learning-centred; it is concerned with analysing and describing the process by which learners develop their competence in the second language (L2). Different researchers have attempted to find out how languages are learnt, or more specifically, how input is translated into output and what goes on inside the learner's black box. The second tradition is learner-centred. It is concerned with learner factors which cause different individuals to learn differently. In order to have a full understanding of how languages are learnt, an account of how learners learn and how they differ, is necessary. Moreover, given the close relationship that exists between SLA research and language teaching, it is sometimes difficult to separate one from the other. Indeed, one of the primary motivations for investigating L2 language processes and learner factors is to obtain insights which could be used to inform and improve instructional practices. Therefore the scope of this chapter is to provide a general background regarding both L2 learning and L2 teaching. It will be divided into three sections. The first section will focus on research which attempts to describe and explain the nature of the learning process. The second will be concerned with what learner factors are involved in L2 learning and how they affect learning outcomes. The last section will be devoted to pedagogical matters.

## 2.2 The learning process: description

Contrastive analysis was among the earliest attempts to analyse and describe the L2 learning process. Researchers in this field, (e.g. Lado, 1952; James, 1980), conducted contrastive analyses of the learners' L1 and L2 and found that there were areas of convergence that were responsible for positive transfer from L1, and also areas of divergence which, it was felt, were more likely to cause learner difficulty and trigger errors (Corder, 1967). In other words, it seemed that in learning an L2, learners necessarily fall back on their L1, and model their output on the patterns of their mother tongue. According to contrastive analysis theory, the learning process is a matter of imitation and habit formation modelled on L1 patterns, the evidence for this being successful utterances due to positive transfer and erroneous utterances due to interference from L1. These findings had important implications for teachers and materials developers who thought that one way of facilitating L2 acquisition is to expose learners to materials that best match their L1, thus avoiding the occurrence and the establishment of interference errors from the L1.

Ironically, another type of error, overgeneralisation errors, such as I 'goed', typical of L1 acquirers were discovered in the oral production of L2 learners. Since such errors could not have resulted from imitation either of the target language (TL) or of the mother tongue, they were taken as support for Chomsky's (1957) proposal that the acquisition process was essentially one of rule formation. Learners were seen to play an active role in forming and testing hypotheses in an effort to induce the rules from the TL to which they were exposed. More important, errors were analysed and were found to reflect what Selinker (1972) referred to as Interlanguage (IL) to signify that learners' approximations of the TL were separate linguistic systems in their own right, not governed by the same rules as either the learners' L1 or L2. While the study of learners' errors was in a sense illuminating, it was limited for a number of reasons. Chief among these was that a focus on predicting errors neglected learners' actual performance with its patterns of well-formed utterances as the focus of inquiry.

Among the earliest performance analyses were the so called 'morpheme studies'. In 1974, Dulay and Burt claimed that they had found evidence of an order of acquisition for English morphemes which was independent of the L1. This appeared to give empirical

support to Corder's (1967) suggestion for learner-generated or built-in syllabuses. Developmental stages and developmental sequences were identified for a variety of structures like interrogatives, negation and relative clauses. Since intermediate stages looked like neither the L1 nor the L2, they supported the claim that learners were not merely reshaping their L1s to conform to the L2s, but rather that learners were creatively constructing the L2 through gradual complexification. The realization that learning is a creative process informed all those involved in the foreign language teaching profession of the necessity to give more freedom to the learner to apply his/her creative powers to the learning task.

Despite the genuine insights yielded by performance analysis, it soon became evident that analysing learner output alone could not account for the whole picture. Investigators slowly became aware of the need to examine the input with which the learners had to work, recognising that not all input would become intake (see Wagner-Gough 1975). Research evidence (e.g. Krashen, 1982), lent support to the hypothesis that learners who receive quantities of comprehensible input will exhibit the greatest proficiency. Research in the area of input quality indicated a correlation between the frequency of certain forms in the input and their appearance in learners's ILs. Studies of input (e.g. Ferguson, 1968) also focused on modified input from native speakers referred to as 'foreigner talk', and modified input from the language teacher which became known as 'teacher talk'. These two types of input addressed to L2 learners shared some common features, such as restricted vocabulary, greater use of gestures, simpler syntax by teachers or caretakers to accommodate learners' level of comprehension. Krashen (1982) hypothesized that for input to become intake, it has to be comprehensible. All these studies point to the fact that while input plays a crucial role in the language classroom only input adapted to the learner's level of comprehension is likely to be acquired by the learner.

In this section, we have seen that the early stages of SLA research have been concerned with the description of the L2 language process. Such a description has moved from a narrow focus on error analysis to a broader view on discourse analysis. As we shall see in the next section, SLA research has increasingly been used to explain how languages are learnt.

## 2.3 The learning process: explanation

The 1980s was a period in which the concern for description and theory building gave way to a concern for explanation and theory testing. To provide a general theoretical perspective of how SLs are acquired, a number of SLA models will be explored.

### *The universal grammar model*

The universal grammar model (UG) was developed by Chomsky in the 1980s and represented his second conceptual revolution, which emphasized, once again, the importance of the mind in L2 learning (Chomsky, 1957). The human mind is considered to be the locus of universal language properties. That is what is meant by universal grammar. The UG model claims that the human mind is naturally equipped for learning languages. It contains principles and parameters built in to it. Learners, for example, do not need to learn the general principle of dependency (i.e. knowledge about the structure of a particular language). This means, for example, that in producing a question out of a declarative sentence, they automatically use their structural knowledge of language, and are thus necessarily dependent on this knowledge. However, they do not know which parameters to apply to the language they are learning. Parameters are believed to capture the differences between languages. Another possibility is whether the grammatical subject of a declarative sentence actually has to be present. For example, in pro-drop languages, like Arabic or Spanish, the subject can be dropped; in non-drop languages, like English, the subject is not dropped.

Cook (1991) reported that while L2 learners do not need to learn the principles that are common to all languages, they need to learn the parameters on which languages vary. He wrote: 'Learning the grammar of an L2 is not so much learning completely new structures, rules, etc. as discovering how to set the parameters for the new language' (p.24). Claiming that the learner is adequately equipped with a natural device for acquiring languages, does not downplay the crucial importance of exposure to that language. In UG theory, it is assumed that language input is the evidence out of which the learner constructs knowledge of the language.



The implication of the UG model for language teaching is that teachers should provide language input that allows the student to reset parameters. Similarly, syllabuses for language teaching should indicate to teachers areas which need not be emphasized. Teachers should also be aware that L2 learners do not start their parameter settings from scratch; they still have access to the system of principles and parameters in their L1, and that some effects of the first language are bound to linger on.

The UG model is considered by many as a powerful account of L2 learning, yet it has two salient shortcomings, its domain is strictly limited to the core aspects of syntax, and it assumes no effort on the part of the learner.

### ***The information processing model***

At the opposite pole from UG is McLaughlin *et al.*'s (1983) information-processing model, which sees language in terms of dynamic processing, rather than as static knowledge, and looks at L2 learning from the perspective of human information-processing. This perspective derives from contemporary cognitive psychology, with its concern for processes of learning, perception, memory, and problem-solving.

The information-processing model is based on two basic assumptions: 1) human learners are endowed with limited cognitive capacities; 2) human learners use various information handling techniques to overcome these limitations.

According to the first assumption, human beings, by their very nature, are limited-capacity information processors. This limitation reflects restrictions on what can be attended to at a given point in time, and also restrictions on how information is processed in terms of an individual's knowledge, past experience, and expectations. The shortages of processing resources become more acute when individuals are faced with complex tasks such as using a FL. For example, L2 learners' capacity to encode or decode a message in the TL is often subject to dramatic limitations, especially at the early stages. If they are exposed to a rapid flow of speech in a language they have not mastered, the effect would be that their information processing capacity becomes overloaded, and they may eventually switch off. This typical example of communication breakdown can be accounted for by the individuals' short-term memory overload, and their reliance on controlled, as opposed to automatic, processes, characteristic of low-skilled L2 learners. In contrast to native speakers, such learners attend to every single

word in reading, listening or speaking, and apply processes that are under conscious control. As a result, too much demand is put on their inherently limited processing capacities.

The second assumption underlying the information-processing model is that in order to function effectively, human beings develop ways of countering their information processing limitations such as: 1) information handling procedures; 2) routinization of skills.

Various information handling procedures help human beings overcome short and long-term memory limitations concerning the encoding, storage and retrieval of information. Miller (1956) argued that human short-term memory is limited to seven plus or minus two, but pointed out that the items in question are not equivalent to bits of information but could include meaningful chunks of information. Chunking is thought to be an effective way of encoding large amounts of information.

Transferring information into long-term memory requires a different information handling procedure. Craik and Lockhart (1972) argued that there are various levels at which information can be processed, and the likelihood of long-term retention depends on the depth of processing involved. Cognitive depth would suggest that the greater the mental operation invested in the learning task the better the retention. The notion of the positive effect of cognitive depth in processing finds its application in vocabulary learning strategies like the ones which consist in associating meanings with mental images, or classifying and categorizing words into semantic maps. Such strategies are thought to facilitate the storage of words in memory (McCarthy, 1990). The implication for language learning is that learners use different strategies to handle input, some of which involve deeper levels of processing, and result in superior long-term retention. Poor learners may not suffer from inherent storage or capacity deficit, but rather need to apply different learning strategies.

As pointed out above, the information handling procedures of chunking and depth of processing were shown to alleviate the pressure put on human processing abilities. Routinization of skills is the other type of procedures claimed to play a role in the way information is processed. Two modes of processing are used to promote the routinization of skills: 1) automatic processing; 2) controlled processing.

Automatic processing refers to the establishment of mental operations as learnt responses through consistent activation of certain nodes in memory over many trials. McLaughlin *et al.* (1983) observed that:

*Most automatic processes require an appreciable amount of training to develop fully. Once learned, an automatic process occurs rapidly and is difficult to suppress or alter (p. 139).*

The second mode of information processing, controlled processing, is not a learnt response, but a temporary activation of nodes in memory, under the attentional control of the subject.

This view of learning finds its application in some aspects of L2 learning processes. In the early stages of learning a FL, learners often rely more heavily on controlled processes and focus most of their attention on lower-order information based on linguistic cues rather than on higher-order, contextual, semantic or pragmatic information.

One aspect of L2 performance where the automatic/controlled processing distinction is especially relevant is reading. In the early stages, readers apply controlled conscious processing to lower-level skills such as word decoding skills. They expend most of their energy on deciphering every single word. As learning progresses, a degree of automaticity is achieved with respect to word decoding, so this process can be short-circuited as the reader engages in the process of sampling from the text to confirm predictions or hypotheses about text meanings. McLaughlin *et al.* (1983) summarized the reading process when they wrote: "In learning to read, children utilize controlled processing to lay down 'stepping stones' of automatic processes as they move on to more and more difficult levels of learning" (p. 151).

To summarize, an information-processing approach to L2 learning stresses the limited cognitive capacity of human learners, the use of various information handling techniques to overcome such limitations, and the integration of subskills in making complex skills. The acquisition of a complex skill, such as learning a L2 is thought to involve the gradual integration of lower-level skills. As automaticity develops, controlled processing is bypassed and attentional limitations are overcome. This transition from controlled to automatic processing is central to learning.

A major issue in FL teaching pedagogy is how to develop learners' automatic skills in using the language. Questions arise as to which procedure facilitates the acquisition of language systems: 1) having learners derive their own abstract rules through exposure to input; 2) teaching them rules explicitly. Based on the work of Seliger (1975), McLaughlin *et al.* (1983) contended that some higher-level abstract knowledge of linguistic structure is likely to help adult learners process a L2, adding that "abstract knowledge of rules systems may serve second language learners as a good shortcut in the learning process, saving them from the trouble of generating false hypotheses about underlying rules" (p. 153). However, they argued that when the input is relatively clear, an implicit learning strategy might be most successful, that is the learner might do best to ignore explicit considerations of form, and focus instead on communication. It seems that the success of any particular strategy depends on the characteristics of the learning situation, and also on individual styles. Some adult learners want to rely on rules, others prefer to learn from the input. Hatch (1974) called the first "rule learners", and the latter, "data gatherers".

Another issue related to the development of automatic skills concerns the use of top-down versus bottom-up processing. These terms are derived from the field of artificial intelligence and concern two opposite ways of processing information in an attempt to construct meaning from the text. A top-down, or knowledge-driven system is thought to use higher-level information, such as background knowledge, or schemata about the world or text structure, to facilitate processing and understanding of incoming data. A bottom-up, or data driven, system relies principally on lower-level information like linguistic cues to make sense of the text. On the question of these two contrasting approaches to information processing, McLaughlin *et al.* supported the view that interactive bottom-up and top-down processing is likely to produce the best pedagogical results.

The information-processing model seems to be particularly applicable to foreign language learning contexts in which learning proceeds gradually from skill-getting activities to skill-using practice.

### ***The Monitor Model***

The Monitor Model was developed by Krashen in the 1970s and 1980s and is based on five hypotheses.

#### *(1) The acquisition-learning hypothesis*

This hypothesis states that adults have two distinct and independent ways of developing competence in an L2. The first way, a subconscious process similar to the way children develop ability in their L1, is called 'acquisition'. The second way to develop competence in L2 is known as 'conscious learning'. According to this hypothesis, adults can also acquire, and the ability to pick up languages does not disappear at puberty. The pedagogical implication to be derived from this hypothesis is that adult learners' potentialities for both acquisition and learning can be explored in the classroom.

#### *(2) The natural order hypothesis*

This hypothesis claims that the acquisition of grammatical structures proceeds in a predicted order, regardless of learners' first language background. The implication for classroom teachers is that they must not be misled into believing that correcting students' mistakes or the explicit teaching of rules are effective for the acquisition of late acquired structures. Many structures prove to be resistant to learning; and many mistakes prove difficult to eradicate, no matter how much practice, or feedback opportunities are provided to learners. An example of this is the third person singular morpheme.

#### *(3) The monitor hypothesis*

Krashen (1982) claims that in general, utterances are initiated by the acquired system, then they may be altered by the formal, conscious system - the monitor - in order to improve accuracy. However, Krashen (1982) recognised that the use of the monitor is subject to several constraints. In order to use the monitor effectively, the performer, for example, must be constantly focused on form rather than meaning, must know and remember the language rules that need to be applied, and must also have enough time to use his/her repair system, promptly and effectively. Under such conditions, applying the monitor to oral output and performance may impair communication and irritate both the

performer and the receiver. As a result, monitoring, especially with monitor overusers, can hinder more than promote acquisition.

*(4) The input hypothesis*

The claim is that acquisition takes place only when learners are exposed to quantities of comprehensible input that is a little beyond their current level of competence. Production ability is not taught directly. It emerges over time on its own. The necessary condition for acquisition to take place and for automatic production to emerge is to expose learners to: 1) input that is comprehensible and makes sense to learners, 2) input that contains  $i + 1$ , where  $i$  refers to learners' current level of competence, and  $1$  indicates a little beyond that stage, 3) quantities of input.

*(5) The affective filter hypothesis*

This states that affective factors relate to success in L2 learning in that they act on the affective filter to facilitate or inhibit learning. Those whose attitudes are optimal will have a lower filter, and thus will be more open to input. Conversely, those whose attitudes are not optimal will have a strong affective filter which will prevent input from becoming intake.

Perhaps as a result of its dramatic impact on SLA research, the monitor model has attracted a lot of criticism. The most significant objection concerns Krashen's claim that acquisition and learning are entirely separate and that learnt knowledge cannot turn into acquired knowledge or vice versa. Ellis (1986) reports that this position has been challenged on the grounds that "When learnt knowledge is automatized through practice, it becomes acquired, i.e., available for use in spontaneous conversation" (p.264). Ellis also observes that "despite its comprehensiveness, the Monitor Model is still a 'black box' theory" (p.265). In other words, it does not explain what the learner does with input, nor in what way the processes responsible for 'acquisition' and 'learning' are different from each other.

### *Social models*

These models capitalise on the social aspect of language. L2 learning usually takes place in a social situation where people interact with each other and where the language fulfils a particular function.

### *The socio-educational model*

This model is based on a theory of bilingual development and self-identity. It claims that distinctiveness is a crucial element of personal identity. As a result, developing a high proficiency in an L2 may have serious implications for the individual's self-identity, and vice-versa. This bond between language and the individual's self-identity is deeply rooted in the individual's consciousness, and is the result of society's belief that language is the central part of one's self-identity.

The crucial claim of this model is that high proficiency in an L2 is likely to have a great impact on self-identity, which depending on the learning circumstances, will result in additive or subtractive bilingualism (Lambert, 1974). It is assumed that learners who reach an advanced level of proficiency may begin to experience changes in their self-perceptions. The nature of the type of these changes may depend on a variety of factors, one of which is the pressure exerted on the language learner by the community. If there is no threat to the learner's L1 culture and identity, the result is an example of additive bilingualism, which reflects a harmonious growth. If on the other hand, the individual is pressured to learn the L2 in order to be assimilated into the TL group, this would be an example of subtractive bilingualism. This kind of pressure can produce feelings of loss of cultural identity, and alienation.

It should be pointed out that the threat to self-identity may be perceived differently by different learners. Some learners view the acquisition of an L2 as an enrichment to their identity, and the more languages they master the more dimensions are added to their personality.

However, it can be observed that adults learning an L2 are often reluctant to change their identity. Accent is a major indicator of identity (Labov, 1974), and unsurprisingly, it is this aspect of language that is most resistant to change. Perhaps, adult L2 learners are more likely to acquire L2 accents that correspond best to their personality type, social class, and communication style.

The socio-educational model represents L2 learning contexts in which minority groups may have to choose between being assimilated or rejected. The most successful ones are those who opt for a balanced, rich, and harmonious bicultural, bilingual or even trilingual speakers.

### ***The acculturation model***

Acculturation is defined by Brown (1980, p.129) as 'the process of becoming adapted to a new culture'. It is seen as an important aspect of SLA, because language is one of the most observable expressions of culture, and because in L2 language contexts, the acquisition of a new language is dependent on the way in which the learner's community and the TL community view each other. The central premise of the acculturation model is:

*... Second language acquisition is just one aspect of acculturation and the degree to which a learner acculturates to the target language group will control the degree to which he acquires the second language (Schumann, 1978, p.34).*

Schumann developed his model by observing the naturalistic acquisition of English by Alberto, a 33-year old, working class Costa Rican, living in the Boston area. Due to his limited contact with English speakers, it is not surprising that Alberto was not a very successful language learner. Schumann explained Alberto's limited acquisition of English by pointing to Alberto's social and psychological distance from speakers of the TL. Social distance refers to group level phenomena such as social dominance, integration patterns and enclosure. Psychological distance, on the other hand, is a construct involving factors operating at the level of the individual like language shock, culture shock and ego permeability.

The SLA models reviewed above looked at L2 learning processes from various perspectives. However, none of these approaches can be claimed to give the whole picture about how foreign languages are acquired. In McLaughlin's words: "There is no single absolute truth about second language learning; we are all like the blind Indians describing an elephant" (p.155). In order to shed more light on the complex phenomenon of L2 learning, the focus of the next section will be on learner factors.



## 2.4 Learner factors

The question of differential success has been one of the major concerns of SLA: why is it that all individuals successfully acquire their L1 but meet with different degrees of success when they attempt to master an L2? In this section, a number of affective factors, namely self-esteem, anxiety, introversion/extroversion, empathy, and tolerance for ambiguity, will be reviewed, because they represent an important link between the learner and the learning process. Awareness of learner affective factors may be helpful for both teachers and researchers in their attempt to understand and interpret learners' behaviour, attitudes and learning preferences. Learner variables like learning style and motivation will be examined separately in the next chapters, given their particular relevance to the themes pursued in the current study.

### *Self-confidence*

Self-confidence can be defined as the degree of trust or reliance that individuals place upon themselves. Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) reported that "nearly all the available literature suggests that self-confidence is very much related to second language development" (p.75). In other words, self-confidence has been largely recognized as a strong predictor of successful L2 learning.

Two measures of self-confidence have been used: anxiety level and extroversion. Low anxiety level and a tendency to be outgoing have been correlated with successful L2 learning. Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) advocated that self-confident people are less sensitive to rejection than those with high anxiety levels and are, therefore, more likely to put themselves in learning situations. As a result, they are not worried about making mistakes and are often more able to take in and process input than are those with less self-confidence.

### *Self-esteem*

Self-esteem is an affective factor that is particularly relevant to foreign or second language learning. The FL classroom is generally fraught with risks and challenges. Learners, for example, may be interrupted, corrected, or may make fools of themselves.

As a result, FL learning can be regarded as humiliating and can pose a threat to the learner's self-esteem.

Before examining the link between FL learning and self-esteem, it is worth clarifying the concept of self-esteem. This concept has been conceptualised differently by different researchers. Scarcella and Oxford (1992) defined it as a self-judgement of worth or value, based on a feeling of efficacy - a sense of interacting effectively with one's environment. (p.52). They identified two types of self-esteem, global self-esteem and situational self-esteem. Global self-esteem arises early in life and is based on two factors: 1) self-perception of competence in various broad areas like academic work, sports or physical appearance, and 2) a personal assessment of the importance of each of these areas. For example, if a student is doing well in sports, and if sports are viewed as important, then global self-esteem is enhanced. Conversely, if a student is a failure at sport, but does not view sports as personally important, global self-esteem is maintained despite this failure.

The second type of self-esteem, situational self-esteem, refers to one's appraisal of oneself in a certain specific situation, event or activity. Individuals can feel good about themselves globally, yet at the same time experience low self-esteem in a particular situation. For example, a learner can feel low situational self-esteem in a language class that is especially failure-inducing, or in a particular skill that is a source of perceived failure. Again, just as with global self-esteem, students' level of situational self-esteem will depend on the perceived importance attributed to the specific skill in question. For instance, situational self-esteem can decrease if a FL student is not doing well with respect to communicative skills, and if communicative ability is considered crucial for future progress.

Lawrence (1987) conceived of self-esteem, rather differently, as the individual's evaluation of the discrepancy between self-image (what the person is) and ideal self (what the person would like to be). He contended that self-image derives from the individual's awareness of his/her physical and mental characteristics. It is shaped early in life and develops through experience. In parallel to their self-image, individuals form their views about the ideal characteristics, or ideal skills they would like to possess. This is what is referred to as ideal self. According to Lawrence, self-esteem is the extent to which individuals care about the discrepancy between what they actually are (self-image)

and what they would like to be (ideal self). If, for example, learners set high standards for themselves, in the sense that their aspirations far outweigh their achievements, and if they regard such discrepancy as a source of distress, then their self-esteem is likely to be damaged. The important point to note is that it is not actual failure to achieve which decreases the level of self-esteem, but rather the person's distress about failure.

Lawrence (1987) pointed out that individuals with low self-esteem will lack confidence in their ability to succeed. As a result they may try to avoid situations which they see as potentially humiliating. This may explain why some students, for example, prefer to do nothing, at the risk of being punished by the teacher, rather than engage in a task that may bring them failure and humiliation. In this respect, laziness in the classroom needs to be regarded, sometimes at any rate, essentially as an indication of self-esteem.

Allwright and Bailey (1991) reported on the work of Heyde (1977) and Heyde-Smack (1983) on the relation between self-esteem and FL performance. Three types of self-esteem were highlighted: (1) general self-esteem, (2) situational self-esteem, which refers to one's appraisal of oneself in specific situations, and (3) task self-esteem which relates to particular tasks. Heyde's studies revealed that all three types of self-esteem correlated positively with oral proficiency in French by American college students. However, no claims could be made about the causal connection between self-esteem and performance. The two may well feed on each other; success reinforces self-esteem which, in turn, provides the learner with more confidence in approaching new tasks. Heyde's work also showed that students with high self-esteem hesitated less, corrected themselves more and did not need prompting. Of much greater interest, was the finding that teacher behaviour affected students' self-esteem level. It was found that students' self-esteem dropped sharply if their teachers constantly interrupted them to correct them, or if they put pressure on them to monitor their own speech and correct themselves.

McCarthy and Schmeck (1988) reported on a number of studies which investigated the relationship between self-esteem and choice of learning strategies. It was consistently shown that learners with high self-esteem preferred to actively use deep elaborative learning strategies, while learners with low self-esteem used more shallow and repetitive strategies. It was also found that learners with high self-esteem performed better on free recall tests. McCarthy and Schmeck (1988) suggested that deep and elaborative

strategies are self-assertive in nature, while shallow strategies are more passive and dependent.

The findings about learner self-esteem outlined above suggest a number of implications for FL teaching. One of a teacher's primary roles is to enhance the self-esteem of his/her students, especially those who are at a risk of developing a sense of helplessness. The best way to boost students' self-esteem and make them feel good about themselves may be to lead them towards achievement and success. This can be done by: 1) training students to set reasonable goals and assess their progress towards these goals realistically and positively, 2) facilitating the route to success through scaffolding and guidance, and 3) encouraging students through positive feedback.

### ***Empathy***

This refers to people's psychological capacity to put themselves in another person's shoes. In more sophisticated terms, it has been defined by Brown (1980) as "the projection of one's personality into the personality of another in order to understand him better" (p.107).

While a sophisticated degree of empathy is widely accepted as a pre-requisite for successful communication, no conclusive results have been found concerning the relationship between learners' degree of empathy and success in L2 learning. Brown (1980) reports that Guiora and his colleagues found that empathy successfully predicted good pronunciation of a foreign language. However, Naiman *et al.* (1978) found no significant effect for empathy in characterizing the 'good language learner'.

### ***Tolerance of ambiguity***

Ely (1989) maintains that "tolerance of ambiguity is considered by various researchers to be either a personality or cognitive style variable (or both)" (p.443). Tolerance/intolerance of ambiguity has been conceived of by Ely (1989) as "the relative degree of discomfort associated with thinking: that one does not know or understand exact meaning; that one is not able to express one's ideas accurately or exactly; that one is dealing with overly complex language; that there is a lack of correspondence between the L1 and the L2" (p.439). Learning a new language is often fraught with uncertainty and ambiguity. It may be a very complex demanding endeavour, in which the learner

often has to perform in highly confusing or ambiguous situations where the meaning of input, the purpose of the activities and the appropriate response are unclear. Those learners who have a low tolerance for ambiguity might be expected to react to such situations with anxiety, dislike or avoidance.

In their comprehensive study of the predictors of language achievement, Naiman *et al.* (1978) found that learners who were more tolerant of ambiguity performed better on both receptive and productive language tests.

Ely (1989) investigated the relationship between tolerance of ambiguity and strategy use among university students learning Spanish in the US. Tolerance of ambiguity was found to be a significant negative predictor of various learning strategies, such as (1) thinking carefully about grammar when writing, (2) looking up words right away when reading, and (3) planning out exactly what to say ahead of time. On the other hand, tolerance of ambiguity proved to be a significant positive predictor of looking for overall meaning in reading and using creative techniques of constructing mental images to aid later recall. These results suggest that FL learners, for whom ambiguity is a source of psychological discomfort or threat, appear to be more concerned about detail and correctness, and tend as a result to use unproductive learning strategies.

Scarcella and Oxford (1992) claimed that intolerance of ambiguity might make the learner feel insecure and therefore lower his/her situational self-esteem.

The results above suggest that learners who can deal with some degree of ambiguity tend to develop more self-esteem, less anxiety about detail and correctness, and appear to use better learning strategies. The FL teacher has an important role to play in making their students more tolerant of ambiguity. by enhancing their self-esteem, putting less emphasis on correctness and analysis of detail and by exposing them to more productive learning strategies.

### ***Foreign language anxiety***

Horwitz *et al.* (1986) characterised anxiety as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system" (p. 125). A distinction needs to be made between trait anxiety and situation specific anxiety. Scovel (1978), drawing on work in general psychology, defines trait anxiety as "a more permanent predisposition to be anxious" (in Ellis, 1994, p. 479).

Situation-specific anxiety consists of the anxiety which is aroused by a specific situation such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation. It is the latter type of anxiety which is our main concern here.

The focus of the following sections will be on: 1) the sources of anxiety; 2) the effects of anxiety on FL learning and achievement; 3) the pedagogical implications for the FL teacher.

One of the key questions research on anxiety has addressed is "what causes trait or situation anxiety?" Horwitz *et al.* (1986) identified three sources of anxiety related to performance: 1) communication apprehension; 2) tests; and 3) fear of negative evaluation from other people.

Communication apprehension could be defined as a kind of shyness characterized by fear of communicating with people. This is usually manifested by an anxiety about speaking in public, such as "stage fright", or about listening to a spoken message, like receiver anxiety. Such difficulties in speaking/listening are more acutely experienced in a FL class, where learners have little control over the communicative situation, and where their performance is constantly monitored.

Tests represent another source of performance anxiety, related to fear of failure, and essentially due to a negative appraisal of one's efficacy. It is perhaps interesting to note that test anxious students often put unrealistic demands on themselves and feel that anything less than a perfect performance is a failure. One reason behind this could be to make failure less shameful.

The third source of anxiety identified by Horwitz (1986) was fear of negative evaluation. This is characterized by apprehension about others' evaluation, and avoidance of evaluative situations which represent threats to the individual's self-concept and self-esteem. Indeed, any performance in the L2 is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator, and may lead to reticence, self-consciousness, or even panic. Probably no other learning situation implicates self-concept and self-expression to the degree that language study does.

'Learners' competitive nature' was another source of anxiety pinned down by Bailey (1983). She analysed learners' diaries, and found that learners tended to become anxious when they compared themselves with their peers and found themselves less proficient.

She noted that as the learners perceived themselves becoming more proficient, and therefore better able to compete, their anxiety decreased.

Having established some of the main causes of anxiety, I turn now to the second question which researchers have addressed: "what effect does anxiety have on learning?" In the last few years, research has consistently shown significant, negative correlations between FL anxiety and performance as measured by course grades and standardized proficiency tests (Clément, Gardner & Smythe, 1980; Gardner, Smythe & Lalonde, 1984; Horwitz, 1986; Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993).

Whereas much of the research into the role of anxiety in language learning has used broadly-based measures, a number of studies have investigated the more specific, subtle effects of language anxiety. Steinberg & Horwitz (1986) investigated the effects of anxiety-arousal on students' descriptions and interpretations of ambiguous pictures. They found that anxious students tended to be less interpretative in making comments on the ambiguous scenes.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) found that anxious students learnt lists of vocabulary at a slower rate than less anxious students, and had more difficulty recalling previously learnt vocabulary items. Such results can be explained from a cognitive psychological perspective. Eysenck (1979) for example, suggested that anxiety-arousal is associated with distracting, self-related cognition such as excessive self-evaluation, worry over potential failure, and concern about the opinions of others. As a result, anxious learners tend to have their attention divided between task-related cognition and self-related cognition, making cognitive performance less efficient. Eysenck also maintained that anxious students are aware that their performance is impaired and attempt to compensate by increased effort. For example, it has been reported that anxious language students expend more effort than relaxed students but their achievement does not match up to that effort (Horwitz *et al.*, 1986). However, in some cases, extra effort does more than compensate for the reduced efficiency of the cognitive processing.

Ellis (1994) summarized a model of the role of anxiety in language learning based on the study of MacIntyre and Gardner (1989). According to this model, the relationship between anxiety and learning is moderated by the learners' level of language development, and by situation-specific learning experiences. The model also recognizes

that poor performance can be the cause as well as the result of anxiety. As the model suggests, very little anxiety is observed at the beginning stages of learning, but at the next stage, more anxiety is manifested if the learner develops negative expectations based on bad learning experience. At a later stage, if poor performance and negative learning experience persist, anxiety escalates.

While most of the research had examined the effect of anxiety on learner output, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) looked at the subtle effects of anxiety at three stages of the learning process: 1) input, concerned with the initial representation of items in memory; 2) processing, involving the cognitive operations performed on the subject matter; 3) output, concerned with the production of previously learnt material. The study was carried out among L2 learners of French in Canada.

In order to explore the correlations between performance and anxiety at the three stages of learning, they developed anxiety measures, and performance measures, corresponding to each level: input, processing, and output. Results showed that there were significant negative correlations between specific task performances and specific types of anxiety. Results indicated for example, that at the input stage, anxious students seemed to experience difficulty holding discrete verbal items in short term memory. At the processing stage, they were unwilling to take risks, and guess as often as the more relaxed students or avoided responding to avoid guessing. Language anxiety, at the output stage, seemed to interfere with students' ability to retrieve appropriate L2 items from memory, and as a result it slowed down the speed of recall of such items. The vocabulary deficit that appeared at the retrieval stage could be partially attributable to interference from anxiety during previous attempts at vocabulary learning.

The studies reviewed above provide sufficient evidence to show that anxiety is an important factor in L2 acquisition. Teachers have a crucial role to play in alleviating the detrimental effect of anxiety on learning. In the first place, they must acknowledge the existence of foreign language anxiety. Some students, for example, may avoid engaging in the classroom activities that they perceive as anxiety-provoking, and may as a result give the impression that they are unprepared or uninterested. Therefore, teachers should always consider the possibility that anxiety may be responsible for students' behaviour before ascribing poor students' performance only to lack of ability or poor motivation. One way teachers can alleviate FL anxiety in the classroom is by creating a less stressful,



and more relaxed learning environment. They can, for example, demystify the FL learning process by inducing in students a sense of humour likely to make them feel more at ease with themselves and with the learning task and learning environment. Given that poor performance can in itself represent a source of anxiety, students can be given advice on effective learning strategies and study skills that are likely to provide them with experience of success. Teachers should be accepting and non-judgmental, and should give their students the signal that making mistakes is part of the learning process. As students appear to be sensitive to TL corrections, the selection of error correction techniques should be based on reducing defensive reactions in students.

An important issue which needs to be addressed is how much current teaching practices contribute to FL anxiety and how much is due to the intrinsic nature of language learning.

### ***Introversion/extroversion***

Eysenck (1965), cited in Skehan (1989) provided the following description of introverts and extroverts:

*The typical extrovert is sociable, likes parties, has many friends, needs to have people to talk to, and does not like studying by himself. He craves excitement, takes chances, often sticks his neck out, acts on the spur of the moment, and is generally an impulsive individual. He... always has a ready answer, and generally likes change...*

*The typical introvert, on the other hand, is a quiet, retiring sort of person, introspective, fond of books rather than people; he is reserved and distant, except with intimate friends. He tends to plan ahead...and distrusts the impulse of the moment. He does not like excitement, takes matters of everyday life with proper seriousness, and likes a well ordered mode of life...(p.100).*

As suggested by the pen portraits above, extroversion seems to consist of two components: 1) sociability, i.e., gregariousness, 'people' orientation, fear of isolation, and 2) impulsivity, that is, a need for excitement, change, and risk taking. Furthermore, these two components seem to go together, that is, a sociable individual also tends to be impulsive.

Eysenck, cited in Skehan (1989) proposed that extroverts would be easily distracted from studying, partly because of their gregariousness, and partly because of

their inability to concentrate for long periods. Extroverts build up reactive inhibition (fatigue) to learning more quickly. On the basis of such findings, introverts would be predicted to have higher academic achievement than extroverts.

In contrast to educational research which proposed that introversion was a predictor of academic achievement, research in applied linguistics suggested that the desirable end of the extroversion-introversion continuum, for FL learning, was extroversion. Many investigators like, for example, Naiman *et al.* (1978) suggested that more sociable learners would be more inclined to talk, to join groups, to volunteer and participate in class and use language for communication outside class.

It seems then that extroverts would benefit both inside and outside the classroom because they have the appropriate personality trait for FL learning as distinct from general, content-oriented learning. However, there appears to be a conflict between predictions in general content-oriented learning and FL learning in terms of the type of personality trait predictor of success.

Drawing on an extensive review of actual research results about the relationship between measures of extroversion/introversion and FL achievement, Skehan (1989) admitted that the situation was not at all clear-cut, suggesting uncertain, weak, inconclusive or conflicting results/relationships. Based on the work of Strong (1983) who had attempted to categorise studies of extroversion in terms of the test-type used and the type of results obtained, Skehan tried to establish some order in the conflicting and uncertain results. He categorised the various studies available in extroversion in terms of: 1) type of measuring instrument used (observationally-based assessment of personality or questionnaire derived measures), 2) type of language learning situation (naturalistic or FL learning context) and 3) type of learners (children or adults). The main generalisation that could be made was that there were stronger tendencies for positive relationships to be more likely with naturalistic as opposed to FL learning situations, with children as opposed to adults, and with observationally based assessments of personality disposition, as opposed to questionnaire-derived measures.

This suggested that a positive relationship between social traits and achievement could be demonstrated, but the appearance of such a relationship would be somewhat dependent on research design decisions.

On the basis of these conclusions, Skehan (1989) put forward two major directions for further research. First, more emphasis should be put on research which attends more rigorously to contextual factors. For example, in contexts where classes are organised on a group basis, extroversion would have a positive relationship with achievement, conversely, in contexts where individual work is more important, introverts would be more successful.

The second direction for future research concerns an improved definition of the constructs involved. Eysenck's original concept of extroversion as composed of sociability and impulsivity appears to be questionable. In FL learning, one can see potential relevance for sociability but not really for impulsivity. This suggests that the construct of extroversion could usefully be subjected to further analysis to relate it specifically to language learning. An illustration of this is provided by Strong's work (1983) where the overall construct of social style is broken into talkativeness (i.e. tendency to initiate conversations), responsiveness, gregariousness (i.e. the tendency to interact with a wide number of peers), assertiveness, extroversion, social competence and popularity.

To conclude, we may need to accept that both extroversion and introversion have a major role to play in learning a FL and, both have positive features. As was expressed by Skehan (1989): "There is value, it would seem, in having rather variable personality qualities, so that one can adapt effectively to meet different learning demands" (p. 105).

The focus of this chapter, so far, has been to explore a number of hypotheses, theories or models which have attempted to identify and explain the L2 learning processes and learner factors. Given that the central concern of the present study is to explore students' learning preferences and motivation these areas will be treated separately in Chapter Three and Four respectively. The concern of the next section is to examine how insights from SLA research and other disciplines have been implemented into the classroom, with the aim of accommodating the learner and facilitating the learning of languages.

## 2.5 Language teaching methods

The language teaching profession has been obsessed with a search for the best method which will be the panacea for all pedagogical problems. This section will be devoted to a description and critique of some of the most prominent language teaching methods in order to see the ways in which theoretical beliefs about SLA have been applied to pedagogical action. Following Nunan (1991), methods belonging to three different categories will be examined: the psychological tradition, the humanistic tradition, and the second language tradition.

### *The psychological tradition*

This tradition refers to methods based on psychological theories of learning, which are not initially meant to inform language learning and teaching. Two methods will be examined here: audiolingualism and cognitive code learning.

### *Audiolingualism*

This is the method which had its heyday in the 1950s and 1960s, and which had marked FL teaching for a long time. Its theoretical underpinning was provided by a combination of behaviourist psychology and structural linguistics. One of the advocates of behaviourism was Skinner who developed his model of operant conditioning by extrapolating from experiments conducted on animal learning to human behaviour. He claimed that learning is a mechanical process of habit formation through stimulus-response conditioning. Parallel to the development of behaviourism in psychology was the influence of structural linguistics. Bloomfield (1935), one of the most influential proponents of structuralism, looked at languages in terms of grammatical structures and patterns rather than in terms of rules.

Behaviourist habit-formation, and structural linguistic analysis were mutually supportive and provided the theoretical basis of audiolingual practices which can be summarised as follows:

1. Frequent repetition through mimicry-memorization and pattern practice are thought to be essential to effective learning.
2. Errors, like sins, are to be avoided in order to prevent their establishment as habits.

3. Emphasis was on form not on meaning.
4. Language skill should be dealt with in the sequence of listening, speaking, reading and writing.
5. Discrete language items are to be learnt one by one, in a linear fashion.

Skinner's model of language learning soon came under attack. Its most flagrant weakness as brought to the surface by Chomsky's critique based on his own model of transformational generative grammar. Transformationalists demonstrated that language learning could not simply be accounted for in terms of stimulus-response psychology. Some children's utterances could not have been learnt through imitation, but rather were the result of rule-governed behaviour. On the other hand, practitioners found that the audio-lingual method did not yield the promised results outside the military context in which it was developed, namely the transfer of mechanical skills to more spontaneous use of the language. It was often the case that after several years of study, students taught by the audio-lingual method were at a loss when they had to communicate their most basic needs outside the classroom.

### ***Cognitive code learning***

Chomsky's transformational grammar and Ausubel's (1968) cognitive psychology gave rise to the approach known as cognitive code learning. Cognitivism differed from audiolingualism in that it viewed learning as a rule-governed creative process, and the learner as an active agent acting on the environment by formulating hypotheses, testing and modifying them by subsequent experience.

In practical terms, cognitive code learning de-emphasizes mechanical rote learning and capitalizes on the deductive or inductive internalization of rules. The emphasis is on meaningful learning in which new knowledge should be linked to prior knowledge. Students' background knowledge should be activated before presenting them with new items. As regards mistakes, cognitivists believe that making mistakes is part of the learning process (see e.g. Nemser, 1971 and Selinker, 1972).

### ***The humanistic tradition***

What sets humanistic methods apart from other methods is a common belief in the primacy of affective and emotional factors within the learning process. Proponents of

these methods believed that if the learner can be encouraged to adopt the right attitudes, interests and motivation in the TL and culture, as well as in the learning environment in which they find themselves, then successful learning will occur. Reporting on Stevick's (1982) conviction of the primacy of humanistic methods over others, Nunan (1991) observed:

*...success or failure in language teaching depends not so much on whether one adopts inductive or deductive techniques for teaching grammar, nor whether one engages in meaningful practice rather than in pattern drills, but in the extent to which one caters to the learner's affective domain (p.234).*

A number of humanistic methods emerged in the 1970s such as Gattegno's Silent Way, Lozanov's Suggestopedia, and Curran's Community Language Learning (for an excellent review of these methods, see Stevick, 1980 & Richards and Rogers, 1986). The main principles that have inspired and characterized humanistic education as developed by Rogers, Moskowitz and Stevick are examined below:

#### 1. A concern with educating the whole person

Learners are viewed not only as cognitive beings, but also as emotional beings with likes, dislikes, fears and weaknesses. No learning will take place unless both their intellectual and affective needs are catered for. The integration of cognition and affect is the basis of humanistic techniques of teaching which engage the learners' whole persons and explore their ideas, values, opinions, needs and experiences in the what to teach and the how to teach.

#### 2. Emphasis on self-actualization as opposed to self-denial

Self-actualization has been defined by Stevick (1990) as 'the quest for full realization of one's own deepest true qualities' (p. 24). This implies that the aim of self-actualization is to allow learners to evolve and to grow as creative, independent and self-reliant people who accept themselves and others. The implication for L2 learning is that teachers need to explore learners' capacities and potentialities and also accommodate their preferences and learning styles. As Stevick (1990) observes: "Conformity leads to enslavement, the pursuit of uniqueness brings about liberation" (p. 24). Clearly, if

learners are allowed to be themselves (e.g, if their learning styles are matched by the instructor's teaching style), they are more likely to be self-actualized, to grow and learn.

### 3. Teacher as facilitator

The humanistic teacher is not an authoritative, domineering figure. He is real, genuine, discards masks of superiority and omniscience, and accepts and values each student in the group. His main role is to enhance the personal security of students and provide them with an appropriate nurturing context for learning. Humanist educators like Setvick and Curran believed that, given a non-threatening, stress-free environment, in which they feel accepted, learners will grow and learn. Conversely, a non-humanistic learning environment is more likely to throw learners on the defensive, inhibit their participation and block their learning.

### ***The second language tradition: the Communicative Approach***

The third methodological tradition encompasses methods which draw directly on research and theory in first and second language acquisition, and attempt to apply this theory and research to the L2 classroom. The rest of this section will be devoted to the review and critique of one of the most pervasive language teaching fashions in the last two decades: the Communicative Approach (see, for example, Brumfit and Johnson, 1979; Johnson and Porter, 1983; Yalden, 1983). The communicative movement emerged from the interaction between different disciplines concerned with placing language in its social context where it fulfils its communicative function.

The central claim of sociolinguistics is that language is a social activity that should be dealt within its social context. Hymes (1971) had reacted to Chomsky's characterization of the linguistic competence of the ideal native speaker and proposed the term *communicative competence* to represent the use of language in its social context with the observance of sociolinguistic norms of appropriacy. In Hymes' (1979) words, "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless" (p.15). Hymes' communicative competence may be seen as the equivalent of Halliday's *meaning potential*. In Halliday's words "we shall define language as meaning potential: that is, as sets of options, or alternatives, in meaning, that are available to the speaker-hearer" (in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979, p. 27). This means that language is collaborative in the sense

that making meaning is negotiated between speaker and listener. Halliday (1975) elaborated a powerful theory of the functions of language, which complements Hymes' view of communicative competence. He described a number of basic functions that language performs for children learning their first language such as: (1) *the instrumental function* or using the language to get the things done, (2) *the regulatory function* or using the language to control the behaviour of others and (3) *the heuristic function* or using the language to learn and to discover.

A more useful analysis of communicative competence is presented in Canale and Swain (1980) in which four dimensions of communicative competence are posited. These are: (1) *grammatical competence* concerned with mastery of the language code, (2) *sociolinguistic competence* concerned with the socio-cultural use of language such as appropriateness, (3) *discourse competence* involving mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified cohesive and coherent text, and (4) *strategic competence* which refers to the strategies that communicators use to initiate, end up, repair and maintain communication.

The theories outlined above had a tremendous effect on people's views of what it means to know a language. There seems to be more to knowing a language than the ability to compose grammatically correct sentences, hence the emergence of the communicative movement in language teaching. Three other disciplines had an important part to play in fostering communicative language teaching (CLT), namely pragmatics, speech act theory and discourse analysis. Pragmatics appeared on the linguistic map to include everything that is neither abstract grammatical meaning, nor the literal *propositional meaning* of utterances. It is rather more concerned with speakers' communicative meanings like persuading or apologizing, and also with speakers' unspoken, hidden or implicit messages like presuppositions or implicatures (Levinson, 1983). The implication of pragmatics for CLT is that there is more to L2 learning than composing grammatically correct sentences. The learner should be able to convey and understand meaningful messages. In other words, he/she should be communicatively competent in order to avoid not only communication breakdown but also pragmatic failure.

One of the main contributions of speech act theory comes from the philosopher Austin. In his classic book 'How to Do Things with Words' (1962), Austin challenged the



'descriptive fallacy', according to which the sole purpose of making assertions is to describe some state of affairs. Thus, for example, he argued that the utterance 'that's interesting' can be interpreted differently in different contexts. He put forward a theory of speech act according to which utterances are used to do things. In most of their utterances, speakers do things with words, they perform social acts, such as convincing, complimenting, or offering.

Discourse analysis in the sense of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), that is to say, the search for what gives discourse coherence had a great influence on CLT. In the same way that there are rules which operate within sentences, there are also rules which operate between sentences, limiting which sentence can follow another one. This implies that L2 teaching should not be exclusively concerned with atomistic activities which focus on discrete items at the sentence level, but should go beyond the sentence towards holistic activities which encompass stretches of discourse.

The socio-economic and political context of Europe in the 1970s had a catalytic effect in accelerating the spread and development of CLT. A group of experts working within the Council of Europe had a strong concern for the teaching and learning of foreign languages for communicative purposes in Europe. Wilkins' (1972) contribution was an analysis of the communicative meanings that a language learner needs to understand and express. Rather than describing the core of language through traditional concepts of grammar and vocabulary, Wilkins attempted to demonstrate the systems of meanings that lay behind the communicative uses of language. He described two types of meanings: notional categories (concepts such as time, sequence, quantity etc.) and categories of communicative functions (e.g. requests, offers, denials, etc.). Wilkins' contribution put more emphasis on the teaching of communicative functions than on grammatical items. This had a tremendous effect on the design of communicatively-oriented syllabuses throughout the world.

In light of the theories outlined above, applied linguists such as Widdowson (1978), Brumfit and Johnson (1979) and Johnson and Morrow (1981) contributed to the application of a communicative perspective to foreign language education. The essential features of CLT can be as follows:

1. Communicative competence is the desired goal of FL teaching. This includes the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately in a meaningful context and for communicative purposes.
2. The focus is on the teaching of communicative functions and notions. Fluency is emphasised and teachers correct essentially for content.
3. Learners operate within stretches of language above sentence level, and perform within authentic language in realistic situations.

The sort of activities or devices suggested for engaging learners in communicative activities involve the use of information gap, role-play and group work. Information gap work is based on the principle that in real life communication takes place between two or more people, one of whom knows something that is unknown to others. The purpose of the communication is to bridge the information gap between the communicators involved. To make the communication purposeful, learners are required to use the information obtained to fulfil a task.

Role-play is another way of providing a reason for talking. Students are assigned a role and are required to play that role in a specific situation. The students can be either controlled or given freedom in what they say and how they say it.

Group work is generally used as an aid to communication in the classroom. The studies conducted thus far on the effectiveness of group work for L2 learning have yielded mixed results (see for example, Pica, 1994 for an overview). Pica pointed out that studies of learners' production accuracy had revealed that group work may be responsible for fluent but non-targetlike (inaccurate) L2 production characteristic of students in immersion and bilingual programmes. She also reported that in bilingual pre-school programmes involving English and Spanish speaking learners, greater proficiency in English L2 was related to (1) peer interaction if the majority of students were English speaking and (2) teacher interaction if the majority of students were Spanish speaking. This suggests that group work (interaction with peers) is more effective than teacher-led classroom interaction only in cases where the majority of students are speakers of the target language. Pica (1994) concluded that group work seemed to assist certain L2 skills more than others, appeared to be more effective for certain learner groups more than others, and tended to work better with some classroom tasks than with others.

Further research is needed in order to provide more informed decisions about the benefits of this practice to students' learning.

### *Evaluation of the communicative approach*

In the last few years, under the influence of CLT, language teaching seems to have made great progress. The change has been dramatic both in materials development and teaching methodology. Boring textbooks and teaching procedures have been replaced by a splendid variety of interesting materials and engaging classroom activities.

Notwithstanding the wave of enthusiasm that it has generated in language teaching circles, the Communicative Approach has not escaped criticism. It has been rejected by many teachers as not being easily adaptable to contexts in which classroom conditions, students' needs, and teachers' training are not communicatively-oriented. CLT has also been accused of being a 'commercial approach' whose theory is riddled with jargon and empty rhetoric meant essentially to sell the product.

In his admirably provocative and eloquently written article, Swan (1990) levelled strong criticism at various aspects of CLT. Swan does not support the claim that teachers should teach rules of use to their students. He rightly points out that learners already know, in general, how to negotiate meaning. They have been doing this all their lives. What they need to know is what words are used to do this in a foreign language. Therefore interpretation and use of pragmatic meaning are mostly non-language specific, and amount to little more than the operation of experience and common sense.

After having demystified the dogma of rules of use and rules of appropriacy, Swan directed his criticism at what he called 'the real-life fallacy'. By this he meant the methodological claim according to which language practice should involve genuine exchanges, and classroom discourse should correspond as closely as possible to real life use of language. Swan argues that a certain amount of artificiality is inseparable from the process of isolating language items for study. Even allegedly non-communicative questions like 'what am I doing?' have the communicative value of eliciting feedback from students.

Swan went so far as to attack CLT by its own standards, rejecting the value of the information gap technique under the grounds that, very often, it does not serve communicative purposes. He observed:

*If (to take a familiar example) I give a student a paper containing the times of trains from Manchester to Liverpool, purely so that he can pass on the information to another student who is not in Manchester and does not wish to go to Liverpool, then we are perhaps still some distance from genuine communication (Swan, 1990, p. 94).*

The implication to be drawn is that communicative principles are difficult to implement in the classroom and this is the reason why CLT means different things to different teachers.

The last attack on the Communicative Approach was about the strain put on the communicative teacher, and it comes from Medgyes (1990). He observed:

*The communicative classroom requires a teacher of extraordinary abilities; a multi-dimensional, high-tech, Wizard-of-Oz-like super-person - yet of flesh and blood (p.104).*

Whatever its virtues or shortcomings, the Communicative Approach has had a dramatic impact on language pedagogy. By and large, teachers have probably gained more than they have lost from the communicative movement.

## 2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to provide a general background to SLA research and language teaching. In order to make a sense of the plethora of theories and variables involved in this vast area of research, it was necessary to stake out the territory by focusing on two dimensions: the learning process, and learner factors. Through these two dimensions, an effort has been made to describe and explain some of the most crucial aspects of SLA and language teaching.

Just like in the case of the traveller whose view of his destination suddenly changes at the end of the journey, the picture of SLA that emerges in this conclusion seems to be somewhat different from what it was initially. SLA appears to be a macro system involving three separate entities:

1. the learner with his/her psychological neurological, cognitive and emotional domains.
2. the learning environment including the input, the mother tongue, the social milieu, and the instructional factors.

3. theories from various fields like all branches of linguistics, all branches of psychology (including cognition and memory) and also comprehension, information processing, and artificial intelligence, theories.

In order to arrive at a full understanding of how languages are mastered and what mechanisms, processes, or learning events are conducive to success, the SLA investigator has to gain more insights into the two entities represented by the learner and the learning environment, and also to get informed about the inroads made in other disciplines that are susceptible to throw more light on the SLA puzzle. Quite often one gets the impression that SLA researchers are working at cross purposes, i.e., paying little attention to each other's construct definitions or research outcomes, in such a way that one often gets reminded of the blind man and the elephant metaphor.

On the other hand, the plethora of methods which emerged in the last decades led to disillusion and uncertainty about teaching methods among professionals (Kumaravadivelu, 1994 and Prabhu, 1990). It was argued that language learning cannot be satisfactorily conceptualised in terms of teaching method alone. The notion of method itself was considered to be prescriptive and outmoded. In the face of this growing dissatisfaction with the concept of method, more attention needs to be directed to the learner themselves, namely their learning style and learning preferences, which is the concern of the next chapter.

## Chapter Three

### *Learning Style and Activity Preferences*

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#### 3.1 Introduction

As has been shown in the last chapter, improving the quality of FL instruction has been a major challenge for many educators and teachers over this century. Foreign Language professionals have witnessed a variety of language teaching approaches like the structural movement, the communicative movement, the humanistic movement, and the more recent computer-assisted instruction movement, to name but a few of the attempts designed to upgrade the quality of foreign language education. In the last two decades, the "best method" syndrome, whose aim was to discover the panacea for all L2 learners' problems is an indication of this search for improvement.

Wide experimentation with diversified methods has yielded invaluable insights and added significant dimensions to FL learning and teaching. However, experience has shown that the wholesale application of a method in the classroom has resulted in failure and frustration for many learners. It seems that any given teaching technique or learning modality which may do wonders for student A may also, for undetermined reasons, prevent student B from achieving satisfactorily in the same setting. In other words, an instructional method which works for some learners does not necessarily work for others.

Students seem to respond differently to different teaching procedures. It is precisely this individual response to the learning environment that has given rise to the notion of learning style. It is believed that individuals, regardless of their age, ability, or learning contexts, differ dramatically in the way they go about the task of learning. Each individual is thought to have a learning style which is as unique as a signature.

Even though the reality of learning style appears to be widely recognised, what it means still remains very much up to its authors (Keefe, 1979; Dunn, Dunn, and Price, 1979; Curry, 1983; Willing, 1988). Learning style has been defined differently by

different researchers, each using the definition that best suits his/her own purposes, so much so that learning style has acquired the reputation of being an elusive term based on a fuzzy concept.

This confusion comes as no surprise if one considers the wide range of affective, cognitive or physiological dimensions that underlie the individual's learning style. Research evidence has shown that individuals differ tremendously in their personality characteristics and their psychological make up, in such a way that some personality traits or cognitive processes are more available in some persons than in others (see for example Ellis, 1994, Skehan, 1989). This multi-dimensional view of learning style has been compounded by the diversity of contexts in which researchers conducted their studies, as well as by the variety of purposes behind their research. So, investigators working under the umbrella of learning style, have highlighted different elements of learning style to suit their own specific purposes. For example, researchers (Dunn and Dunn, 1979) working with primary school children have focused on learning style elements related to learners' physical needs like the need for mobility, light, or food intake. Others (e.g. Willing, 1988), involved with ESL students, have attempted to categorise learners according to their preferred learning activities. Still other investigators (e.g. Lepke, 1977) have aimed at identifying learners' educational "cognitive map" in order to determine whether students acquired knowledge or skills best through 1) lecture discussion, 2) film, 3) independent study, 4) seminar etc. Clearly, the confusion, or lack of conceptual rigour, that afflicts learning style is nothing but an indication that it is an important area of research that seems to be expanding to diverse educational settings. Therefore, no matter how different the orientations of researchers working with student learning styles, their goal remains the same: to make learning and instruction more responsive to the needs of individual students.

In an attempt to bring more order to the chaotic fragmentation and semantic confusion of the learning style field, Curry (1983) proposed what he termed the 'onion model'. According to this model, all cognitive/learning style measures may be grouped into three main types or strata resembling layers of an onion. The first and outermost layer of the onion is what he labels as *instructional preferences*. These refer to the individual's choice of the environment in which to learn. It is believed to be the least stable, the most easily influenced level of measurement. The second layer of the 'onion

model' refers to the information processing level which reflects the individual's intellectual approach to assimilating information through coding systems and memory processes. This information processing style appears to be more stable than instructional preferences, but it is still modifiable by learning strategies. Finally, the innermost layer of the hypothesised learning style onion refers to the individual's cognitive personality style of adapting and assimilating information. It reflects relatively more permanent personality dimensions like field dependence-independence or introversion-extroversion.

Curry's model shed some light on the differences between the individual's deeply-rooted, cognitively-based learning styles and the outward manifestations of such styles, referred to as instructional preferences, and thought to be transient reactions to the learning environment. Yet Curry does not satisfactorily account for the distinction between the widely used labels of cognitive style and learning style. One of the major purposes of this chapter is to review the three research areas of cognitive style, learning style and instructional/activity preferences in order to highlight the ways in which individuals differ in their approaches to learning.

## 3.2 Cognitive style

Even though cognitive style and learning style have been used interchangeably, a distinction is to be made between them. Cognitive style deals exclusively with one or two elements relative to a cognitive characteristic or personality trait on a 'bipolar' dimension like the field-dependence-independence continuum. Cognitive style is a relatively stable way in which individuals perceive or process information. In contrast, learning style encompasses a variety of elements pertaining to cognitive, affective, physiological, and even cultural domains. Learning style elements are believed to be less stable and more subject to change than the cognitive style dimensions. Researchers (Riding and Cheema, 1991; Harnett, 1985) have reviewed a large number of labels referred to as cognitive styles, the most prominent of which will be examined below.

### *Field-Dependence-Independence*

This is an analytic style, based on left brain hemisphere type of thought processing. It has been operationalized by the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) developed by



Witkin *et al.* (1971). This test requires subjects to identify a simple geometric figure within a more complex design. It has been found that individuals usually have a tendency to favour one side or the other of the field dependence/independence continuum, even though some people appear to be equally comfortable with both. Field independents are thought to focus more on the details of a field or a situation than on the general picture. In other words, they are more able to distinguish parts from a whole, to perceive a particular item or a factor independently, in a field of distracting items. In more concrete terms, if presented with a picture of a forest scene with trees and flowers, including camouflaged monkeys, they manage to spot 'the hidden monkeys in the jungle' quickly and efficiently. Brown (1991) claimed that "in learning a foreign language [field independent learners] tend to focus on the details of language: noun and verb endings, nuances of meanings of words, rules of how language works, and so forth" (p.64). They can also be good at rule-oriented learning activities, such as finding patterns, organizing data, and making generalisations. They tend to be self-reliant and respond better to more independent and more individualised approaches to learning. At the social level, they prefer to work alone, and deal with situations requiring impersonal analysis. Field-dependent individuals, in contrast, tend to be oriented towards a right-hemisphere, holistic, Gestalt approach to information processing and learning. When faced with a particular field or situation, they tend to see the whole picture, the larger view, or the general configuration of a problem or event, and appear to be less sensitive to details, such as 'distinguishing trees from the forest'. They display less ability to impose structure on verbal or other material, are less analytic and more successful at inductive learning. They seem to be socially-oriented, and equipped with interpersonal skills; as a result they prefer to work in groups and acquire languages through interaction. They also tend to require more extrinsic reinforcement and more structured work by the teacher.

The field dependence-independence measure has been widely used by SLA researchers. It has been hypothesized that field-independents will do better in classroom learning because they will be better able to analyse formal grammatical rules. However, it has to be admitted that SLA research which has used GEFT has been far from conclusive (Ellis, 1985, 1991).

### ***Impulsivity-Reflectivity***

This construct describes the disposition to reflect on the solution to a problem, taking into account the speed with which decisions are made. It has been operationalized in terms of response time and errors on a visual recall task. An impulsive learner appears to be fast and inaccurate, shows quick and uncritical acceptance, and is error prone in productive and receptive skills. Conversely, the reflective learner seems to be slow and accurate. Jamieson (1992) highlights the possibility for individuals to be slow-inaccurate (inefficient) and fast-accurate (efficient). She claims that it is this last category, the fast-accurate, that seems to depict the 'good guesser'. The implication is that the 'good guesser' or at least the 'accurate guesser' will be a more successful L2 learner especially in developing comprehension skills.

### ***Introversion-Extroversion***

Introversion and extroversion as personality characteristics have already been described in Chapter Two. Here they are conceived as a style dimension that influences class management and grouping. An extrovert learner gains energy and focus from events and people, and enjoys breadth of interest and many friends. In class she/he likes group work, role-plays, and interactive activities. Introverted learners are stimulated by their own inner world of ideas and feelings, have deep interests and fewer friends. In class, they prefer to work alone. This suggests for example, that foreign language learners will respond differently to classroom activities oriented towards group work and communication, depending on whether they tend to be extrovert or introvert.

### ***Holists-Serialists***

Another dimension of cognitive style is that labelled by Pask (1972) as the 'holist-serialist'. In a free learning situation, he found that the serialists tend to search for specific data and use a step by step approach to confirm or disconfirm their hypothesis. Holists, on the other hand, prefer to scan large amounts of data, searching for patterns and relationships. Although in the end, both groups of learners show similar understanding, their routes to attaining that understanding are different. This suggests that foreign language learners, for instance, will use different approaches or procedures in understanding texts. So the teacher is not advised to use questioning strategies that

impose a particular pattern on students' natural routes to understanding.

The cognitive style dimensions reviewed above have all been identified by means of external reactions or self-reports of the subjects. Another cognitively-based line of research draws on research findings which attempt to uncover brain biochemical differences between, for example, males and females.

While recognizing that many of the differences traditionally believed to exist between men and women are based on stereotypes, Restak (1979) believed that such differences are not exclusively socially determined. There seems to be evidence for sex differences in brain functioning, but such differences are not adequately accommodated in classrooms. He commented:

*the male brain learns by manipulating its environment, yet the typical student is forced to sit still for long hours in the classroom. The male brain is primarily visual, while traditional classroom instruction demands attentive listening (p. 79).*

Furthermore Restak observes that "at present, schooling and testing discriminate against boys and girls in different ways, ignoring differences that have been observed by parents and educators for years" (p.75). It is suggested that classroom practices should not be geared primarily towards one sex or the other. Boys and girls should be taught according to their sex-related preferences. It is a widely observed phenomenon that the atmosphere, and the dynamics of the classroom vary according to the gender of students, and the teacher has often to adapt his/her practices according to the circumstances.

The cognitive styles reviewed above are but a small sample of the plethora of the bipolar cognitive dimensions that have been developed. Riding (1991) proposes that all cognitive style dimensions could be collapsed into two families labelled the Wholist-Analyst and Verbalizer-Imager dimensions. This suggests that a number of cognitive style labels are but different labels or conceptions of the same dimension. For example, analytic, convergent, or field-independent all refer to the same notion. The same applies to the wholist, divergent, and field-dependent dimensions. On the other hand, the partitioning of thinking into two types seems to be over-simplistic. Individuals do not necessarily fall into one extreme or the other, and do not appear to be exclusively one or

the other. Finally it is to be noted that more research needs to be done in this field in order to develop more reliable and more replicable measuring instruments.

By and large, cognitive styles remain centred on mental phenomena and are not directly related to education. Learning styles, on the other hand, seek to encompass the mental, the physical and the affective domains, in order to account for individual differences in learning. As we shall see in the next section, different learning style models have been developed depending on the educational contexts and objectives of the researchers.

### 3.3 Learning styles

Learning style investigators have often relied on identifying individuals' preferences as a means for determining their learning styles. However such preferences are not thought to be random, surface phenomena with no essential coherence. Rather they are supposed to form aggregate wholes which can be identified as distinct learning styles. To this effect, Willing (1988) commented that:

*Learning style is not, after all, simply an attitude to a particular modality. It is seen, rather, as an entire syndrome, a complex set of attitudes and approaches which are interpreted as being based upon an underlying cognitive/psychological orientation of the person (p.152).*

To give a comprehensive overview of learning style research, a number of different models relating to diverse educational settings will be explored in this section.

#### ***Myers-Briggs Dimensions***

The Myers-Briggs dimensions represent a psychological-type learning style model, which uses an instrument known as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (Myers and McCaulley, 1985), derived from Jung's psychological theory. The MBTI instrument measures learning Style along four scales or dimensions having to do with different personality types: extraversion/introversion, sensing/intuition, thinking/feeling, and judging/perceiving. As will be described below, these dimensions cover cognitive,

affective, and social elements of learning style.

*Extraversion/introversion.* This scale concerns how people are energized and oriented. Extraverts are friendly and sociable; they are energized through interaction with others, and are focused on the external world of people and events. An *introvert* is self-sufficient and reserved, energized by solitary activities, and is oriented primarily towards internal concepts and ideas.

*Sensing/intuition.* This scale concerns how people perceive the world and take in data. Relying on data gathered through the five senses, the *sensing* person sees the world in a practical and factual way. *Intuitives* are imaginative, look for the big picture and are aware of abstract relationships, and future possibilities.

*Thinking/feeling.* This scale concerns how people draw conclusions or make decisions. Logical, analytical *thinkers* make decisions on the basis of analysis and objectivity. Interpersonally-oriented, empathic *feelers* make decisions on the basis of personal or social values, and feelings.

*Judgers/perceivers.* This scale describes the process which the individual uses to deal with the outside world. A *judger* looks for closure, structure, organisation, and control. A *perceiver* values spontaneity, flexibility, and autonomy, and wants to adapt and stay open as long as possible.

Each person is a combination of these four dimensions with a preference for one of the two poles of each dimension. Individuals usually have a less preferred pole of a given dimension, as well as a preferred side with which they are naturally more comfortable (Myers and McCaulley, 1985).

Each of the four bipolar scales described above is independent of the other three, so that sixteen possible combinations of preferences, called styles result. A style is designed by an acronym made up of the initial letters of the preferred poles of the scales involved (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990). For example, the acronym ISTJ stands for a psychological type or style characterized by an orientation towards introversion, sensing, thinking and judging.

Ehrman & Oxford (1990) used the MBTI instrument with a group of adult FL learners in the US in order to investigate their psychological type or style in terms of the eight psychological dimensions described earlier. A major goal of their investigation was to establish a link between each of the eight psychological type preferences and a number

of FL learning strategies used by the learners. In other words, the aim was to find out how style influences strategy choice.

Strategies were defined by Ehrman and Oxford as "the often conscious steps or behaviours used by the language learners to enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of new information" (p. 312). The language learning strategies system used by Ehrman and Oxford (1990) was based on Oxford's (1985) taxonomy. The system includes: *memory strategies* for entering information into memory and retrieving it; *cognitive strategies* for manipulating the language for reception and production of meaning; *compensation strategies* for overcoming limitations in existing knowledge such as guessing intelligently, using gestures and coining words; *metacognitive strategies* for organising, planning learning, and self-monitoring; *affective strategies* for managing emotions and attitudes; and *social strategies* for learning, cooperating, and empathizing with others.

The study conducted by Ehrman & Oxford (1990), mentioned above, revealed that psychological type (established by self-report) proved to be a powerful variable in determining strategy choice by FL learners. As illustrated below, each group of learners categorized by psychological type used a typical set of strategies.

*Extraverts* clearly preferred social strategies, and found solitary and concentrated study difficult. By contrast, *introverts* reported learning best alone, and preferred extensive use of metacognitive strategies, with general rejection of affective and social strategies. *Sensing learners* showed the strongest appreciation of concrete, multisensory strategies. Their liabilities appeared in rigidity of approach related to their linear step by step processing; in their relatively low tolerance of ambiguity, their dislike of guessing, and other compensation strategies. *Intuitives*, by contrast, relied heavily on guessing from contexts, conceptualizing and researching for the big picture. *Thinkers*, because of their enjoyment of analysis exhibited the strongest preference for cognitive strategies, and rejected social strategies. Unlike thinkers, feelers expressed concern for social, interpersonal orientations similar to those of the extraverts. *Judgers*, given their need for control and closure, indicated clear preferences for metacognitive strategies such as planning and organising. They liked social strategies just for instrumental purposes rather than for affiliative reasons. Uncomfortable with ambiguity, they strongly rejected compensation strategies like guessing and improvising. By contrast, *perceivers* were

open to the ambiguities of the language learning process and used a variety of compensation strategies, such as guessing or improvising. Unlike Judgers, they generally avoided planning and organising their learning, because they had faith in their ability to adapt to the learning process without much structuring on their part. They also indicated a spontaneous preference for affective strategies and cited an ability to learn without memorisation.

These results indicate that different personality types have their preferred or habitual patterns of mental functioning and dealing with new information specific to learning a foreign language. If we assume that optimizing outcomes involves fitting the instruction treatment to the individual's learning style, then language training programmes should, to some extent, accommodate learners' individual preferences and orientations. For example, an orderly and predictable classroom, with clearly delineated and sequenced goals, and tasks that meet the needs of *judgers* would be unsuitable for perceivers, who prefer a flexible, multiple study option programs, and a classroom in which there is opportunity for guessing and playing around with the language.

However, at this point, two important findings from Ehrman and Oxford's (1990) study are worth mentioning. First, data from the study revealed that introverts, intuitives, feelers and perceivers outperformed the other personality types. This learning advantage was accounted for by the authors in terms of the learning strategies typically used by the more successful learners, the implication being that there seem to be strategies that are more conducive to success than others. The second finding highlighted by Ehrman and Oxford (1990) was that the strongest learners contrasted with the weakest learners of the same learning style largely because they found it easier to adopt strategies characteristic of other styles, suggesting perhaps that flexible learners who access their less preferred processes and with them "cross-type strategies" are at an advantage in learning a FL. A number of interesting conclusions can be drawn from such findings.

Psychological type or style appears to have a strong influence on the way learners use strategy and how they progress in their language program. This leads to optimism about the potential for learning strategy training based on learning style manifested by psychological type. In the first place, training programmes could match the learning preferences of strong learners and at the same time help learners stretch themselves beyond the strategies that are normally related to their own style.

### ***Dunn et al's (1977) Model***

Dunn *et al.* (1977) were involved in developing innovative instructional strategies aimed at facilitating learning for students who had not responded well to traditional teaching. From their experience in individualized instruction, "what became apparent was that selected methods appeared to be extremely effective with some youngsters but failed to produce anything other than minor gains with others" (p.39). The variety of responses to different methods caused the researchers to examine the literature concerned with how youngsters and adults learn. This revealed eighteen categories which when classified suggested that learners are affected by five elements of learning style, a brief review of which will follow.

#### ***(a) The environmental elements of learning style***

Such elements include sound, light, temperature and design to which learners respond differently. It is suggested, for example, that some learners require absolute silence when they are concentrating, while others can block out sound. Still others actually require sound when trying to learn; they invariably turn on music whenever they are attempting to absorb information they wish to retain.

#### ***(b) The emotional dimension***

*Motivation as a function of emotion.* It is acknowledged that teachers should not teach motivated and unmotivated students in the same way. Yet they do exactly that, with predictable consequences for erupting discipline problems, and student and teacher dissatisfaction. Poorly motivated students need to be given opportunities for enhancing their self-image.

*Persistence as a function of emotion.* While some students will work at a task until it has been completed, others cannot continue their work for any length of time when faced with a difficulty. This is an example where self-pacing should be considered.

*Responsibility as a function of emotion.* Whereas some students complete a given task to the best of their ability, others cannot sustain their interest or effort when a task is challenging for them.



*Structure as a function of emotion.* Some students find it difficult to achieve without imposed structure. Others find learning under strict guidelines frustrating and unstimulating, and thrive when offered opportunities to work independently.

(c) *The sociological elements of learning style*

Whereas some work and learn best alone, others achieve best when among peers; for these, small group techniques seem to facilitate learning.

(d) *The physical elements of learning style*

Young learners are assumed to differ in their perceptual strengths, their needs for food intake, mobility and preferred time of the day for working.

(e) *The cognitive element of learning style*

This dimension represents the psychological component of learning style.

Dunn et al's model appears to be one of the most comprehensive models of learning style.

### ***ELSIE***

Reinert (1977) conducted a study in which he developed a measure of learning style called the Edmonds Learning Style Identification Exercise, or ELSIE for short. It is based on the hypothesis that each individual is programmed to acquire and assimilate new information most effectively in certain ways and much less effectively in others. Reinert focused on four possible learning modalities as presented below.

#### **1. Visual Modality**

This style refers to individuals who learn best by visualising things in their minds. In processing information, they need to convert whatever they have heard into a visual form. In the classroom, they prefer to rely on visual stimuli, such as filmstrips, realia, and

diagrammatic representations.

## 2. Written Word-Oriented Modality

Those who come under this category learn best by seeing everything spelt out in a printed form. They need to convert information into a written form in order to function. In learning a language, they need to visualise in their minds the spelling of each word as they have heard it. Such individuals try to develop a photographic memory of what they are exposed to in the form of print.

## 3. Auditory Modality

Auditory-oriented learners rely on listening to learn and remember. They tend to convert material into sounds, such as sounding out words in their heads while reading. In class, they learn faster by listening to tapes.

## 4. Activity-based Modality

Some learners may need to get involved in some kind of activity to learn more efficiently. In learning situations, they are often seen writing, talking, tapping their feet or their fingers and constantly moving around. In class, they need to write out exercises, repeat aloud, and very often despite their teachers' instructions, they seem determined to take massive amounts of notes in order to succeed. Some of these activities may seem wasteful of time, but they prove to help them remember better.

In an attempt to help teachers identify their students' learning style/modality, Reinert developed a technique which consisted of a simple exercise to be administered to learners. The purpose of the exercise is to note the pattern by which individuals internalise 50 common lexical items of their mother tongue. The participants have to listen to each word as it is read to them, and at the same time to note, in a response sheet, their individual reaction to each word. They have to indicate whether they first of all:

- have a visual image of a thing or action
- have a visual image of the written form of the word
- derive meaning from the sound alone
- have some physical/kinesthetic response.

The participants then tally the total number of responses for each of the learning categories and plot these on a scale to produce a graphic learning style profile.

Reinert observed that rarely would an individual have just one strong mode with the other three being very weak; most frequently, individuals would show moderate strength in two or three modes and corresponding weaknesses in the others. He added that the guiding principle, in every case would be to utilize strengths to compensate for weaknesses. For example, the person who is strong both in listening and activity should listen to tapes but also should repeat them aloud. This combined effort is thought to maximise learning and compensate for weaknesses in other modalities.

Reinert proposed that learners should be made aware of their strengths and weaknesses so as to identify their preferred way of learning. But he also argued that "the fact that a particular mode is especially difficult for an individual is no excuse for doing no preparation in that area; on the contrary, it probably means that the student will need to work in that area all the harder" (p.24). For instance, if a student is weak at listening, he/she may need to listen to a tape, for example, three or four times more than another student who is strong in listening.

ELSIE appears to be a valuable tool for teachers and students alike. First, it allows teachers to make informed choices as to which tasks to assign to individual students. Second, it enables students to manage their time and energy in a more efficient way, by capitalising on their strengths to compensate for their weaknesses, and also by working harder at their weaknesses if it proves necessary.

### ***Reid's (1987) Model***

Reid (1987) investigated the learning style preferences of ESL students in the USA, in order to provide insights for the multi-ethnic ESL classroom. He used a self-report questionnaire which consisted of randomly arranged sets of five statements on each of the six learning style dimensions to be measured: visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, group and individual learning. Preference mean scores for each set of variables were classified into three ranges: major, minor, and negative learning styles. Analysis of variance and multiple comparison of means tests were run on the preference means. The results were statistically analysed to identify the relationship of learning preferences to variables such as language background, field of study, sex.

Generally speaking, the study showed that ESL students displayed a strong preference for kinesthetic and tactile learning styles, and a negative preference for group learning. However, different patterns of preferences emerged according to which 'background' variable was considered. For example, the patterns of variation among students of different language backgrounds revealed that Arabic, Chinese, and Korean speakers had multiple major learning style preferences, namely visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile. Japanese speakers did not as a group identify a single major learning style, but Spanish, Malay, and Thai speakers were definite in their preferences: they chose kinesthetic and tactile as their major learning style. However, concerning group learning, none of the respondents chose group work as a major learning preference, except for Malaysian students whose highest preference mean was for group learning.

Given that different ethnic groups of ESL learners exhibit different patterns of learning preferences, it is probable that the culture and previous educational experience are responsible for at least some of the students' learning style preferences.

The results in this study suggest that some re-examination of curricula and teaching methods may be in order. Group learning, which was considered a 'negative' style by students, needs to be used with caution. Likewise, given that the majority of the respondents preferred kinesthetic and tactile learning styles, the traditional type of classroom instruction geared towards the auditory learner is not justifiable.

Reid suggested that one major goal of education could be to help students identify and utilize their preferred learning modalities. Another could be to allow them to be exposed to unfamiliar teaching and learning styles. Reid's conclusion was that teachers should attempt to enlarge students' repertoire of learning modalities by having them experience success with new activities, without imposing new learning habits on them.

### ***Ellis' (1993) approach to learning style***

Ellis (1993) investigated the learning styles of two nineteen-year old learners of L2 German in London, Simon and Monique. These students had received a teacher-centred, form-focused type of instructional practice with hardly any opportunity for meaningful communication. The purpose of the study was to see in what way Simon's and Monique's

learning styles varied, and how their learning styles affected the way they responded to the instruction they received, and the rate and level of their L2 achievement.

Ellis used two dimensions to identify the learners' learning styles, the cognitive and the affective dimensions. The cognitive dimension measured the extent to which learners were *studial* or *experiential*. A studial learning style was characterized by a concern with accuracy, correction of mistakes and grammatical explanation. What characterized experiential learning was a concern about fluency, and engaging in real communication. The affective domain concerns the extent to which the learner is positively or negatively oriented towards the task of learning the L2.

The results of the study showed that the two learners did manifest identifiable styles of learning. Simon appeared to be a balanced flexible learner in that he favoured both a studial and an experiential approach to L2 learning. Being field-independent, he was good at grammar analysis and vocabulary memorization, but at the same time he enjoyed participating in class, and liked to engage in real communication. Monique was field-dependent, and displayed higher oral abilities, which suggests that she was better equipped to learn experientially through communication. However, she had to adopt a studial style in order to meet the requirements of the course. This adaptation was accompanied by stress and tension as was indicated in her diary.

As regards their achievement, Simon did well in communicative as well as grammar tasks. Monique had high scores in grammar tests but did poorly in oral proficiency tests.

These results show that Simon was a more successful and effective learner than Monique because (1) he was a more flexible learner; (2) his natural studial orientation was accommodated by the instructional methods. This evidence strongly suggests that optimal learning takes place where there is a match between instructional and learning styles. Some learners, if highly motivated like Monique, may adapt, but this may create anxiety and tension as was evident in Monique. Such responses may inhibit learning.

### ***Willing's (1988) Model***

Willing's study stemmed from a need to explore ways and means of identifying and accommodating different learning styles in ELT programs for adult immigrant students in Australia. It was hypothesised that the learning differences between these students were

not negligible variations; rather they reflected some hidden regularities in their preferences. So the principle aim of the study was to capture the profile of students' learning style, and to establish comparative data in learners of different age groups, different ethnic groups and different educational levels.

It was assumed that learners would be able to express their preferences in the following areas:

- Classroom activities
- Ways of being grouped
- Sensory modality preferences
- Aspects of language which need emphasis
- Different modes of learning independently outside class

Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data relating to each area listed above. A thirty-item, self-report, Likert-type questionnaire was developed and administered to a sample of 517 learners from various ethnic backgrounds. Responses to the questions represented primarily a simple reaction of "likes and dislikes". An average level of preference for each question was calculated.

The survey results seemed to establish an overall hierarchy of preference for the various learning modalities. Pronunciation was quite uniformly rated very highly, to such an extent that it had the highest average of all the items on the survey. What this seemed to be indicating was that learners were expressing a strong concern for accuracy; this contrasts with the assumption of the communicative approach which, at times, seems to downplay the importance of accuracy. The learners' high rating of error correction constitutes in itself a reason for reconsidering the issue. Similarly, teacher explanation was highly preferred by virtually all learner groups. Up to seventy per cent of students gave "teacher explains everything" the maximum rating. While neither grammar nor vocabulary were of the highest concern to the majority of learners, conversation in class, and interaction with Australians were rated very highly. A series of interviews supported these findings, namely that a method which encouraged conversational practice and discussion was the single most highly valued learning modality. On the other hand, what might be called the artificial side of the communicative approach appeared to be relatively unpopular. Using cassettes, films, games, pictures all received quite low

ratings. A learning mode genuinely unpopular with learners was studying alone. This may indicate that autonomous study needs to be re-thought.

Identifying subject-specific learning modality preferences formed the first phase of Willing's study. The second phase attempted to capture the learning style profile of the learners. While acknowledging that it was possible to consider a preference for a particular modality as constituting in itself a learning style, Willing suggested that learning style would involve a much more coherent set of preferences which formed an entire syndrome.

Willing (1988) posited that a fundamental hypothesis underlay the choice of option types within each general area of preferences that were included in the questionnaire. According to him, this hypothesis was based on the interaction between two dimensions: a cognitive dimension and a personality dimension. The first of the two dimensions involved a continuum running from a concrete to an analytic learning style. The other dimension appeared to correspond to a personality factor which could be labelled 'active' versus 'passive'. Willing (1988) postulated that "given two scales, each consisting of two poles, the net result is four general types of behaviour" (p. 68). The fundamental hypothesis was that the responses of a particular learner to the questions would show a coherent pattern of higher preference for either concrete, or analytic, or any other dimension.

Factor analysing the subjects' responses to the questionnaire items, four different learning orientations, or syndromes, or styles were uncovered among the survey population which Willing characterised as: concrete, analytical, communicative, and authority-oriented.

Concrete learners, who like to learn by games, cassettes, pictures and films accounted for about ten per cent of the student population. Analytic learners who preferred to study grammar, learn by reading and show concern for accuracy accounted also for ten per cent. Communicative learners whose preferences were for communicating with native speakers and watching TV constituted approximately forty per cent of the total population. The authority-oriented group who liked the teacher to explain everything, and liked to write everything in their notebooks accounted for a further thirty per cent. The remaining ten per cent were 'mixed'.

The crucial findings of this study suggested that the group of ESL students investigated tended to learn better in naturalistic settings where English was used for communicative purposes. In class they preferred to learn in a structured way under the teacher's guidance. On the other hand they did not seem to be keen on either using their analytic powers or on relying on gadgets or artifacts.

The focus so far has been on how learning style investigators have sought to account for individual learning preferences by categorizing learners into neat packages and assigning them to a particular category or style. Another area of research that is of particular interest to teachers concerns learners' instructional preferences. The purpose of the next section is to examine research studies which investigated learner activity preferences with the aim of helping instructors match their teaching methods to their students' needs and preferences.

### **3.4 Learning activity preference**

Learning activity preferences is an educational issue whose scope reaches beyond mainstream school education or ESL classrooms. It finds its application in various other educational settings, an example of which is provided below.

#### ***Rezler et al.'s (1981) LPI***

Rezler and Rezmovic (1981) developed the learning preference inventory (LPI) of health professions' students in an attempt to identify which instructional devices were more likely to improve their motivation for learning. It was recognized that students learn in different ways. Some like to be given specific assignments, others choose to define a problem for themselves and search for solutions. Because of individual differences in learning preferences, one method of instruction can please some students but alienate others. The teacher who wants to capture the interest of many different students need to match these preferences with suitable learning conditions.

The researchers in this study took two points into consideration in the final selection of scale to be included in the LPI: (1) The scale should be amenable to presentation in a straightforward manner with simple objective test items. (2) Since studies in Educational Psychology support the assumption that learning preferences



depend on both cognition and affect, it was desirable that the scales of the inventory should reflect both cognition and affect. As finally developed, the LPI includes six overlapping scales:

1. *Abstract*: Preference for learning theories, concepts and generating hypotheses.
2. *Concrete*: Preference for learning tangible, practical, tasks and skills.
3. *Individual*: Preference for learning/working alone with emphasis on self reliance and solitary tasks like reading.
4. *Interpersonal*: Preference for learning/working with others.
5. *Student-structured*: Preference for learning via student-organised tasks with emphasis on autonomy and self-direction.
6. *Teacher-Structured*: Preference for learning in a well-organised teacher-directed class assignments and goals closely defined.

The instrument was developed by giving the respondents a description of the six scales and asking them to rank them in order of learning preference. Six scale scores were obtained, each score being merely the sum of ranks assigned to each item. Content validity of the instrument was supported by factor analysis, and construct validity was demonstrated by showing that scores on the LPI correlated with scores on another instrument in a study with allied health and pharmacy students.

The LPI is a potentially useful tool whereby health profession educators could identify the learning preferences of their students. Assessment of learning preferences would help to match students with learning conditions that they find rewarding. The rest of this section will be devoted to activity preferences in ELT contexts.

### ***ELT Activity Preference***

In an attempt to look for a match/mismatch between students' and instructors' preferences, a number of researchers addressed the question of what learners and teachers think are legitimate learning activities in the classroom.

Eltis and Low (1985) conducted a survey among ESL teachers in Australia in an attempt to investigate the type of learning activities, thought to be useful to students. They asked 445 teachers about the usefulness of selected learning activities, including 1) communicative activities such as group work and role-play and 2) traditional activities

such as repetition and reading aloud. It was found that the teachers who were investigated showed a definite preference for communicatively-oriented activities.

Activities which were regarded as particularly useful were pair/group work, role-play, and language games.

Alcorso and Kalantzis (1985) studied the perceptions of a group of ESL students regarding a number of activities similar to those used in the study by Eltis and Low (1985). Results showed that students seemed to favour traditional activities. Data from the Eltis and Low (1985) and Alcorso and Kalantzis (1985) studies indicated that while the teachers surveyed appeared to favour communicative-type activities, learners seemed to prefer more traditional learning activities, the one exception being class discussion, which was given a high rating by students and teachers alike. In follow-up interviews conducted with learners who took part in the survey, Alcorso and Kalantzis (1985) reported that:

*There seemed to be a common view about the importance of grammar across respondents with different levels of English and from diverse educational backgrounds... In explaining these preferences, the learners said they saw grammar-specific exercises as the most basic and essential part of learning a language (p. 90).*

Conversation was another favoured activity among students. However, curiously enough, communicative activities rated highly by teachers in the previous study were not of particular interest to the students, who considered them as a waste of time. Alcorso and Kalantzis reported that these types of activities reflected a divergence of opinion among students, which seemed to relate to students' educational background and socio-economic position.

Willing (1985), as described above, investigated the learning preferences of 517 ESL learners in Australia. The most highly rated activities were: pronunciation practice, explanation to the class, conversation practice, error correction and vocabulary development. Activities receiving low ratings included: the use of cassettes, (students') self-discovery of errors, learning through pictures, video, pair work and language games.

The studies reviewed above provided interesting indications of teachers' and learners' perceived preferences, but may not be directly comparable. In order to provide data on learner and teacher perceptions which could be directly comparable, Nunan

(1988) surveyed sixty ESL teachers in Australia using a questionnaire including ten of the most and least popular student learning activities from the Willing study above. The teachers were asked to rate the activities on a four-point scale according to their degree of importance, and their response patterns were compared to Willing's study. It was found that only in one instance was there a match between the ratings of students and teachers, that is, in the importance accorded to conversation practice. All other activities were mismatched, in particular pronunciation practice, error correction, the use of cassettes, students' self discovery of errors.

Brindley (1984), in a series of interviews with teachers and learners, uncovered what seemed to be two mutually incompatible sets of beliefs about the nature of language and language learning, by teachers and learners, which appear to consistent with the studies reported above. He suggested that many learners had fixed, predetermined ideas about what it is to be a learner, and what it is to learn a language. For them learning a language consisted of 1) acquiring a body of knowledge to be transmitted by the teacher by explanation and error correction; 2) learning the structural rules of the language and the vocabulary, through such activities as memorisation, reading, and writing. The teachers' views seemed rather different; learning consisted of acquiring organising principles, and the teacher was conceived of as a resource person who provided the language input for the learner to work on. His/her role was to assist learners to become active and self-directing. This implies that the teacher should not ignore the wishes of the learners and adopt a 'doctor knows best' attitude by insisting, for example, on communicative activities which the learner may not feel are valid. In so doing, the teacher would be abandoning any hope of being learner-centred.

It seems that in all educational contexts, tailoring instructional methods to learners' styles and preferences is a pre-requisite condition for maximising learners' growth and success.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

As has already been mentioned, language learning methodology and curricula have become learner-centred, in the sense that they are more concerned with learners' needs, learning styles and preferences for learning. The trend nowadays is for individualized

learning which claims that learners learn best when the teaching material and methods match their learning styles and preferences (Nunan, 1988).

Researchers and educators agree that language teaching methodology must be informed by the attitudes and preferences of the learners, but they sometimes disagree as to how much credit should be given to learners' preferences. Some see them as deep-seated, cognitively-based phenomena; others regard them as superficial, transient, whimsical reactions to the teaching/learning act. "Preference" is currently viewed as the expression of a person's affinity with a particular object or experience. It may happen that, under some circumstances, individuals have no choice, or that they are ignorant of possible alternatives for their preferences. But very often, people's preferences would appear to be soundly motivated. To take a simple example of how individuals prefer to function in space, (i.e. where to sit and next to whom), it seems that the reasons for their sitting preferences may be motivated by unsuspected and diverse reasons, not the least of which are reactions to the physical environment and expression of personality. Similarly, students' styles or preferences may be determined by a variety of personality or cultural factors. For example, classroom learners exhibit different behaviour and different preferences according to whether they are shy or outgoing, dependent or independent, energetic or nonchalant, more analytic or more creative, highly or poorly persistent. In the same way, different individuals favour different ways of processing information, absorbing input or responding to the learning environment.

Miller (1991) claimed that "Far from being simple habits that can be changed at will, some believe learning styles to be complex adjustments to life that are learned early in life and remain held in place, as it were, by demands of psychodynamics" (p.231). Cognitive styles are also depicted as a form of psychological defence against anxiety generated by a threat to the ego. The 'analytic' style, for example, is conceived of as "a way of seeking certainty through the pursuit of detail... thereby avoiding the uncertainty and attendant anxiety generated by the larger reality" (Miller, 1991, p.234). The notion of style as a self defence mechanism was supported by research on personality disorders (Miller, 1991). For example, Miller pointed out that:

*the 'dependent' disorder couples ingenious docility with excessive needs for affection and nurturance. Refuge from the difficulties presented by the material world is sought within a dependent*

*relationship (p. 234).*

It appears that the more stylistically 'specialized' an individual, the more will it be difficult to encourage change or versatility, because specialization serves as a defence mechanism in protecting the individual from anxiety. This implies that in some cases, at least, attempts to modify an individual's style or preferences could generate varying degrees of distress or hostility.

Yet, other researchers or educators maintain that learners can adapt and acquire new preferences if they are given opportunities to experience success with new ways of learning. This again will depend on the personality of the learner, as well as on the personality and teaching style of the instructor. Students, for example, are more likely to accept change from a teacher whose style and personality they like or identify with. Still, other investigators, like Reid (1987), have suggested that teachers should aim at complementing their students' preferred styles by exposing them to, and encouraging them to use, other styles. Ehrman and Oxford (1990) argued that weak learners can benefit from stretching themselves beyond the strategies that normally characterise their own style, and can be trained to use more effective strategies associated with their less preferred style, with some amount of discomfort, though. By and large, style versatility is a complex issue, simply because it is both a matter of nature and nurture.

Most research findings in learning style and preferences claim that a mismatch between learning styles and teaching styles lead to clashes or style wars which frequently affect students' learning potential and their attitudes towards the subject matter and learning in general. The crucial implication is that both teachers and learners should be aware that there are different ways of learning which prove to be differently successful for different learners.

## Chapter Four

### *Approaches to L2 Learning Motivation*

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*"It is clear enough that free curiosity has a more positive effect on learning than necessity and fear" (St. Augustine's confessions, in London, 1975 p. 67).*

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Motivation is generally thought to be the single most important thing that learners bring into the classroom. In Corder's (1967) words: "given motivation, it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to the language data" (p. 164). As McDonough (1981) observed: "Most language teachers will agree that the motivation of the students is one of the most important factors influencing their success or failure in learning the language" (p. 142). At the same time, motivation is considered to be the most obscure and difficult of all theoretical issues in general and educational psychology. It is not a unidimensional, unitary, clear-cut concept that is applicable to all language learning contexts. In order to do justice to the crucial role played by motivation, and to illuminate our understanding of this concept, it is essential to examine learner motivation from two fundamental and contrasting perspectives: the social psychological approach (which is mainly concerned with SLA motivation), and the educational psychological approach (which is typically oriented towards general classroom learning).

#### **4.2 The social psychological approach to motivation**

The social psychological approach to motivation is associated with the work of researchers like Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) who made extensive studies of the attitudes and motivation of L2 French learners in Canada. They assumed that foreign language learning motivation is socially grounded and goal-oriented. Their primary

concern was to identify learners' social goals or reasons for learning the L2. Gardner and Lambert categorized their subjects' goals into two classes of reasons, or orientations:

1. *An integrative orientation* involves an interest in learning an L2 because of "a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other language group" (Lambert 1974, p.98).
2. *An instrumental orientation* refers to the learners' motive or interest in learning the L2 for utilitarian, pragmatic goals such as getting a job or passing an examination.

For many years, Gardner and his colleagues championed integrative motivation as preferable to instrumental motivation. Evidence in support of this hypothesis was provided by the Montreal study of learners of French. Graham (1984) suggested that Gardner's integrative construct blurred the distinction between the desire to communicate comfortably with the second speech community and the desire to become a fully-fledged member of that community. Hence the term *assimilative* orientation was proposed to account for the latter.

McDonough (1981) argued that a distinction needs to be made between "two aspects of integrative motivation which should be kept separate" (p. 152):

1. A general desire for wider social contact among speakers of the language. This affiliative tendency represents the weaker claim of integrative orientation.
2. A desire to acquire the psychological characteristics of the other group, or take on a persona similar to that attributed to the other group. This represents a much stronger claim.

McDonough (1981) pointed out that "in several of Gardner and Lambert's studies that show a positive correlation between integrative orientation and achievement it is not clear whether the students were motivated by the affiliative tendency or the belief that they could become members of the other community" (p. 152). McDonough also claimed that "it is rather unlikely that the second, stronger sense of the integrative motive is effective for many learners" (p. 152). In measuring students' integrative orientation, researchers need to make a difference between assimilative orientation and a desire to have contacts with native speakers. Clearly, other studies in different parts of the world proved to be less predictive of the primacy of the integrative motive. Studies in the Philippines (Gardner and Lambert, 1972) and in India (Lukmani, 1972) showed that instrumental motivation was more predictive of success than integrative motivation. Lukmani, in particular, demonstrated that among Marathi speaking Indian students

learning English in India, those with higher instrumental motivation scored higher in tests of English proficiency. Similarly, Kachru (1972) noted that in third world countries, where English has become an international language, it can be acquired very successfully for instrumental reasons.

At this point, it is to be noted that Gardner's highly influential constructs of integrative and instrumental motivation do not say much about motivation per se; nor do they reflect Gardner's recent theories of L2 learning motivation. By 1985, Gardner argued that motivation has distinct characteristics and should not be equated with orientation. He now defined motivation as "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language" (p.10). This definition indicates that motivation involves three elements, the desire to attain a goal, the effort deployed in striving for that goal, and positive attitudes towards the learning activity.

The desire to achieve the goal refers to whether the learners genuinely want to learn the TL, and the extent to which they want to do so. Language learners may in fact vary in their desire to learn a language. While, for instance, certain learners may have a genuine desire to learn a new language, others may just have to learn it. The question to be asked here is: if a learner has no desire to learn a language, can he/she be said to be motivated? Hence, desire or drive to learn a language remains a crucial factor in characterising motivation.

The effort the individual expends, or is willing to expend, in order to learn an L2 is assumed to be the most valid assessment of motivation by Gardner (1985) who suggested that: "many of us want to be millionaires, but if this desire is not associated with a concomitant effort to achieve the goal we are not really motivated to become millionaires" (p. 11). However, one might argue that it may be hard to prove whether the absence of effort necessarily indicates a lack of drive or motivation. The ability to exert effort may be independent of the desire to learn and, rather, be under the influence of the individual's physical, cognitive, or personality factors. As will be seen later in this chapter, individuals can and do differ in their expectations for success, their attributional styles (viz., whether they ascribe success to effort, ability or chance) and in their views about their self-efficacy. To take Gardner's example, some people may in fact crave to become millionaires, but lack the necessary confidence, energy or skills to do so.



Concerning attitude towards learning the language, the crucial point to be made is that it may not necessarily correlate with either desire or intensity; attitude is however likely to have a facilitative effect on learning languages. As Gardner (1985) pointed out:

*Language courses are different from other curriculum topics. They require that the individual incorporates elements from another culture. As a consequence, reactions to the other culture become important considerations (p. 8).*

To summarise thus far, the components of Gardner's concept of motivation do not necessarily go hand in hand. Desire to learn an L2 does not seem to imply deployment of effort; and a positive attitude towards learning a language does not necessarily entail the desire to learn it. In Gardner's conception, it is perhaps the joint effect of all such components that make up motivation.

Having established the concepts of orientation, and motivation as independent, distinct entities, Gardner then attempted to find a link between them by incorporating them into what he called the *integrative motive*. In his own terms, "the concept of the integrative motive includes not only the orientation, but also the motivation and a number of attitude variables involving the other language community, out-groups in general and the language learning context" (p. 54). This all-encompassing concept of the integrative motive which subsumes both motivation and orientations better reflects Gardner's most recent view of motivation. It was this later approach that Gardner, Clément, Smythe and Smythe (1979) used in their celebrated *Attitude and Motivation Test Battery* (AMTB) to measure students' motivational orientations. As operationalised in the AMTB, the integrative motive consisted of nine scales. These are:

1. attitudes toward French Canadians,
2. interest in foreign languages,
3. integrative orientation,
4. attitudes toward European French,
5. attitudes toward learning French,
6. motivational intensity,
7. desire to learn French,

8. my French teacher-evaluative, and
9. my French course-evaluative.

The first four scales form the *integrativeness component*, the next three the *motivation component*, the eighth and the ninth the *attitudes towards the learning situation component* of the model. It is not clear on what basis Gardner included the diversity of scales and components, not necessarily compatible with one another, to characterise a unitary concept: the integrative motive. Au (1988) strongly criticised Gardner's integrative motive hypothesis as equivocal and lacking generality. He noted that:

*This taxonomy for combining scales into components is not of an empirical nature in that Gardner and his associates have not employed a factor analytic (or other) statistical technique to justify this taxonomy. Gardner himself freely admits this classification system is a logical rather than an empirical one (Gardner, 1980). Scores of all the scales are added together to arrive at a single score of the integrative motive. It is not at all clear on which grounds such a linear combination is justified. If it is proposed that the nine scales constitute three separate components, and yet scores of the three components can be additionally combined to arrive at one single score, one can only conclude that either the subdividing of the nine scales into three separate components is no more than an empty rhetoric or the basis for adding the nine scales is an insecure one (p. 79).*

Au's criticism has to be seen as casting considerable doubt on Gardner's conceptualisation of the integrative motive. A priori, scores obtained on the integrative motive may blur the distinction between, for example, interest in foreign languages, attitudes towards European French or interest in the course. Some of the disparate factors or components integrated in the integrative motive may be better treated separately.

The mounting criticism of Gardner's social psychological approach to motivation suggests that this approach needs to be expanded in the light of new developments in educational psychology.

### 4.3 Expanding the social psychological approach to motivation

In the last few years, L2 motivation research has gained new momentum as demonstrated by renewed research interest and attempts to expand the traditional research paradigms. Examples of this interest are articles by Crookes and Schmidt (1991), Dörnyei (1994b) and, Oxford and Shearin (1994), which sought to expand the base of knowledge about motivation to learn another language. The thrust of these articles was firstly that research conducted by Gardner and his associates was somehow limited and limiting. In Crookes and Schmidt's (1991) terms, "it was so dominant that alternative concepts have not been considered" (p. 501). Secondly, they argued that motivational concepts drawn from other research areas would enhance our understanding of L2 motivation. To this effect, Dörnyei (1994a) observed: "while acknowledging unanimously the fundamental importance of the Gardnerian social psychological model, researchers were also calling for a more pragmatic, education-centred approach to motivation research, which would be consistent with the perceptions of practising teachers and which would also be in line with the current results of mainstream educational psychological research"(p. 273). The main limitations attributed to Gardner's model of L2 motivation together with the proposed theoretical framework by recent research will be examined below.

The first limitation thought to characterise Gardner's model is that it is grounded in a social psychological framework, and as a result ignores other rich and useful theoretical offerings from different branches of psychology, which highlight concepts like need-achievement, self-efficacy, and locus of control. As will be shown later, such concepts have relevant and interesting implications for L2 motivation.

Coming from Canada where language learning is an important social issue at the core of the relationship between the Anglophone and Francophone communities, Gardner and Lambert were particularly sensitive to the social dimension of L2 motivation. While acknowledging that this social dimension is a major breakthrough in motivational research, researchers argue that it cannot by itself answer all questions about motivation for learning a new language. In this respect, Dörnyei (1994b) observed: "Indeed, I believe that the most important milestone in the history of L2 motivation research has been Gardner and Lambert's discovery that success in L2 is a function of the learners' attitudes towards the linguistic-cultural community of the target language, thus

adding a social dimension to the study of motivation to learn an L2" (p. 519). Yet, Dörnyei (1994a) also remarks that "...Gardner's motivation construct does not include details on cognitive aspects of motivation to learn, whereas this is the direction in which educational psychological research on motivation has been moving during the last fifteen years" (p. 273).

Oxford and Shearin (1994) highlighted another limitation to Gardner's social psychological model of motivation when they wrote: "The social psychological approach to L2 motivation is concerned with the individual in the context of a group, usually the target culture, and therefore tends to focus on integrative motivation as a reflection of relations between individuals and groups" (p.15). They further added that "some reasons for L2 learning are not tied to relations between individuals and groups" (p.15). This suggests that motivation reflects many other aspects such as the nature of the task, the person's attribution of success, and the kind of rewards involved - all of these notions will be discussed later in this chapter.

Another criticism levelled at Gardner's social psychological model was that it did not reflect all the potential types of motivational orientations of foreign language learners. A number of research studies attempting to uncover new motivational orientations will be reviewed below.

Ely (1986) conducted a survey among first-year university learners of Spanish in California in order to find out their motivational orientations for learning Spanish. Three motivational clusters emerged. The first two corresponded to an integrative and instrumental motivation, and the third clearly centred on the need to fulfil a language requirement. This suggests that fulfilling a language requirement could also be regarded as a goal that stimulates students' motivation.

Prompted by the controversy that developed around the general applicability of Gardner's hypothesis, Clément and Kruidenier (1983) raised the possibility that type of orientation may be function of type of setting. To investigate their hypothesis, they conducted a study with carefully selected learners coming from different cultural settings (unicultural Quebec vs. multicultural Ottawa), belonging to two different ethnic groups (Anglophones vs. Francophones), and learning target languages of different socio-political status (French or English vs. minority Spanish), thus generating eight subgroups. The objective was to assess the influence of ethnicity and milieu on the emergence of orientations to L2 acquisition. Results showed that a friendship orientation

had a greater influence upon the motivation levels of Francophones in Quebec, while the Anglophones' motivation was more influenced by a knowledge orientation. The travel orientation tended to be more important for those students who were learning a minority language, Spanish, while learners of languages with official status in the community, like French or English, were influenced by an instrumental orientation.

Clément and Kruidenier's model proves to be wider than that of Gardner, in that it attempts to tease out additional orientations for language study specific to the social setting of the learners. Therefore, such results do not support the general applicability of an integrative orientation. In Clément and Kruidenier's (1983) terms, "the intimate affective bond implied by the 'integrative orientation' was not found here" (p. 287).

In contrast to the studies reviewed so far, Schumann's Acculturation Model (Schumann 1978, 1986) also emphasised the importance of some level of integrative motivation, but was restricted to SL learning in a naturalistic setting. Schumann's model predicts that learners will acquire the L2 only to the degree that they acculturate to the SL community. Instrumental/integrative motivation is seen as one of many social and psychological factors contributing to the construct of acculturation. Schumann argued that one of his subjects, Alberto, failed to learn English because of psychological and social distance from target language speakers, and that learners with limited functional reasons for language learning, such as the instrumental orientation, are likely to develop the type of pidginized language exhibited by Alberto.

In his current view, Schumann (1986) appears to have abandoned his earlier claims that acculturation is the major causal variable in SLA, demoting the concept to one that acts only as a remote cause in a chain of causal factors which bring the learner into contact with target language speakers. Verbal interaction with those speakers results in the negotiation of appropriate input, the immediate cause of language acquisition. In Schumann's view, motivation is treated as a component of some more encompassing concept. It is important because it spurs learners to interact with target language speakers.

Most of the studies reviewed so far were conducted in L2 environments having at least a minimal amount of extracurricular contact with members of the TL group, and were mainly concerned with the instrumental or integrative orientations for learning second languages. What seemed to be missing was research studies which investigated

the orientations of learners in FL learning contexts, having no contact with the TL community.

In an attempt to identify motivational orientations specific to foreign language contexts, Dörnyei (1990) conducted a study with EFL learners in Hungary. Four motivational subsystems were uncovered: (1) *instrumental*, (2) *integrative*, (3) *achievement*, and (4) *attribution about past failure*. Results indicated that instrumental goals played a prominent role in the learning of English up to an intermediate level. However, it was found that learners whose interest in learning English included socio-cultural and non-professional reasons demonstrated the highest degree of proficiency. Interestingly, even in a context where TL learning is largely an academic matter, student motivation remains socially grounded.

In a subsequent study, one of Clément, Dörnyei and Noels' (1994) major goals was to identify the components of, and assess the importance of the integrative motive for L2 proficiency in the Hungarian EFL context. Results revealed five orientations for learning English, with different levels of endorsement by students. The *xenophilic*, *media*, *socio-cultural*, and *instrumental* orientations were strongly endorsed by the students, whereas *identification* orientation received only minimal support, suggesting that identification as a goal for learning was rejected. Dörnyei accounted for this perceived cultural divergence by claiming that "the English language and the Anglophones may appear culturally and amicably interesting, but there is a definite limit to the extent of the desired rapprochement" (p. 433).

All the studies of motivation reviewed above focused primarily on social attitudes rather than on motivation per se. They demonstrated that the goals for learning a new language follow different patterns from the one identified in Gardner's model. The best that can be said is that motivational orientations seem to be determined by many factors (e.g. individual, cultural, social). As such, they vary from one situation to another or from one instructional context to the next. In order to capture the full spectrum of learners' motives for learning foreign languages, research on motivation needs to draw on notions pertaining to the fields of both applied linguistics and educational psychology, taking into account students' specific learning context and situation.

Interestingly, motivational orientations are also claimed to undergo complicated changes within the same individual. Oxford and Shearin (1994) provided two real-life examples of such motivational changes. The first example involved a learner, who as a

teenager learnt the Cyrillic alphabet so she and her boyfriend could have a secret code to use while passing notes in church. The next year, she enrolled for Russian in college because it was challenging and had prestige value. Later, she majored in Russian for instrumental career reasons. The other example provided by Oxford and Shearin (1994) concerned a learner who started by taking a Japanese language course simply to fulfil a requirement, became intellectually entranced with the language and culture, and later wanted to live and work in Japan, and use the language every day. In these examples, initial participation led to interest, which then led to further involvement and to changes in the reasons for L2 learning. For both students, motivation followed developmental paths that were different from the traditional framework of integrative and instrumental motivation.

The two illustrations provided by Oxford and Shearin may well be typical examples of many learners for whom L2 learning is a life-long changing experience. In many foreign language learning contexts, students initially motivated by requirements become interested in the language, and experience a shift in their primary motivation.

#### **4.4 The educational psychological approach to motivation**

As was shown above, research in L2 motivation has been dominated by the social psychological approach championed by Gardner and his colleagues. It was not until the early 1990s that a marked shift in thought appeared in papers on L2 motivation, as researchers tried to reopen the agenda (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991) in order to shed a new light on the subject. The problem with Gardner's approach was that it appeared to be incongruent with teachers' conceptions of motivation, and at the same time restricted in scope as regards the recent developments of motivation research in various branches of psychology.

When teachers say that a student is motivated, they are not concerning themselves with the students' reasons for learning, or about their attitudes towards the TL culture, they are rather observing that learners become productively engaged in learning tasks, and sustain that engagement. This teacher-validated use of the term motivation has not been given enough emphasis by SLA investigators, but is in fact very close to the concept of motivation that has been explored in educational psychology.

In recent years, research studies (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford and Shearin, 1994) have attempted to extend the social psychological approach to L2 motivation by adding new components derived from various fields of psychology. The field of motivation theory in psychology is wide and varied, and as a result offers a rich repertoire of new perspectives relevant to L2 motivation.

Two major trends characterise the historical development of motivation in psychology (see Weiner, 1992). The first trend views motivation as a function of an individual's instinct, need, drive, or state. The second trend in the historical development of motivation in psychology is characterized by an interest in a cognitive perspective which views motivation to be a function of a person's thoughts rather than some instinct, need, or drive. As will be shown later in this chapter, various cognitive motivational factors would appear to be at work in shaping learners' motivation.

The aim of the following section is first, to highlight some of the fundamental concepts related to two major developments in motivation theory namely need theories and cognitive theories; second, to explore motivational components specific to instructional situations.

### *Need theories*

Need theories are based on needs that create tension until satisfied (Weiner, 1992 and Child, 1993). In psychology, the source of any motivated action whether it is called a drive, a need, or an instinct, is assumed to give rise to tension. Successful tension-reduction is clearly an event which is likely to be remembered, and so learning takes place. For example, individuals are driven to learn because learning may satisfy their needs for rewards such as approval or success. The view of motivation as deriving from an attempt to satisfy one's needs or drives is very helpful in educational psychology. A particularly interesting development of this viewpoint is the work of Maslow (1970), who postulated that human beings investigate, direct, and sustain activity to satisfy certain needs that are hierarchical in nature, beginning with biological needs and progressing upward to psychological ones. Maslow's hierarchy of needs progresses through five levels: 1) physiological; 2) safety and security; 3) belonging and love; 4) esteem; and 5) self-actualization. Maslow's hierarchy suggests that learners as human beings have essential needs like comfort, safety, and acceptance, that should be catered for before the higher order needs of self-esteem, self-confidence, and curiosity about



exploring the environment, for example, can be addressed. In other words, learners cannot aspire to higher order needs of self-esteem and self-actualization unless their lower order needs of safety and security are met.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs seems to have significant implications for FL learners. Their needs for security and safety must be satisfied if they are to engage in risk-taking activities. In other words, they are more likely to take risks in class and participate if they do not feel threatened, or humiliated through criticism or overcorrection. Conversely, learners can become anxious and regress in their needs, motivation and performance if they feel insecure in class. Teachers can reduce learners' anxiety, and foster greater psychological security by being tolerant of mistakes, using praise and self-encouragement techniques, and introducing enjoyable activities based on students' preferences.

The needs highlighted by Maslow draw more attention to the hierarchical nature of needs that are fundamental to the growth of human beings, than to the needs that motivate learning in educational contexts. Need theories have emphasised other types of needs which create tension in the learner until satisfied, such as the need to satisfy one's curiosity or interest, or to gain sympathy and rewards. These needs are thought to energise students' learning.

Another theory of motivation is based on the need for achievement and the related fear of failure (see e.g. McDonough, 1981 and Oxford and Shearin, 1994). Oxford and Shearin (1994) noted that "need achievement is not global, applying to all situations, but instead varies markedly from one achievement area to another for a given person" (p.17). Need for achievement is also thought to be conditioned by individuals' past success or failure. Past success in a particular situation would make a person more likely to engage in achievement behaviour, in a similar situation in the future. Conversely, past failure would generate fear, and stifle achievement behaviour. The implication for classroom instruction is that in order to sustain the motivation of students driven by the need to achieve, care should be taken to provide them with tasks conducive to success.

Educational psychologists (Kyriacou, 1986; Entwistle, 1987; Child, 1993), who conceived of motivation as the fulfilment of needs, identified three categories of motivation: intrinsic, extrinsic, and achievement.

1. *Intrinsic motivation* is potentially a central motivator of the educational process. It arises when an individual wants to learn something out of pure interest, to satisfy his/her

own curiosity. In Deci and Ryan's (1985) terms "intrinsic motivation is in evidence whenever students' natural curiosity and interest energise their learning" (p. 245).

2. *Extrinsic motivation*, in Kyriacou's words "refers to those learning situations where the impetus for the motivation stems from satisfying a personal drive, where the learning task is seen to be a means towards an end which may be in part contingent on the successful completion of the task but is not derived from the task itself" (p.39). Extrinsically motivated behaviours are carried out in anticipation of a reward from outside and beyond the self. Typical extrinsic rewards are prizes, money and approval from the teacher, or parents. Research (see Deci, 1975) has shown that different types of extrinsic rewards can affect intrinsic motivation in different ways. For example, the introduction of monetary rewards to what was initially a challenging task actually served to decrease intrinsic motivation. By contrast, positive feedback that is perceived by individuals as a boost to their feelings of competence and self-determination can increase or maintain intrinsic motivation. Perhaps one of the most important extrinsic motives that may lead to intrinsic motivation is termed *affiliative drive*. This refers to learners' needs to do well in school in order to please a teacher whom they like and appreciate. Although this desire for teacher approval is an extrinsic motive, it is often a precursor to intrinsic motivation as is attested by students who are initially prompted to learn in order to gain teacher approval, and end up intrinsically devoted to the subject matter itself. This example suggests that in certain circumstances extrinsic motivation cannot be regarded as detrimental or antagonistic to intrinsic motivation.

3. *Achievement motivation* refers to the kind of drives which incite the individual to learn, in order to fulfil his/her own potentialities or attain academic achievement. Achievement motivation derives from need achievement theory, according to which individuals need to achieve and strive for success in a situation which involves standards of success.

It is important to note that a general drive for achievement can conceivably be both intrinsically and extrinsically determined. As shown in Figure 4.1, achievement motivation overlaps with both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This suggests that need for achievement may be driven by a desire for external rewards, as well as by a desire to do well because an activity is self-fulfilling.



*Figure 4.1: A model of FL motivation*

Figure 4.1 also suggests that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be separate from, or overlap with, achievement motivation.

Clearly, accounting for motivation in terms of drives and needs seems to be applicable to L2 classroom learning. The three types of motivation mentioned above have their place in the language classroom. However, other facets of motivation based on cognitive theories need to be explored.

### ***Cognitive theories of motivation***

In the last decades, motivation research has slowly recovered from the influence of behaviourist, reinforcement theories, and from the strong impact of theories based on needs or drives, and has become more dominated by a cognitive approach to motivation. Cognitive theories of motivation gave way to a reformulation of the concept of motivation. Following the work of Atkinson (1964), and Weiner (1992) motivation was

viewed as a function of a person's thoughts, rather than of some instinct, need or drive. Information derived from past experience is encoded in the mind and transformed into a belief that becomes the source of action. In some learning contexts, for example, individuals may expend efforts only to the extent that they believe that the probable results are worth the effort to be invested. Similarly, individuals are more likely to exert efforts if they believe in their self-efficacy or ability to perform well. This cognitive view of motivation is best encapsulated by Keller's (1983) definition: "Motivation refers to the choices people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid, and the degree of effort they will exert in that respect" (p. 389).

The implication behind the cognitive view of motivation for an L2 learning context is that learner motivation may not simply be triggered through positive reinforcement from the teacher, the satisfaction of internal rewards, or the need to achieve. Learners' motivation may rather depend on what they think about their own efficacy, their expectation for success, the cost effectiveness of efforts, and also on whether they perceive their goals as relevant and achievable. What is more important to note is that the cognitive framework that develops in the individual's mind through past success or failure may indelibly affect his or her future action.

In order to highlight the importance and value of the cognitive approach to motivation, and show its relevance to FL educational context, four components central to cognitive theories of motivation will be explored below: 1) attribution theory; 2) learned helplessness; 3) self-efficacy; and 4) equity theory. All four components concern the individual's self-appraisal of what he/she can or cannot do, which will, in turn, affect how he/she strives for achievement in the future.

### *Attribution theories*

Attribution theories are mainly concerned with the study of how causal ascriptions of past failures and successes affect future expectations and performance. In McNamara's (1994) terms "People who credit their success to personal capabilities and their failures to insufficient effort will undertake difficult tasks and persist in the face of failure: in contrast those who ascribe their failures to deficiencies in ability and their success to environmental or chance factors will display low achievement strivings and give up readily when they encounter obstacles" (p. 9). This concept seems to be akin to the notion of locus of control in psychology, according to which individuals who believe that

the cause of success or failure is within their control are more likely to have higher expectations than those who think that it is beyond their control. Dörnyei (1990), in his attempt to uncover students' motivational orientations in Hungary, identified a component of L2 motivation referred to as "attributions about past failures". He argued that such attributions are particularly significant in FL learning contexts where L2 learning failure is a very common phenomenon.

### *Learned helplessness*

Learned helplessness refers to a resigned, pessimistic, helpless state that develops when the person wants to succeed but feels that success is impossible or beyond him/her for one reason. In other words, the probability of success does not appear to increase by any action or effort. This feeling of helplessness may prove to be difficult to reverse or eradicate once it has been established. Interviews among Moroccan EFL students, reported in Chapter 8 revealed cases of learners, who for various reasons seemed to have developed a sense of learned helplessness. They appeared to have reached the stage where they thought that nothing could help them improve or achieve success. They simply felt hopeless and helpless. This perhaps explains why some students become withdrawn or drop out.

### *Self-efficacy*

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's judgement of his/her ability to perform a specific action. McNamara (1994) highlighted the role played by self-efficacy in shaping motivation. She pointed out that "an individual, particularly if low in self-esteem, is unlikely to attempt a task if he or she believes the probable outcome will be failure: this dimension of an individual's belief system is known as self-efficacy and is a key factor in motivation or non-motivation to change" (p. 9). Attributions of past accomplishments play a crucial role in developing self-efficacy, but people also appraise efficacy from observing peers, as well as from persuasion, reinforcement and evaluation by others. Once a strong sense of self-efficacy is developed, a failure may not have much impact.

The concept of self-efficacy appears to be akin to the notion of self-confidence, that is, the belief that one has the ability to produce results, accomplish goals, or perform tasks competently. Clément, Dörnyei and Noels (1991) showed that self-confidence was the major motivational subsystem in a FL learning situation.

### ***Equity theories***

Equity theories are characterized by a mathematical ratio of inputs to outcomes. Inputs include intellectual ability, personality traits, experience - anything the individual believes he or she contributes to the learning context. Outcomes include good marks, praise, promotion - anything that results from the situation that the individual perceives as having personal value. Equity theory argues that people evaluate their rewards and punishment in terms of fairness or equity by comparing outcomes to inputs. If the person perceives a discrepancy between inputs and outputs, in the sense that effort is not worth the outcome, dissatisfaction and demotivation result. On the other hand, if the ratio is deemed positive, that is, if all the effort is viewed as leading to significant outcomes, then the learner will feel continuously motivated.

The cognitive concepts of motivation reviewed above suggest that learners can develop negative or detrimental beliefs about the causes and probability of success, about their own self-efficacy as learners, and also about the adequacy between effort expenditure and success. Such beliefs are thought to play a major role in determining students' levels of motivation. This suggests some practical implications for L2 teachers. Teachers can help shape their students' beliefs about success in various ways: 1) by inculcating the belief that success is not only possible but probable, as long as there is a high level of effort; 2) by setting challenging but achievable goals likely to give students a sense of progress; 3) by accepting and providing for diversity in goals and learning style preferences in order to facilitate success; and 4) by training students to develop effective study skills, and learning strategies, likely to promote success.

### ***Motivational components specific to the learning situation***

Since the end of the 1980s, more importance has been attached, in the L2 motivation literature to motives related to the learning situation (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991; Oxford and Shearin, 1994). In order to grasp the array of variables and processes involved at the level of L2 motivation, Dörnyei (1994) identified three sets of motivational components: *course-specific*, *teacher-specific*, and *group-specific*, motivational components.

### 1) Course-specific motivational components

Based on the work of Keller (1983) and Maehar and Archer (1987) relative to classroom learning motivation, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) identified two basic facets of motivation: (1) the determinants of motivation, and (2) the behavioural aspects of motivation. These crucial elements of motivation will be presented below with particular reference to FL learning in the classroom.

Four major determinants of motivation seem to apply to FL learning contexts: (1) *interest*, (2) *relevance*, (3) *expectancy*, (4) *outcomes*. The first of these, *interest*, refers to a positive response to stimuli, such that learners' curiosity is aroused and sustained. Interest could be intrinsic, i.e., emanating from the learner, or extrinsic, i.e., triggered by the learning situation. In this respect, the teacher may have an important role to play in enhancing students' interest by stimulating their curiosity, for example, through the use of unorthodox learning techniques, like active learning-oriented activities. Matching students' needs and preferences is another way of promoting students' motivation. If language classroom activities are perceived as uninteresting or irrelevant, the learner might decide to turn off.

The second determinant of motivation, *relevance*, is a pre-requisite for sustained motivation and requires the learner to perceive that important personal needs are being met by the learning situation. At a more general level, humans are assumed to have needs for (a) *achievement*, (b) *affiliation*, i.e., establishing ties with people, and (c) *power*, i.e., desire for a measure of control over one's environment. These needs have some implications for the FL language classroom. For example, the teacher may give students a sense of achievement by increasing opportunities for success and more specifically by pitching lessons to the right level because as Crookes and Schmidt (1991) argued "when the level of challenge is perceived as higher than the individual's level of ability, the result is anxiety; and when the level of challenge is perceived as lower than the individual's ability, the result is boredom" (p. 488). The need for affiliation is also relevant to the FL classroom. Communicative activities are thought to meet this need by giving students a feeling of belonging through collaborative work. However, it is important to note that different cultures attach different values to need for affiliation. Some cultures allow for individual excellence, whereas others strive mainly for group excellence. These differences, of course, are mainly determined by the approach to education and assessment.

The third determinant of motivation is *expectancy*, which refers to learners' expectations and attributions concerning success or failure. For example, those who attribute success to their own efforts are more motivated than those who attribute outcomes to external causes like luck or the teacher's mood. According to Crookes and Schmidt (1991), "it seems likely that students who have experienced failure in SL learning and attribute this to their own inabilities rather than problems with the course or text, are likely to have a low estimate of their future success in second language learning, which may in turn lead to low risk-taking, low acceptance of ambiguity, and other behaviours that are probably negatively correlated with success in SL learning" (p. 490). Similarly, a teacher who overcorrects students can lower their expectations of success, and reduce the students' willingness to pay attention or persist in learning the language.

The fourth determinant of motivation referred to by Crookes and Schmidt (1991) as *outcomes* concerns the combination of extrinsic rewards, such as praise and good grades, to intrinsic rewards, such as enjoyment and pride.

In addition to the four determinants of motivation presented above, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) pointed out four key behavioural aspects of motivation. First is *direction* which means attending to one thing or activity and not others. Second is *persistence* which means concentrating attention or action on the same activity for an extended period of time. Third is *continuing motivation* which is resuming interrupted activity without being obliged to do so by outside pressure. Fourth is *activity level*, which is equivalent to effort or intensity of application. These four factors appear to represent important manifestations of motivation.

## 2) Teacher-specific motivational components

As highlighted by Dörnyei (1994a), L2 teachers have a special role to play in motivating students. Perhaps the most important teacher-related motive has been identified in educational psychology as *affiliative drive*. This term refers to students' needs to do well in school in order to please the teacher or parents. Although this desire for teacher approval reflects a primary extrinsic motive, it can lead to, and trigger, intrinsic interest.

A second teacher-related motivational component is what Dörnyei (1994a) refers to as *authority-type*, that is, whether the teacher supports students' autonomy, or exerts authority over students. Dörnyei argued that giving autonomy to learners fosters their



motivation. He pointed out that: "Sharing responsibility with students, offering them options and choices, letting them have a say and establishing priorities, and involving them in the decision-making enhance student self-determination and intrinsic motivation" (p. 278).

A third teacher-related motivational component highlighted by Dörnyei is the teacher's role in actively developing and stimulating learners' motivation. There are three main channels for the socialization process: 1) *Modelling*: students view their teachers as role models, who embody the 'group conscience' and as a result, they model their attitudes and orientations towards learning after their teachers both in terms of effort expenditure and orientations of interest in the subject matter. 2) *Task presentation*: the way tasks are presented to students is thought to have a great impact on students' motivation. In Dörnyei's (1994a) words, "efficient teachers call students' attention to the purpose of the activity they are going to do, its potential interest and practical value, and even the strategies that may be useful in achieving the task, thus raising students' interest and metacognitive awareness." (p. 278). 3) *Feedback*: there are two types of feedback: informational feedback, which comments on competence, and controlling feedback which judges performance against external standards. Social comparison is thought to be detrimental to intrinsic motivation, which implies that comparing students' achievement in class should be avoided.

### 3) *Group-specific motivational components*

*Group dynamics* are thought to influence students' affects and cognition (for a review, see Donelson, 1990; Marvin, 1981). With respect to L2 motivation, Dörnyei (1994a) cites three aspects of group dynamics: 1) *goal orientedness*; 2) *group cohesion*, and 3) *classroom goal structures*.

*Goal orientedness*: a group goal is best regarded as a composite of individual goals. So, the group may have a variety of goals. On the other hand, the goal of the course may not be the only group goal and in extreme cases may not coincide with the group goal at all. For example, the goal of a group of students may be to have fun rather than to learn. The extent to which the group is attuned to pursuing its goals is referred to as *goal orientedness*. In this respect, goal orientedness appears to be an important variable in group motivation.

*Group cohesion* is the strength of the relationship that links the members to one another and to the group itself. Dörnyei (1994) reported on research findings which claimed a consistent, positive relationship between cohesion and group performance. Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1994) confirmed that perceived group cohesion was an important motivational component in a L2 learning context. This may be due to the fact that in a cohesive group, the learning environment is more supportive and more conducive to success.

*Classroom goal structures* can be competitive, cooperative, or individualistic. In a competitive structure, students work against each other, and only the best ones are rewarded. In a cooperative situation, students work in small groups in which each member shares responsibility for the outcome, and is equally rewarded. In an individualistic structure, students work alone, and one's probability of achievement is not affected by another student. Based on consistent evidence from various educational settings, Dörnyei (1994a) asserted that, "compared to competitive or individualistic learning experiences, the cooperative goal structure is more powerful in promoting intrinsic motivation..., positive attitudes towards the subject area, and a caring, cohesive relationship with peers and with the teacher" (p. 279).

The picture that emerges from this overview of L2 motivation research is that both the social-psychological and the educational-psychological approach to motivation have a major role to play in improving our understanding of L2 motivation.

The merit of the SLA approach to motivation is to have brought to the surface the view that socially and culturally oriented attitudes may dramatically influence L2 motivation and achievement. However, this view was particularly adapted to the Canadian context in which the two communities live side by side and have strong feelings and attitudes towards one another. Other L2 learning contexts may reveal other types of attitudes, orientations or motives for learning a new language.

On the other hand, contributions from many aspects of psychology prove to be helpful in expanding the traditional concept of motivation, and making it more "congruent with the concept of motivation that teachers are convinced is critical for SL success" (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991, p. 502).

## 4.5 Conceptualisation of motivation

Different researchers have proposed different definitions or conceptualisations of motivation depending on the perspectives they apply to their approach to motivation. As was shown earlier in this chapter, motivation has been defined in terms of rewards, drive reduction, the choices people make and their belief system. Drawing on cognitive theories of motivation, Brown (1990) defined motivation as "the extent to which you will make choices about (1) goals to pursue, and (2) the effort you will devote to that pursuit" (p. 384). He suggested that definitions of motivation such as this one could be interpreted in five different ways depending on the theoretical perspective you apply to it (behaviouristic, psychoanalytic, cognitive, humanistic and affective theories).

In the field of SLA, Gardner's (1985) conception of motivation was encapsulated in the following equation by Skehan (1989, p. 54):

$$\text{Motivation} = \textit{Effort} + \textit{Desire to achieve a goal} + \textit{Attitudes}.$$

This equation suggests that motivation can be conceived of as an amalgam of three components. The central element, desire to achieve a goal, acts as an energizing factor. Attitudes shape the direction for motivation to operate, and effort determines the intensity of motivation. This view of motivation is essentially language-specific, and rather oriented towards the achievement of social goals, e.g., integrative or instrumental orientations.

In light of the literature review outlined in this chapter, motivation appears to be too complex to be accounted for exclusively in terms of social goals. In order to put some order in the plethora of concepts that come under the umbrella term of motivation, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) and Scarcella and Oxford (1992) conceived of motivation as having both external behavioural characteristics and an internal attitudinal structure. Three behavioural features of motivation are *decision*, *persistence*, and *activity level*. The internal structure of motivation includes four attitudinal factors: *interest*, *relevance*, *expectancy*, and *outcomes*. This definition seems to stress the educational aspects of motivation. Various psychological needs may lie behind the desire to learn a foreign language. Scarcella and Oxford (1992) arguably pointed out that "many people, hard as

it is to believe sometimes, learn languages for fun, not for profit or for social purposes" (p. 53).

### *An integrated model of motivation*

In order to have a more comprehensive and coherent view of motivation in learning foreign or second languages, both social-psychological and educational approaches to motivation need to be integrated into a general model of motivation, as represented in Figure 4.2. This model suggests that motivation is not a self-contained entity, but is part of cause and effect processes. Incentives such as goals energise the individual's drives to satisfy needs and to make decisions as to whether to do something and how much effort to expend on doing it. These drives and choices to act are then translated into specific behavioural manifestations like interest, participation, and effort.

Needs and goals act as the triggering force behind motivation. They represent the sources which generate, in the individual, the desire to fulfil a need, attain a goal or make the choice to act. Various goals may be operating concurrently such as integrating into a new culture or attaining social empowerment. Similarly, the needs may simultaneously include achievement, affiliation, curiosity, or rewards. Success in this case acts as a source of motivation. In London's (1975) words, success is "the only valid incentive for prolonged application to language learning" (p. 80).

The individual's sources of motivation are presumably determined and influenced by learner internal factors such as personality and values, and by learner external factors such as society's expectations and the contextual environment in which the learner functions. However, whatever the nature or circumstances of such goals and needs, their role is to energize the desire and give it direction.

It is this impetus, or burning desire to reach a goal or satisfy a need, together with the choice to act, that represent the essence of motivation. They are regulated by learner internal and external factors such as locus of control, self-efficacy and teacher and parental influence. Such regulating factors may promote or inhibit the motivational impetus before it is channelled into behavioural manifestations. For example, an insecure student who procrastinates out of fear of failure may be inhibited in deploying efforts, and engaging actively in learning tasks. Similarly, a student who has developed a feeling of helplessness, or who believes that the gains obtained are not worth the effort expended is more likely to be less motivated and to have less stamina or desire for work.

## Regulating factors

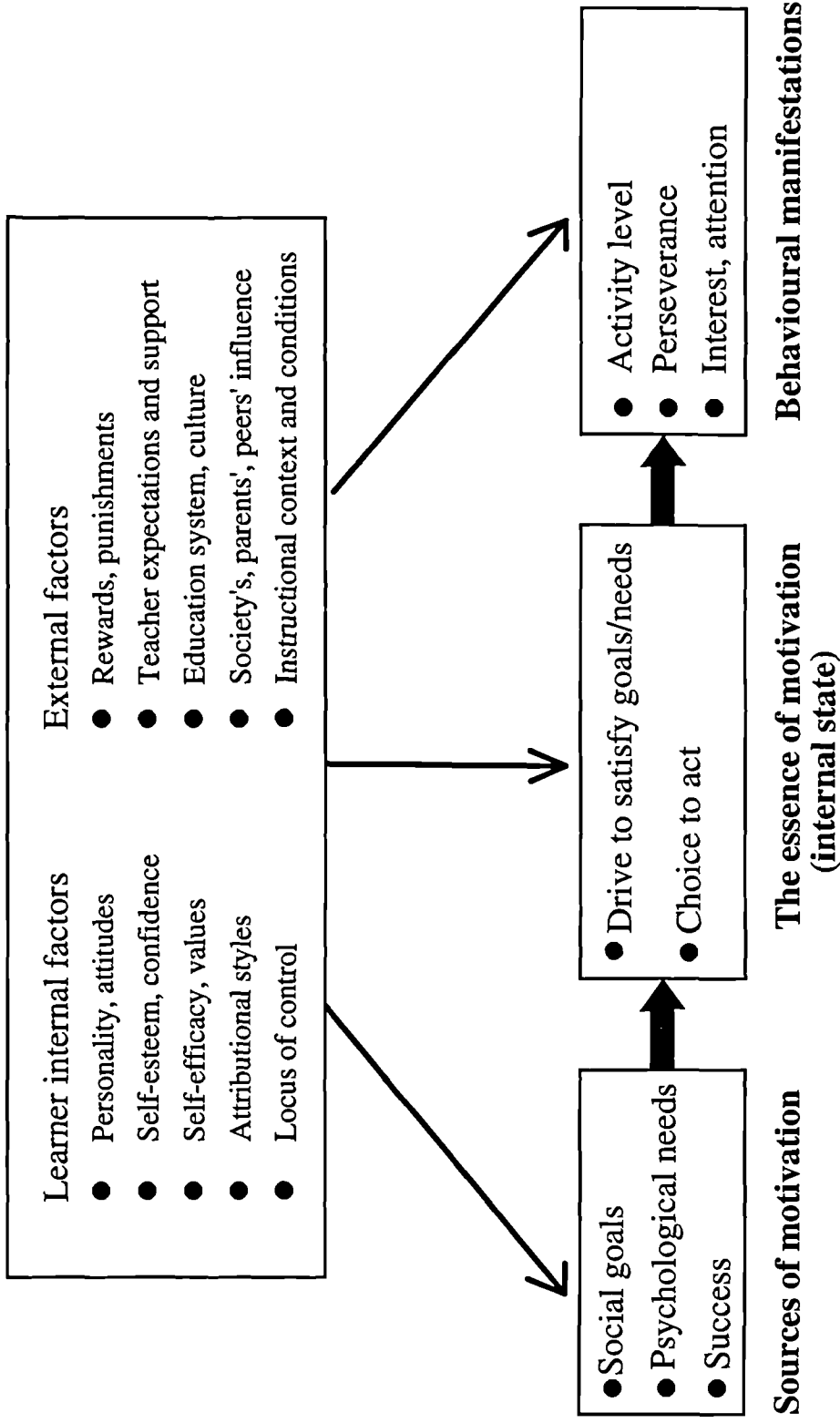


Figure 4.2: An integrated model of FL motivation

The behavioural aspects of motivation represent the effects or manifestations of motivation. They include inward manifestations like interest, attention, and attitudes to learning, and also outward behaviour such as effort, persistence and participation in class. These motivational manifestations also are assumed to be affected by the regulating factors pertaining to the learner or the learning environment. For instance, a teacher's anti-pedagogical behaviour may undermine learners' attention or enthusiasm and as a result may be detrimental to their activity levels. Likewise, learners who attribute success or failure to chance are not likely to deploy more effort or persevere.

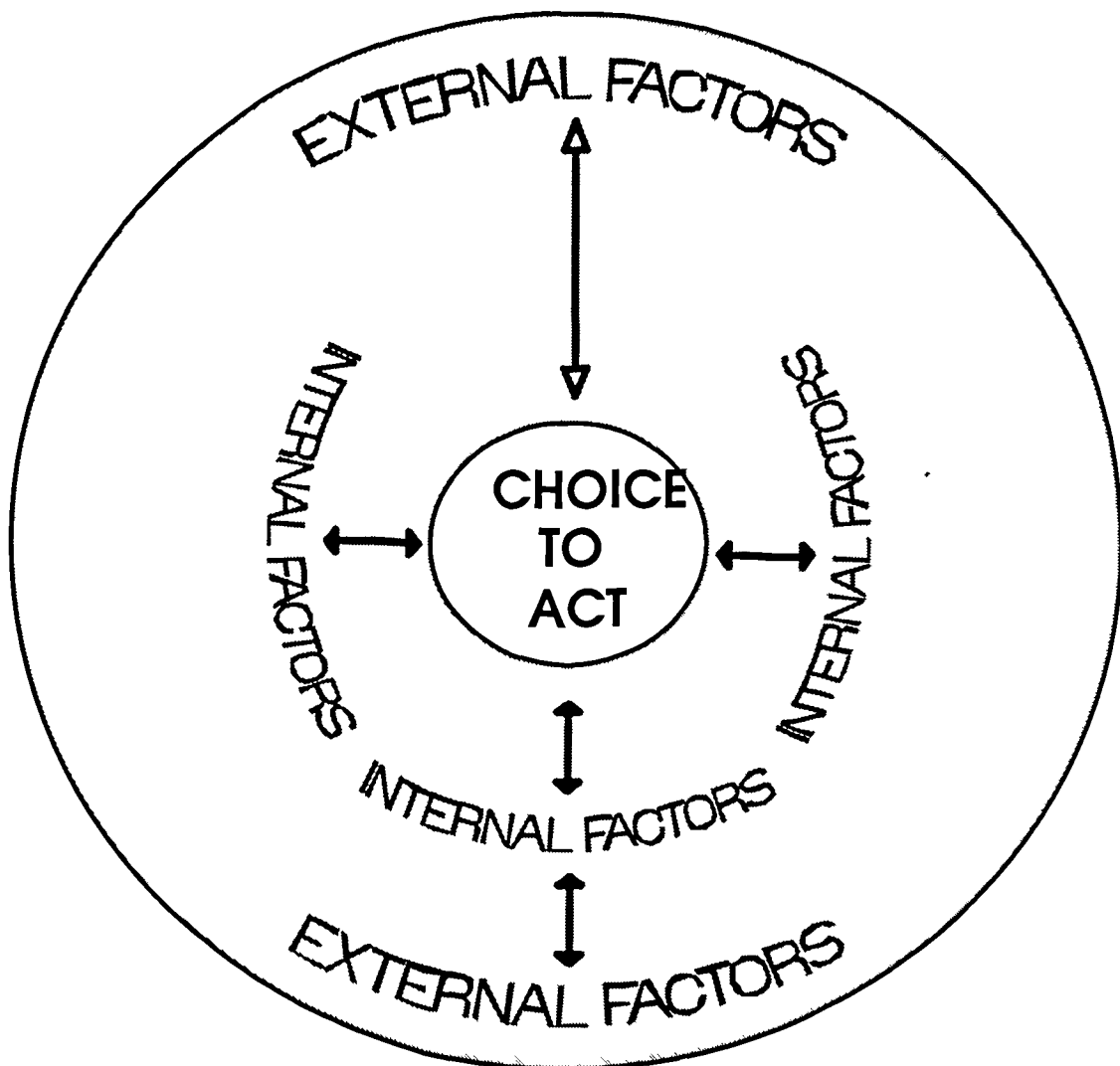
The model suggested in Figure 4.2 is based on the view that motivation may be conceived of as being at the heart of a dynamic cause and effect process, controlled by cognitive and emotional factors specific to the individual learner and his/her learning environment. Thus, motivation is characterised by (1) causal factors or orientations towards learning, (2) an internal facet representing the drive to learn and the decision to do so, and (3) an external behavioural aspect. This is why the measurement of FL/SL motivation has often been anchored to three areas: (1) motivational orientations, (2) motivational desire or intensity of learning, and (3) motivational effects or manifestations which include a wide range of learner behaviour. These represent the three axes around which research in motivation has evolved.

As shown in Figure 4.2, the regulating factors are considered to have a pervasive influence on all components of motivation. They determine the goals/needs, control the desire, and regulate the behavioural manifestations of motivation. Because of their predominant effect, they represent the 'space' in which motivation develops. It is worth pointing out that Figure 4.2 is not claimed to be exhaustive, in the sense that there may be some other factors that the reader might wish to include.

The model of FL motivation proposed above suggests that the SLA, and the non-SLA approaches to motivation fit together into a coherent pattern which captures the main facets of motivation: (1) drive to learn and decision to do so, (2) the reasons or incentives behind this desire, (3) the effects of both desire and decision-making. In order to have a full picture of learners' motivation, the three aspects need to be addressed. The regulating factors shown on Figure 4.2 are necessarily taken into account in exploring learners' motivation.

### *An interactive model of motivation*

The interactive approach to motivation was proposed by Williams (1994). It is based on the view that (1) motivation involves making choices about actions and behaviour and (2) motivation depends on a complex interplay between factors inside and outside the learner.



*Figure 4.3: An interactive model of motivation adapted from Williams (1994)*

Drawing on cognitive approaches to motivation, Williams argued that motivation is not simply a matter of having a willingness to act or an incentive for acting but involves making calculated decisions and choices as to whether to do something and how much

effort to expend on it. She claimed that the decisions people make depend on two clusters of factors: (1) factors inside the learner such as perceived value of the activity, perceptions of success and failure, control, attitude and curiosity and (2) factors outside the learner such as teachers, parents, and society's expectations. As is shown in Figure 4.3, choice to act is central to the model, and the internal and external factors are placed in outward circles. What is important to note is that all the components involved (choice to act, internal and external factors) interact with each other in a dynamic way. According to the interactive model, motivation depends on a complex interplay between the choice to act, internal and external factors.

## 4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, an attempt was made to understand and conceptualise motivation for learning a new language. FL learning motivation, just like motivation for learning any other school subject, is in essence an internal state which consists of an affective desire to satisfy a need or pursue a goal, and of a cognitive decision-making process as to whether to act, and how much effort to expend. Basically, motivation is to be distinguished from its sources / incentives (e.g. a rewarding experience of success) and from its behavioural manifestations (e.g., perseverance and deployment of effort). What is important to note is that motivation, including its sources and manifestations, is subject to a number of factors inside and outside the learner. More than that, drawing on Williams (1994), all the variables involved interact with one another in a dynamic way.

As was suggested earlier in this chapter, the social psychological and educational approaches to motivation can be reconciled and integrated. The main difference between FL learning motivation and other types of motivation is that the first is more likely to be determined or affected by social goals or attitudes towards the TL culture as well as by affective factors such as cultural identity or FL anxiety.

Two points about motivation appear to be of particular importance to the present study: (1) students' motivational orientations or reasons for learning a language may vary from one learning situation to another or from one cultural context to another and (2) students' sources of motivation are to be distinguished from the manifestation of motivation such as effort or activity levels in the classroom.



## Chapter Five

### *Research Methods and Design of the Two Phases*

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#### 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is twofold: 1) to raise some of the issues involved in doing research and give evidence for the precautions taken to enhance the validity and reliability of the measures used, both at the development and administration levels of the instruments, as well as at the data analysis level; 2) to make a clear statement of the aims of the study and the audience it is addressed to, and also to give an overview of the general design and approaches adopted.

In order to avoid any confusion, discussion of some specific issues encountered at different phases of the study was thought to be best unravelled in parallel with the discussion and interpretation of results within their proper contexts. But first a brief overview about what is meant by research is in order.

#### 5.2 The nature of research

Research is thought to be one of the major means by which man sets out to come to grips with his environment and understand the nature of the phenomena around him. Drawing on the work of Cohen and Manion (1989), Bassey (1990a,b), and Guba and Lincoln (1987), an attempt is made, in the next sections, to provide a rapid overview of the main features of research, and to highlight the differences that exist between the major research paradigms.

Cohen and Manion (1989) contend that research has three characteristics which distinguish it from the other means of problem solving available to man, namely experience. First, whereas experience deals with events occurring in a haphazard way, research is systematic and controlled, relying on both inductive and deductive reasoning.

Second, research is empirical in that it turns to experience for validation. Third, research is self-correcting. This means that scientific procedures have built-in mechanisms to anticipate errors and are generally open to criticism and revision. Given its three distinctive characteristics, research appears to be a combination of both experience and reasoning and is therefore regarded as the most powerful search for 'truth', particularly with respect to natural sciences.

Research in education was characterised in the past (see Cohen and Manion, 1989) by an uncritical acceptance of authority of opinion not suggested by objective evidence, and particularly by an overdependence upon personal experience. Such approaches to research proved to be inefficient and unscientific and were thought to have hampered progress in educational research for many years. In the last few decades, advances have been made in educational research as a result of the application of the methods of social science to the study of education and its problems.

In adopting a social scientific orientation, educational research has attempted to integrate two competing views held by the social sciences: (1) the established traditional view of absolute truth, and (2) the more modern, relativistic view. The former holds that social sciences are essentially the same as natural sciences, and are therefore concerned with discovering the natural and universal laws that control individual and social behaviour. The latter conception emphasises how people differ from inanimate natural phenomena and also from each other.

Whether one aligns oneself to the view that social sciences are essentially the same or different from natural sciences depends on one's conceptions of three phenomena: (1) social reality, (2) the nature of knowledge, (3) human beings and the relationship between them and their environment. These three assumptions are discussed by Burrell and Morgan, cited in Cohen and Manion (1989). The first assumption is of an ontological kind and concerns the question of whether social reality is external to the individual, imposing itself from the outside, or whether it is the production of the individual's cognition or consciousness. Thus, depending on the view the researcher has about social reality, she/he will conceive of reality as unique and subjective, or rule-governed and objective.

The second assumption underlying the debate about the nature of social sciences concerns the nature and form of knowledge, and how it can be acquired and

communicated to others. The question is whether knowledge is real, capable of being transmitted in a tangible way, or whether it is more subjective and based on personal experience and insight of the world. How one aligns oneself in this debate profoundly affects the way one goes about uncovering knowledge of social behaviour. A view of knowledge as objective and tangible requires of the researcher an observer role and adherence to the methods of natural sciences. This view is often referred to as "positivism". By contrast, seeing knowledge as personal, subjective and unique imposes on the researcher a rejection of the methods of the natural scientist, and an adoption of an anti-positivist stance.

The third assumption that underpins the social reality debate is related to the conception of human nature, as well as the relationship between human beings and their environment. Two different pictures of the human being emerge from this assumption. One portrays him as responding mechanically to his environment, the other as the initiator of his own actions. Burrell and Morgan in Cohen and Manion (1989) expressed clearly the distinction:

*Thus, we can identify perspectives in social science which entail a view of human beings responding in a mechanistic or even deterministic fashion to the situations encountered in their external world. This view tends to be one in which human beings and their experiences are regarded as products of the environment; one in which humans are conditioned by their external circumstances. This extreme perspective can be contrasted with one which attributes to human beings a much more creative role: with a perspective where 'free will' occupies the centre of the stage; where man is regarded as the creator of his environment, the controller as opposed to the controlled, the master rather than the marionette... (pp. 7-8)*

These three sets of assumptions underpinning the conception of social reality, identified above, have direct implications for the methodological concerns of the researcher. Investigators adopting a positivist approach to the social world, viz. those who treat it as being real and external to the individual, are more likely to use a traditional quantitative approach. Others favouring the more subjective anti-positivist approach, and regarding the social world as personal and man-made, tend to accept more qualitative methods of research.

The essence of quantitative research is to uncover the laws and principles that govern human behaviour in order to draw generalisations, or solve a social or educational problem. Investigations are generally directed at analysing the relationships and regularities between selected factors or variables. Very often numerical, quantitative data are collected and statistical tests are carried out.

Perhaps the most widely used quantitative instruments in educational research are questionnaire surveys and scales. However such data collection methods have limited potential (Henerson, Morris and Gibbon, 1987) for producing data that adequately reflect the individual's inner reality. Researchers using quantitative methods may have little control over the quality of information they have access to in the sense that they are locked into getting answers only to the questions they have asked, missing out potentially useful untapped information; they have no easy way to check whether they have asked the right questions in the first place; and they have no direct control over checking subjects' responses. Nevertheless, quantitative methods can provide an economical and practical way of having access to specific information that applies to a large population. They are particularly adapted to carrying out experimental design research under controlled conditions, or to conduct attitude surveys using closed-answer questionnaires.

As a reaction against the limitations of quantitative methods, advocates of qualitative research methods argue that investigating the social world through measurement is misguided. As a result, researchers like Cicourel (1964) argue that one has to explore the research situation in terms of the participants themselves, by looking at their ideas and their views of reality. In other words one has to listen to the participants' 'own agenda' about an issue, and not impose one's views or frame of reference or our own reality upon them. The concept of reality can vary from one person to another, suggesting that there is not one reality but multiple realities.

Various qualitative procedures are devised to probe into inner social realities such as case studies, or participant observation. These all aim at establishing direct, intimate contact with participants, often over an extended period of time, in order to explore (often unsuspected) underlying realities. Such research methods lend themselves more to areas in which little ground has been uncovered, or to situations involving sensitive issues unlikely to emerge through questionnaire data.

In summary, whereas it is acknowledged that educational problems are generally best apprehended through direct immersion in the individual's subjective world, it is undeniable that quantitative methods still have an important role to play in capturing what is universal about human nature in the most economical way. Therefore, the qualitative and quantitative approaches to research in education would seem to be complementary to one another, rather than mutually exclusive. In most cases, the research methods adopted are dictated by the research goals and situation.

In contrast to Cohen and Manion (1989) who discussed the theoretical underpinning that distinguishes social science from natural science, Bassey (1990a,b) characterised the process of inquiry, and highlighted the three paradigm view of educational research. He contended that "research entails systematic, critical and self-critical enquiry which aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge" (Bassey, 1990a, p. 35). This definition suggests that an essential character of research is that it is purposeful. The purpose of research is to check a hypothesis or solve a problem that is likely to contribute to the advancement of knowledge, in particular to show something that was not known before. Another important characteristic of research that emerges from Bassey's conceptualisation of research is that research implies critical and self-critical inquiry viz. the data is expected to be collected, and analysed critically to ensure trustworthiness (validity and reliability). Bassey's definition of research also suggests that data is collected and analysed in a regular not haphazard pattern.

Bassey (1990a) proposed that the process of inquiry involves five stages. The first stage is to establish a theoretical and conceptual background to research that is normally the starting point of the inquiry. The second stage is to indicate the methodology that underpins the inquiry, and possibly to give a detailed criticism of the method in the light of having used it. The third stage is to ensure that the data is appropriate for its intended purpose, and that sufficient data has been collected. The fourth stage relates to data processing. It implies sifting the data to find patterns, condensing it into manageable proportions and trying to interpret it. The fifth stage, in the process of inquiry, is to make a claim to knowledge by expressing clearly, with an audience in mind, what it is that has been found, and why it is believed this is to be the case.

After examining the processes involved in research inquiry, Bassey (1990b) made an attempt to apply a three paradigm view to educational research by describing and

contrasting three paradigms: the positive research paradigm, the interpretive research paradigm, and the action research paradigm. These are outlined below.

#### *The positive research paradigm*

To the positivists, there is reality 'out there' in the world that exists irrespective of people; the world is rational and makes sense; and reality can be perceived in the same way by different researchers, and can be described, explained, and encapsulated in the form of generalisations. Positivists do not expect that they themselves are significant variables in their research. The data collected by positivists tend to be numerical and suitable for statistical analysis, hence such methodology is often referred to as quantitative.

#### *The interpretive paradigm*

In contrast to positivists, the interpretive researchers take the view that reality is a construct of the human mind, and that people construe the world in ways which are often similar but not necessarily the same. As a result, the world may not be rational and make sense, and language may often be interpreted differently; so sharing accounts of what has been observed may be problematic. Interpretive researchers are considered to be part of the world they are observing, and so they may change the situation they are studying. The data collected by interpretive research is usually verbal consisting of field notes and transcripts of conversation; hence this method is described as qualitative.

#### *The action research paradigm*

Whereas the positivist and the interpretive paradigms both involve the idea of observers trying to describe the phenomena of their surroundings, the action research paradigm is about researchers trying to improve the phenomena of their surroundings, such as teachers striving to enhance the quality of their teaching. The universally agreed characteristic of action research is that it is research designed to improve action. Action research does not seem to have any pre-established procedures; its methodological techniques reflect the pragmatic needs of teachers. To meet its needs for improvement, action research is an on going often cyclical process that remains constantly open to criticism.

In an attempt to make a clear distinction between the naturalistic and the positivistic approaches to research, Guba and Lincoln (1987) highlighted two major categories of differences between the two paradigms: 1) the assumptions/axioms underlying them, 2) the methodological procedures associated with them. These two types of differences are outlined below.

### *1. Axiomatic differences between the Naturalistic and Positivistic Paradigms*

*Axiom 1* relates to the nature of reality. Positivists assume that there exists a single tangible reality that can be fragmented into independent variables which can be studied independently of each other. Naturalists assume that there exist multiple realities which are constructions existing in people's minds.

*Axiom 2* concerns the inquirer-respondent relationship. Positivists assume that the inquirer is generally able to maintain a discrete distance from the object of inquiry. The naturalists assume that the inquirer and the respondent, in any human inquiry, inevitably interact to influence one another. For example, inquirers react to the mental images they have of respondents in developing the instrumentation; respondents answer or act in terms of what they perceive to be expectations held for their behaviour.

*Axiom 3* relates to the nature of truth statements. Positivists assert that the aim of the inquiry is to make generalisations which represent truth statements of enduring value. These generalisations are about similarities; differences are generally set aside as intrinsically uninteresting. Naturalists are not concerned about generalisations because as Guba and Lincoln pointed out "generalisations are much like radioactive materials, in that they decay and have a half life" (p. 148).

*Axiom 4* has to do with causality. Whereas positivists place a premium on the determination of the cause and effect relationships, naturalists take the view that only plausible inferences are possible.

*Axiom 5* relates to values. Positivists assume that inquiry is value free and can be guaranteed to be so by virtue of the objective methodology which the positivists employs. The naturalists assert that values impinge upon an inquiry in terms of the inquirers, the respondents and the context of investigation.

## *2. Methodological differences between the Naturalist and the Positivistic Paradigms*

### *Preferred methods*

Positivists tend to prefer quantitative methods probably because of their apparently greater precision and objectivity and also because of the advantage of being mathematically manipulable. Naturalists tend to prefer qualitative methods. Guba and Lincoln (1987) contend that the distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods is often mistakenly taken to be the chief mark of distinction between the paradigms. In practice, either methodology could be appropriate to either paradigm.

### *Source of theory*

Positivists insist on a priori formulation of theory. They are likely to assert that inquiry without a priori theory to guide it is mindless. The naturalists believe that an a priori theory constrains the inquiry to those elements recognised as important by the investigator and may, as a result, introduce bias. Theory is considered to be more powerful when it arises from the data rather than being imposed on them. Clearly, both positions have a place in educational research, and it is the context of investigation that may dictate which research method to adopt.

### *Instruments*

The positivist prefers non human devices for data collection purposes because they are more cost effective, they have a patina of objectivity and can be systematically aggregated. The naturalist prefers humans as instruments because they are able to take a holistic view and use their tacit knowledge.

### *Design*

For positivists 'good' design is a pre-requisite. By contrast, naturalists are less willing to specify a design in advance. They anticipate that the design will unfold as the inquiry proceeds. Each of these procedures has its own advantages and shortcomings, and researchers normally use the method that is particularly adapted to their research purposes and conditions of investigation.



### *Setting*

The positivists prefer to conduct studies under laboratory conditions because they are considered to represent the epitome of control. Naturalists choose to work in a natural setting where the phenomena of interest can be studied as they present themselves in 'real life'.

### *Rigour, trustworthiness and authenticity*

Naturalistic inquiry is sometimes attacked as not rigorous, in contrast to positivistic inquiry which has a well developed standard of rigour. To solve the problem, naturalists have devised a set of criteria parallel to the usual criteria of rigour, called criteria of *trustworthiness* to distinguish them from their positivist counterparts of validity and reliability. As was clearly summarised by Kyriacou (1990), trustworthiness consists of four criteria: 1) *truth value* relates to establishing confidence in the truth of the findings; 2) *applicability* means the extent to which the findings of a particular inquiry can be transferred to other contexts or with other subjects; 3) *consistency* relates to whether an inquiry would yield the same results if it were replicated with the same subjects; 4) *neutrality* is concerned with the degree to which the findings are not biased by the inquirer.

In order to meet these four criteria, naturalists propose a number of activities and techniques, which include triangulation of sources, persistent observation, checking findings and interpretations with the respondents, and keeping a reflexive journal about 'self' and 'method'.

Having established the nature, the goals and the processes of research, as well as the various paths offered to researchers in their quest for 'reality', the focus in the following sections will be on the approach adopted and on the precautions taken into account in conducting the present study.

## 5.3 Outline of the research design

### 5.3.1 Audience and statement of the aims

This study responds essentially to EFL educators' concerns about what makes students learn the FL, that is to say, their incentives, and their motivations for learning the language, as well as their preferred ways of going about the task of learning the new language.

Foreign language teachers are often faced with recurrent questions that remain unanswered. From my experience, I found myself asking the following:

- *Are my students genuinely interested in the language they are learning, or are they there just to fulfil exam requirements ?*
- *Do they perceive any specific reasons or needs for learning the language or do they conceive of it as a waste of time ?*
- *How do they react to the instructional practices they are exposed to in class, and how do they differ among themselves in their learning preferences ?*

The purpose of the present study, then, stems from a concern to investigate some of the questions that EFL teachers may have to face, concerning two fundamental aspects of FL learning, namely students' motivations and learning preferences.

Learners' motivations and preferences largely depend on what they bring to the learning situation, and also on what the learning situation has to offer them. Foreign language learners bring to the classroom all sorts of attitudes, expectations, views and personal preferences or styles. As was shown in Chapter 4 all such factors are believed to have a tremendous effect on learners' receptiveness, interest and performance in class. On the other hand, what happens in the classroom, may in turn play a significant role in triggering or shaping students' attitudes, motivations and preferences. It is widely recognised that teacher behaviour, attitudes, and instructional procedures may play a crucial role in enhancing, sustaining or depressing students' motivations (see Chapters 2 and 4). If teachers gain more insights into the preference patterns, and the motivational fabric of their students, there is much that they can do to foster effective learning. In addition, getting a better understanding of how groups of learners differ in their motivations and preferences and highlighting the link that may exist between the two is

likely to expand teachers' perceptions about some of the dynamics or processes involved in learning a foreign language.

In an attempt to encapsulate students' motivations and preferences, the study evolved through three progressive steps, moving from a broader to a more focused view of the areas explored. Throughout the three separate studies which were carried out, there was a slight shift in focus in order to accommodate the different facets of students' motivations and preferences. These studies involved an on-going process of piloting and refining of the measuring instrument. Questions of piloting will be tackled in the next part of the chapter; what follows is a general overview of the two phases of the study.

Phase one research took place in 1993-1994. It was mainly exploratory, broadly based and used samples ranging from 53 to 65 subjects. It consisted of two preliminary studies. The first, conducted in December 1993, aimed at capturing the patterns of students' learning styles or preferences relative to various aspects of their learning environment, (see Chapter 3 for an overview of learning style). Five dimensions of students' learning preferences were investigated:

1. The perceptual dimension which categorised students according to their preferred learning modality either visual, auditory or kinesthetic;
2. The social dimension which looked at students through their preferred ways of being grouped in the classroom: alone, or in groups;
3. The affective/emotional dimension which involves the reasons why they chose to learn English, and their favoured teacher behaviour;
4. The instructional dimension or what Curry (1983) referred to as the outward manifestation of student learning style which aimed at identifying students' preferences for a set of learning activities.

The second preliminary study of phase one research took place in the Spring of 1994, and was characterised by a narrower focus, and a balance between students' motivations and their preferences for learning English as a FL. Out of the vast array of dimensions addressed in Study One, two aspects were thought to be more promising to investigate in more detail:

1. The reasons why students chose to learn English, i.e., their motivational orientations towards learning the language;

2. Students' instructional preferences, i.e., the classroom learning practices they seemed to favour.

These two goals, as focus for research, seemed to be of more consequence to FL education in that they were felt to be crucial in bridging the gap between teaching and learning in a learner-centred curriculum. If teachers were better informed about the motivations and attitudes students brought into the classroom, as well as their reactions to what was going on in the classroom, they would gain a better understanding of their students' needs and perspectives, and would as a result be in a better position to promote their learning.

Two other considerations were taken into account in shifting the focus away from learning style towards motivations and preferences. First, undertaking a comprehensive and valid study of students' learning and cognitive styles required adequate, expedient, and adaptable measuring instruments models, which were not easily accessible or available at the time of the investigation. Second, students' motivations and preferences appeared to be at the top of FL research agenda and this offered the possibility of making interesting comparisons with other studies.

The second phase of the study was conducted during the Spring term of 1995 and addressed a larger sample of subjects. Whereas the major concern of phase one research was to narrow the focus of research and at the same time to develop and pilot the measuring instruments, phase two research concerned itself with going into more depth, namely focusing on the two major aspects of the study, motivation and learning preferences. More specifically, the study sought to investigate the following three areas, and their interrelationship:

1. students' preferred ways of learning in relation to a number of instructional practices,
2. students' sources of motivation (in relation to three dimensions: intrinsic, instrumental and integrative) and self-reported strength of motivation,
3. teachers' views about the usefulness of different instructional practices.

The rationale behind including strength of motivation was that motivational orientations do not indicate much about motivation itself. It was also thought interesting to explore the link that might exist between students' motivational orientations and their levels or intensity of motivation. Similarly, the reason for investigating teachers' views of

the usefulness of learning activities was to explore the similarities or divergences between what students preferred and what their teachers thought was useful to them.

### **5.3.2 Approach used**

Conducting qualitative studies using diaries, observations, and active participant methods can be very appealing to researchers who want to have a fresh look at learners' individual differences by probing into their innermost realities. However, engaging in such research requires a context free from any constraints that may hinder the researcher's control over the situation. By and large, purely qualitative research methods may be ideal for researchers fully involved in the educational settings they investigate, but they may prove to be hazardous for those who cannot have open access to subjects.

Although it is true that part of the purpose of the present research involved individual differences in motivation and learning preferences, the intention was to capture students' motivational and preference profiles, using a quantitative approach, namely questionnaires. This methodological orientation seemed to be consistent with the methods used in current research in the field of motivation and preferences. On the other hand, using a wider variety of sources and data collection procedures such as class observation is ideally desirable, but is, in practice, constrained by a number of factors or conditions.

By and large, in the field of motivation, questionnaires are of necessity one of the major tools in the evaluation of motivational orientations. They seem to be adapted to eliciting students' reasons for learning a FL or their attitudes towards the language, its culture, and TL community. Likewise, questionnaires are also extensively used in identifying learning preferences or capturing the profile of learning styles. The major reason for using questionnaires is that they can lend themselves to statistical procedures such as factor analysis which allow researchers to make generalisations within and between groups of respondents.

One of the major weaknesses attributed to questionnaires is that they may not reflect the whole picture of subjects' reality. This comes as no surprise given the restricted code of communication on which questionnaires operate. In order to have more access to subjects' subjective reality, and provide more evidence to the questionnaire data, follow up interviews proved to be a necessary addition. Semi-

structured interviews were conducted in the Phase Two research with the view of throwing more light on students' motivations and preferences as well as teachers views about the usefulness of a set of learning activities. More specifically, such follow-up interviews aimed at having subjects account for their attitudes, views, or preferences, and also set their own agenda in an attempt to project their subjective inner reality.

### **5.3.3 Rating scales**

Choosing the type of rating scales to use in a questionnaire is an important decision to make. Low (1988) pointed out that there are two main types of rating scales: monotonic and bipolar. In Low's (1988) words, a monotonic scale "starts from zero and increases (or decreases) continually along a single dimension" (p. 70). According to Low, a bipolar scale "could well be described as a 'mirror image' scale, as it involves two sides which are mirror images of each other in all but one feature" (p. 70).

Different researchers in the area of motivation and learning preferences have used different types of rating scales, having different numbers of alternatives, and with or without a mid-point option. For example, Reid (1987) used a 5-point bipolar scale including a mid-point option. Dörnyei (1990) and Ely (1986) used a bipolar scale with six alternatives but without a mid-point option. This type of scale may perhaps be more appropriate for adults than for adolescent students. Eckart (1995) measured adult students' reasons for learning foreign languages in Wales and used a 5-point monotonic scale without a mid-point (ranging from 1 of no importance, to 5 very important). Eckart's scale appears to be very appealing, but it is not certain that the symbolisation of 1 to 5 would not be confusing for all school children, for example. Willing (1988) explored EFL students' learning preferences, using a 4-point monotonic scale with the following options: no, a little, good, best. Willing's monotonic 4-point scale appeared to be somewhat restricted in scope but, at the same time, it seemed to be the most appropriate for the present study because of its simplicity.

By and large, for the purposes of this study, bipolar scales, which involve options ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' with a mid-point were completely avoided for two reasons: (1) the mid-point was assumed to mean different things to different people such as 'no opinion', 'don't know', 'neutral' or 'undecided'; (2) given that the intention was to assign scores to the different responses by subjects, it was thought

that the assignment of a meaningful score to the mid-point option would be problematic. Therefore, following Willing (1988), it was thought more appropriate to use a monotonic scale which measures the *importance of*, or the *degree of preference for*, or *agreement about* the items, on a 4-point scale ranging from 'very important' to 'not important at all' or 'prefer very much' to 'not at all', depending on the item in question.

## 5.4 Validity and reliability

Before describing the precautions taken to make the scales used in the present study more valid and reliable, it is worth discussing the major issues related to the validity and reliability of attitude instruments.

### 5.4.1 Validity

For any piece of research to claim credible results and conclusions, instrument validity has to be established. In other words, it must be shown that the instrument used is an appropriate one to measure what it purports to measure. Different procedures can be applied to assess instrument validity, depending on the type of measurement used and the context of investigation.

Given that the construction of self-report scales involves making hypotheses about unobservable constructs which have to be operationalised into test-items, construct validity, content validity and sometimes concurrent validity have to be demonstrated.

The first step towards establishing construct validity is to make sure that the constructs one wants to measure are clearly conceptualised and defined. The definition of the construct should include a list of its distinctive features and where possible a description of the human behaviours which typically reflect the presence of the construct. Once construct definition has been satisfactorily accomplished, the next step is to defend the construct validity of the instrument itself. Henerson, Morris and Gibbon (1987) defined construct validity as "the extent to which you can be sure it represents the construct whose name appears in its title" (p.136). They suggested four different ways in which construct validity could be measured:

1. Appealing to the opinions of qualified judges about what the construct seems to be measuring;

2. Calculating the correlation between results from researcher's instrument and results from another measure of the same construct;
3. Criterion group study which consists of administering the instrument to a criterion group, i.e., a group judged to possess an abundance or deficiency of the construct in question. This is believed to help identify the items that are inadequate for measuring the construct;
4. Appeal to logic. Henerson, Morris and Gibbon (1987) claimed that "when the construct can be easily defined, audiences will accept the instrument as logically related to the construct as long as they know that it has been administered fairly" (p.138).

This suggests that the circumstances of administration of the questionnaires make a great contribution to the validity of the instrument. This question will be tackled in due course. For the moment, let us turn our attention to the second type of validity: content validity.

Once the conceptual issues regarding the construct have been settled, its content validity has to be established. Very often, a construct is defined by several types of behaviour, and its accurate detection may require the measurement of all these types of behaviour. Content validity refers to the representativeness of the sample of questions included in the instrument. High content validity means that the instrument contains a representative sample of questions/items which map onto the various manifestations of the construct.

It seems then that the translation from hypothesis to measurement items can be fraught with difficulties. If the items are based on a fuzzy construct, or if they are not adequately mapped onto the construct they are meant to measure, the instrument may prove to be fallible and invalid.

The third approach to defending instrument validity advanced by Henerson, Morris and Gibbon (1987) is what is known as concurrent validity. They claimed that the concurrent validity of an instrument is achieved by "collecting data to see if the results obtained with the instrument agree with results from other instruments, administered at approximately the same time, to measure the same thing" (p.143). Concurrent validity is normally determined by calculating a correlation coefficient between the two measures.



Clearly, this type of validity may prove to be problematic given that results from different studies may not be reliably comparable.

#### ***5.4.2 Reliability***

Reliability addresses the question as to whether a measurement instrument is accurate in terms of producing consistent results each time it is used. The point is to show that results have not happened just by chance and that they are free from unpredictable kinds of error. Error that affects reliability may result from fluctuations in the mood or alertness of respondents, poor conditions of administration, differences in scoring or interpretation of results and random effects by respondents who may answer questions without trying to understand them. Coolican (1994) highlighted two distinct uses of reliability: internal reliability and external reliability.

##### ***Internal reliability or internal consistency***

Internal reliability refers to the extent to which an instrument is reliable within itself. Two questions are normally asked within this concept: the first is whether respondents are consistent in answering the questions included in the instrument, and do not contradict themselves. The second question is whether the items or questions themselves are homogeneous and assess the same attitude or characteristic. In this respect, Coolican (1994) made an important distinction between what he called a 'weight scale' and an 'attitude scale'. He claimed that whereas weight is measured by just one indicator (the dial reading), an attitude scale is often measured by many items or questions, hence the value of checking whether respondents, for instance, tend to answer each item of the scale consistently, that is in the same way as they answer all others. Coolican (1994) suggested three methods for checking internal reliability or consistency.

##### ***a. Split half method***

This method consists of contrasting the results of two comparable subgroups of items in the test within a single administration. The aim is to find out whether these subgroups of items yield the same results. A high split-half correlation means that the test is internally consistent, i.e., the items tend to elicit the same attitude from any given respondent.

*b. Item discrimination method or homogeneity*

These methods take into account respondents' performance on each item. For items answered along a scale of response, Cronbach's coefficient alpha is calculated to determine the extent to which all items on a questionnaire are homogeneous, that is they focus on the same attitude or characteristic.

*c. Item-analysis*

According to this method, items will produce higher reliability in a questionnaire if they discriminate well between individuals. One way of checking the discriminatory power of an item is to calculate the correlation between each person's score on the item and their score on the test as a whole. Another way is to identify the highest 10 % and the lowest 10 % individuals' scores on the test. The scores of these two groups of people are then totalled for each item. Items which do not discriminate highly between the two groups may be discarded.

***External reliability or stability***

This concerns the question of whether the instrument produces similar results on different occasions. The main method used for checking external reliability is what is referred to as *test retest method*. This consists of re-administering the instrument to the same respondents in order to demonstrate the extent to which the test yields consistent results across the two administrations. If they do, the test then has high reliability.

***Interrater reliability***

Fink (1995) identified two other types of reliability which contrast with both the internal consistency and the external stability discussed above, which he referred to as *interrater* and *intrarater* reliability. According to Fink, interrater reliability "refers to the extent to which two or more individuals agree", and intrarater reliability "refers to a single individual's consistency of measurement..."(p. 144).

The general assumption underlying such concepts is that special problems for establishing reliability arise when the instrument is actually a person, for example, an observer, interviewer, or rater. Henerson, Morris and Gibbon (1987) pointed out the value of interrater reliability in these terms:

*Not only may the test environment and the behaviour of the person who is being tested vary from time to time; the perceptions of the person doing the reporting may fluctuate. A rater might, for example, see the same behaviour as indicating "strong" enthusiasm at time A, and only "above average" at time B. The best way to demonstrate that your work has been minimally contaminated by inconsistency from "human instruments" is to use more than one person to do at least a sample of your interviews or observations. If different people report pretty much the same thing, that is evidence of consistency. (p.149).*

It needs to be recognised that establishing reliability is subject to time constraints and context-constraints including the inconvenience of overburdening the respondents with additional measurements. As Henerson, Morris and Gibbon (1987) maintain: "the special problems of establishing reliability in the field of attitude measurement should neither be minimised nor exaggerated" (p.154). The next section will examine the precautions taken to make the instruments used in the present research more valid and reliable.

#### **5.4.3 Precautions taken to establish validity and reliability**

The aim of this section is to describe the precautions taken to establish reliability and validity in generating the items, developing the scales, administering the questionnaires, and also in analysing the data.

However, before addressing these questions, it is worth clarifying the crucial issue related to preference measurement. First, a definition of the term preference is in order. Learning preference refers to the perceived enjoyment and the perceived gains and benefits derived from experience with a given learning procedure or activity. It is assumed that learners generally develop an affinity with certain ways of learning the language, based on their personality characteristics, their cognitive make-up, their needs, their expectations and their views about how languages are best learnt.

A priori, preference, like attitude, is a subjective phenomenon. It reflects the individual's subjective experience, which may be specific to a particular learning environment, including teacher personality, teaching style and competence. It is important to stress the fact that the purpose of educational research is not to invent or impose an objective reality on the observed world, but to look for and examine the inner

reality of the learner. The implication is that preference, being what it is, is subjective and is expected to be so.

However, in order to overcome the limitations and distortions of idiosyncratic situations, the present research sought to draw generalisations, using large samples, and at the same time to check for consistency of results through the use of three consecutive studies. In addition, follow-up interviews were used to provide more in-depth analysis of learner preferences.

### *Construction of the questionnaires*

It is to be noted that in the present study, every item had to be generated and every scale had to be developed in order to meet the research goals and match the specific context to be investigated. In developing and trying out the measuring instrument, a premium was placed on providing maximum validity and reliability that could be allowed by the research context. Three main guidelines were relied upon:

1. Achieving a clear understanding of the motivational constructs and the approaches underlying the selected classroom learning activities;
2. Opening a favourable and promising channel of communication with subjects, likely to give access to their inner world;
3. Adopting methods of analysis and interpretation likely to shed more light on the data.

The constructs underlying the instrumental, integrative, and intrinsic orientations, as well as the concept of strength of motivation are widely documented, and they presented little confusion as to what they meant. A great attempt was made to generate items that mapped onto the various behaviours reflected by such constructs.

In generating intrinsic motivation items, it was assumed that intrinsic motivation for learning English in the context investigated would be characterised by the following types of behaviour: a *general interest in English*; an *emotional involvement with the language*; an appreciation of the most salient features of the language, namely its *pronunciation* or *musicality*, and a desire to achieve excellence in the language for its own sake by *acquiring a good accent* or *speaking English like natives*.

All such items were included in the intrinsic orientation scale. It was hypothesised that if these items loaded on the same factor as yielded by factor analytic procedures this would indicate that: 1) the aggregate of items measure what they purport to measure viz.

intrinsic motivation; 2) that intrinsic motivation can be identified among the students investigated.

Similarly, the same principles were applied in generating the instrumental motivation items. An attempt was made to select items that reflected utilitarian reasons for using English, particularly adapted to the context investigated, such as *using the language for a job, at university or getting informed about science and technology*. Other items involving a more general use of English such as *getting informed about the world and understanding documents*. It was also thought essential to include another item *getting good baccalaureate grades* not so much because it was a good reason for starting a new language, but because it may represent an incentive for persisting in learning that language.

In generating integrative orientation items, care was taken to reflect the two main aspects which characterise this construct namely the desire to *facilitate communication with the TL group*, and the intention to *integrate with the TL group*. Therefore, it was assumed that integratively motivated students in the context under investigation, would like to *correspond, make friends with natives*, would *appreciate their character and manners*, would *identify with singers, writers, film stars*. They would like to *know about Anglophone culture, way of life*, would also like to *copy some aspects of Anglophone culture, and visit Anglophone countries*.

It needs to be noted that an integrative construct derived from an L2 Canadian context may not be perfectly adaptable to a Moroccan FL learning situation. 'Identification' need not be equated with the desire to relinquish one's identity, and think and behave like the TL community. Identification may involve any cultural subset such as popular music culture, the international academic community, the international world of fashion, travel, computers, business or commerce. Lennon (1993) pointed out that:

*... it should not be assumed that the development of integrative motivation involves a rejection of the learner's own linguistic and cultural identity or a wholesale embracing of the totality of English speaking culture. Children growing up bi- or tri-lingually are able to identify to some extent with two or more linguistic cultures successfully. Moreover, even monolingual speakers do not identify culturally with any more than a subset of the culture represented by speakers of that language (p.42).*

Lennon's (1993) view of integrative orientation appears to be compatible with foreign language contexts, in which an assimilative orientation is not necessarily needed or required.

Strength of motivation was mainly based on the perceived desire or willingness to learn English, and the amount of effort students thought they were prepared to deploy in learning the language. A strongly motivated learner was assumed to be someone who has a strong 'commitment to working hard', 'doing homework', without thinking of it as a 'waste of time'; someone who 'deploys considerable effort', and who displays some extra zeal, or enthusiasm towards learning the language by 'giving priority to reviewing English, first' and 'expecting to follow extra courses'.

The various learning activities available for FL teaching are well-known to practitioners worldwide, and their theoretical underpinnings are fully documented in the literature. Yet, given the plethora of such learning activities, which ones to include into the questionnaire was not an easy task. First, it was decided to select items based on well-established FL methodological approaches like the traditionally-grounded audio-lingual or cognitive code practices, and on the more recently developed communicative approach. However, in order to give a full picture of students' learning preferences, other important activities that did not seem to fit in well in any of these approaches had to be incorporated into the questionnaire, such as the use of songs, cassettes, TV, pictures/flashcards, reading comprehension, guessing, debates, oral presentations etc... In order to make such a wide range of activities more manageable for analysis, these had to be aggregated into groups or types of learning through factor analytic procedures.

Generally speaking, three factors determined the choice of items for inclusion into the questionnaire: familiarity with the work of other researchers, familiarity with the situation investigated, and research constraints.

For instance, familiarity with the work of various L2 motivation researchers provided examples of items used to uncover students' motivational orientations in various educational settings in the world, like Clément, Dörnyei and Noels (1994) who conducted their research among EFL secondary schools in Hungary. The 27 Likert-type questions they used included items such as: 'think/ behave like UK/US people', 'broaden my outlook', 'without English less travel', 'do not want bad marks' (p. 430). Similarly, Nunan (1988) provided examples of items used to compare teachers' and students'

ratings of 10 activities in an EFL learning context in Australia. Such activities included items like 'explanation to class', 'pronunciation practice', 'conversation practice', 'error correction', 'language games', and 'pair work' (pp. 91-92). In the same educational context in Australia, Willing (1988) assessed students' learning style preferences using 15 questions including items like: 'In class, I like to learn by reading', 'In class, I like to learn by conversation', 'I like to learn by games', 'I like the teacher to explain everything to us' (p. 106).

It needs to be noted that none of the scales used in the literature, either in motivation or in learning preferences, perfectly matched the Moroccan context under investigation. Therefore, new, relevant scales had to be generated. Insights into the socio-cultural and educational context investigated, including students' needs, interests, and expectations as self-perceived and as reflected by the community at large, proved to be helpful in selecting items adapted to the potential subjects.

The last factor that affected item-selection had to do with the constraints imposed by the research instrument itself. There seemed to be a limit to the type and number of items to be included in the questionnaire without inducing fatigue, irritation or confusion. An attempt was made to include items that best represented the construct or concept under investigation and at the same time that lent themselves best to being communicated to the respondents. In any conflicting situation, appeal to logic was the major source to rely on.

After the item selection problems had been settled, the next concern was to establish an effective channel of communication with respondents, that could enhance the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument. Two major considerations were relied upon: 1) sending a clear message through the questions; 2) facilitating a good reception of the message, and an unbiased error-free response from the subjects, in terms that the respondents could understand.

Despite the widely held view that any attitude scale should contain a balance of positively and negatively worded questions in order to avoid response bias, most of the items used in the present research were positively phrased. Negatively worded questions were generally discarded so as to avoid overloading respondents' L2 language processing abilities. The use of negatives was not thought to be as crucial as the simplicity and clarity required for understanding the questions. On the other hand, the attitudes

expressed in the questionnaire did not belong to the categories of emotionally loaded or sensitive issues which inspired strong feelings or embarrassment and which as a result needed some extra precautions. So on the whole, the use of negatively worded questions was thought to be unnecessarily confusing to the respondents. However, four negatively worded questions were incorporated into the scale for assessing strength of motivation, as measured by self-report, concerning the deployment of effort and the desire to learn, in order to avoid the effect of evaluation apprehension on the part of the respondents. In order to encourage the student to respond truthfully to such effort-evaluating questions, some adjuncts were inserted just at the beginning of the statements, like 'franchement', 'vraiment', 'personnellement', 'si possible', 'pour moi'. These words also served the purpose of humanising the questions and attenuating the blunt effect of the statements, and at the same time, reducing the embarrassment of students about evaluating themselves. It needs to be mentioned that all the questionnaires used in the study were written in French, the second official language in the country.

In drafting and administering the questionnaires, the focus was not only on communicating as clearly as possible through fixed choice items, but also on ensuring a good reception of the messages and an unbiased error-free response. The following guidelines were kept in mind:

1. Care was taken to make the overall design and layout clear, attractive, and clutter-free, in order to facilitate the task of respondents and as a result, ensure a high co-operation and response-rate.
2. The question forms were kept to the minimum so that all respondents would have the same kind of tasks to perform. The questions were restricted to closed answers and checking a box was the only task required.
3. The items were personalised by putting at the top of the list of items a general short statement such as "J'apprends mieux", "J'apprends l'anglais", "Je préfère". The rationale behind this was to encourage students to think and respond in their own terms not in general, or on behalf of others.
4. The questions were generally sequenced in random order to control for respondents' consistency of answer. It was also made sure that the questionnaires began with items that were straightforward and easy to answer.



5. In writing the instructions or introducing the questions, brevity and clarity were kept in mind. Key words were highlighted to make them stand out. It was assumed that a self-administered questionnaire had to be self-explanatory.

#### *Administration of the questionnaires*

Another important factor taken into account was the circumstances of questionnaire administration. The way questionnaires are administered is assumed to have a marked effect on how they are completed by respondents. In order to ensure a fair and effective administration, a number of measures were taken.

The questionnaires were handed in person to the students' regular teachers of English who were briefed about the general objective of the survey and were responsible for making the spoken presentation to students and allowing them to fill out the questionnaires at their own pace during regular class time. It took them generally 20 to 25 minutes to complete the questionnaires and they seemed apparently to have no problems in understanding, or responding to the questions as reported by their own teachers. Furthermore, the questionnaires were generally fully and consistently completed.

The time of the year and the geographical area used for collecting the data were thought to be crucial. The spring term was considered to be the ideal time to conduct such a study because students would be familiar with their instructional environment and procedures, and teachers would be more acquainted with their students' names and motivational levels. The data were collected under normal circumstances and no school event or national event was happening at that time, such as excitement about exams or holidays. On the other hand, all the data collected throughout the two phases came from Rabat, partly because it was the area I was most familiar with, which allowed me to make more informed choices about which schools to visit. Being the capital city of the country, Rabat is a kind of melting pot that includes people from all parts of the country. Incorporating subjects from other urban or rural areas was decided against in order to have a homogeneous and controlled sample. The administration results were quite satisfactory in the sense that the response rate for the two phases was 100 %.

The preceding sections highlighted the general precautions taken to increase the reliability of the instruments used, namely at the development and administration stage of

the questionnaires. The focus of the following paragraph will be on the measures taken to check and try to improve on the reliability and the validity of the instruments at the data analysis stage.

### *Data analysis*

In analysing the data, an attempt was made to measure the reliability of the scales and questionnaire items involved. For each factor uncovered by factor analysis procedures, two types of Cronbach's alpha values were computed. The first showed the general reliability of the factor, the second pointed out the reliability of the factor if a particular item was deleted. The purpose of highlighting the second type of Cronbach's alpha values was to find out whether the potential absence/presence of an item would contribute negatively or positively to the general reliability of the scale or factor involved. If for example, the alpha of a factor markedly increased when an item was deleted, then this item would have to be discarded because its presence reduced the reliability of the factor. For example, in preliminary Study Two, the alpha for the instrumental orientation factor substantially increased when the item "learn computer science" was deleted. Consequently, this item was considered invalid and was discarded from subsequent scales.

On the other hand, in order to improve on the validity of the scales, items which proved to be problematic were deleted and replaced by more adequate ones. For example, in preliminary Study Two, the item "because I like the musicality of English" cross-loaded on two factors, the intrinsic, and the instrumental, suggesting that the item in question was interpreted in two different ways by respondents. Some subjects perhaps confused music with musicality. Therefore, in subsequent Phase Two research, this item was replaced by "because English has a pleasant pronunciation".

## 5.5 Overview of the two phases of research

### 5.5.1 Preliminary study one (phase one research)

#### *Aims*

This study stemmed from a concern with approaches to ELT education which place the learner in the limelight, and put learner needs, motivations and preferences at the centre of the stage. Adopting a learner-centred approach to ELT curriculum and methodology is considered to be a good step forward towards effective teaching/learning the language.

In this study the main goal was to investigate some aspects of students' learning style preferences which could possibly be measured via a self-report questionnaire. After a review of the literature, no ready-made or easily applicable test was available for measuring students' learning styles. So, a questionnaire was designed with the view of covering a vast array of potential learning preferences which were typically domain-specific and adapted to the educational context under investigation.

Five dimensions of learning style were advanced. The first dimension aimed at identifying students' perceptual modality preferences, viz, their preferred modes of accessing language input: (1) visual, i.e., through the eyes; (2) auditory, i.e., through the ears; (3) kinesthetic, i.e., by doing things, through whole body involvement.

The second learning style dimension was social in perspective and aimed at examining students' preferred ways of being grouped which involved learning alone, or with a group of students. The items included in the perceptual and social dimensions mentioned above were inspired by Reid's (1987) study on the learning style of ESL students in the USA. The aim of the present study was to find out which perceptual modality EFL learners in Moroccan schools were dominant at, and which social groupings matched their learning preferences.

The third dimension of learning style investigated related to what Curry (1983) referred to as the outer layer of students' learning style, that is their instructional preferences. These are considered to represent the outward manifestations of more deeply ingrained cognitive and personality styles. It is assumed that learners' preferred ways of learning a language are psychologically based, and reflect deeper cognitive styles. For example, learners who prefer to learn the language through formal grammar

rules and problem solving activities are considered to be analytic learners, those who prefer to use pictures, drawings, or cassettes are thought to be more concrete learners. Similarly, individuals who are more keen on holistic strategies such as guessing or predicting are supposed to be global learners. However, such generalisations are to be used with caution since the underlying constructs and the way they are measured are fraught with difficulties. The items selected to measure students' instructional preferences consisted of a wide variety of classroom learning activities, some of which were communicatively oriented, others were more traditional in orientation. The inclusion of such items was partly motivated by the work of Alcorso and Kalantzis (1985), Nunan (1988), and Willing (1988), who attempted to measure the learning style or instructional preferences of foreign migrants in Australia learning English as a FL. Most of the activities they included in the questionnaires had a striking similarity to the activities used in EFL classes in Morocco. Therefore, incorporating some of such items was enticing, in so much as this allowed for comparisons across studies.

The fourth dimension of learning style was personality-based. It had to do with students' favoured teacher behaviour. It was thought interesting to find whether students' perceived preferences were aligned to the view of the teacher as facilitator, corrector of errors, transmitter of knowledge or provider of support. One reason behind investigating students' favoured teacher behaviour was to have some indications about students' preferred instructional needs or styles: active, independent style of learning, or passive, dependent style. This dual notion of active/passive style of learning was highlighted in the study undertaken by Ellis (1993) among two English learners of German in London. These learners differed distinctly along the active/passive dimension. One preferred an active, independent, and unstructured style of learning, the other favoured a rather more passive, dependent, and structured style. The rationale behind investigating this dimension was to find out whether Moroccan learners were prepared to take responsibility for their own learning and be independent, or whether they needed a more structured dependent approach to learning.

The last dimension investigated was of an affective order, and had to do with the reasons that motivated students to learn English. Motivation was assumed to be an important, emotional element of learning style (see for example Dunn, Dunn and Price (1979)). The items selected to measure this dimension of learning style appealed mainly to

students' emotional involvement with, and attitude towards, the language, TL culture, and English class.

The rationale behind incorporating a large array of learning style elements or dimensions into the preliminary study was, first, to encapsulate the profile of the Moroccan EFL learner, and second, to have a global diagnosis before proceeding to a more selective examination. In other words, the aim was to have a broad view of students' distinctive features before focusing attention on more specific and promising areas.

Apart from investigating students' learning style preferences, a major concern of the study was to find out the extent to which students' instructional preferences matched the activities they were exposed to in the classroom. The question was whether, as consumers of ELT, they got what they wanted. Since it was practically impossible to carry out a long term observation of the context under investigation, it was decided to evaluate the frequencies with which key activities were used in the classroom, as perceived by students' self-report. Students had to rate the frequency in which the activities were used in class on a three-point scale ranging from "very often" to "rarely" (see appendix A). If anything such a measure was thought to check on how much students were familiar with the instructional practices they had to express their preferences about.

### ***Instrument***

A self-report, Likert-type 86-item questionnaire was developed. It comprised five sections to match the main research questions.

Section 1 asked students to evaluate the frequency with which a set of ten key classroom activities were used by their own teachers.

Section 2 comprised 34 items all focused on classroom learning activities. Twelve were traditionally-oriented like learning grammar rules or repeating after the teacher, and six were communicatively-based like class discussion or role-play. The other nine items were neither communicative nor traditional and had to do with active learning through discovery, the use of cassettes, TV, newspapers etc. It is to be noted that whenever possible key activities were double checked in order to verify students' consistency of response.

Section 3 contained a total of 15 items dealing with students' perceptual modality and grouping preferences. Twelve items assessed students' preferences for learning words or sentences either through reading, listening, or doing things, like drawing or role playing. Three items measured students' preferences relative to their groupings in class.

Section 4 consisted of 15 items which had to do with various types of teacher behaviour such as corrector of errors, transmitter of knowledge, or provider of support.

Section 5 contained 12 items having to do with students' perceived reasons or motivations for learning English such as emotional involvement with the language, its culture or purely pragmatic reasons.

Students had to rate each item on a four-point, monotonic scale ranging from "prefer very much" to "not at all", "strongly agree" to "not at all" or "very important" to "not at all", depending on the nature of the questions. A fifth mid-point option was not included for the following reasons:

1. By its very nature, a monotonic scale does not lend itself to a mid-point option.
2. A mid-point option proves sometimes to be confusing and misleading for both respondents and scorers.
3. There seemed to be no adequate term or phrase for a fifth option, that could be easily accessible for students.
4. Even though it is claimed that adding a fifth option increases the reliability of the instrument by expanding score variability, it was thought that it would also encourage random answers on the part of respondents.

However, whereas a fifth option was discarded, it was thought desirable to include an off the scale "no opinion" option in order to check for consistency of students' answers.

### ***Data analysis***

The participants were 54 high school students, aged 16 to 18, who came from two schools in Rabat. Given the relatively small size of the sample (N=54), no other statistical devices could be used apart from the mean scores and percentages. On the other hand, given the narrow range of scoring used, varying from one to four, mean scores did not yield a very revealing picture. So, the percentage level of response of those who

responded very high to items was adopted as a means of giving a more revealing picture of the weight given to each item by respondents.

### ***5.5.2 Preliminary study two (phase one research)***

Data analysis and results of study one revealed some interesting patterns in the students' preferences and attitudes. Two areas proved to be of particular interest and worthy of further attention and investigation: (1) students' reasons for learning English, i.e., their motivational orientations; and (2) students' instructional preferences. As was mentioned earlier, these two areas of research were high in the ESL/EFL research agenda worldwide, and bringing the Moroccan EFL situation into the scene appeared very enticing.

The shift away from a purely learning style perspective was determined by two types of considerations. A fully-fledged learning style measurement must of necessity integrate cognitive or personality-based dimensions, and as yet, no adequate model of learning style adaptable to EFL learning situations was available. On the other hand self-reporting on cognitive and personality dimensions of learning style could be fraught with difficulties. It would require the use of a more sophisticated type of language which could be beyond students' understanding particularly in relation to self-administered questionnaires.

### ***Aims***

The study had as its objective to investigate three goals: (1) students' motivational orientations, (2) students' instructional preferences, (3) teachers' ratings of their students' motivation.

The first aim was to investigate students' motivational orientations with respect to three dimensions: (1) instrumental, (2) integrative, (3) intrinsic. As described in Chapter Four, the first two orientations had been widely researched in different part of the world among ESL and EFL learners. The third one intrinsic motivation had not yet been viewed as an orientation in itself for FL learners. It had been traditionally associated with learning in general educational settings, together with other sources of motivation like the extrinsic or achievement dimensions. For the purposes of this study, it was decided to incorporate the educational psychology concept of motivation within the traditional,

applied linguistic, view of motivation, in order to apply a broader perspective to FL motivational orientations.

The second goal of the study was to measure students' classroom motivation as evaluated by their teachers' ratings of their motivational levels in terms of interest and participation shown in class as well as their commitment to practice and homework. Teachers had to rate each student on a five-point monotonic scale ranging from highly motivated to poorly motivated. The purpose was to categorise students according to their levels of motivation in class in such a way as to allow a comparison between students' motivational orientations and their levels of classroom motivation. Given that students' motivational orientations do not say much about their motivation per se, establishing the link between students' orientations and levels of classroom motivation was thought to be useful.

The third goal of this preliminary study was to investigate students' preferences with regard to a number of traditional and communicatively-oriented activities. The ultimate aim of this study was to establish the link between students' motivational orientations, instructional preferences and teacher ratings of their motivation in class, in order to find out whether different types of motivation matched different patterns of learning preferences.

### ***Instrumentation***

#### ***Motivational orientation scale***

The motivational orientation scale consisted of three subscales designed to measure students' intrinsic, instrumental, and integrative orientations. The constructs underlying such orientations had been widely described and investigated. However, they had to be operationalised in terms appropriate to the situation investigated in order to match the socio-cultural and educational context of the subjects. A total of 15 items with five items for measuring each sub-scale were generated. Seven of the 12 items used to identify students' reasons for learning English in Study One were re-used, eight more items had to be created to allow for a balance between the three sub-scales.



### *Teacher ratings*

Teachers were asked to rate each of their students on a five-point scale ranging from highly motivated to poorly motivated, in terms of the interest and participation they showed in class as well as their commitment to practice and homework. Each student, then, had a score ranging from one to five. Even though such scores may be claimed to be subjective, as teachers' rating standards may vary from individual to another or from class situation to the next, they were assumed to be reliable enough for categorising students in terms of their levels of motivation. In order to minimise the scope for error, care was taken to select trained and experienced teachers who had taught their students long enough to be largely familiar with their levels of motivation.

### *Activity preference items*

This part of the questionnaire was meant at measuring students' preferences for a set of 18 items, half of which were communicatively-oriented, and the other half were traditional in orientation. All items were selected from study one and allowed for a comparison between students' preferences with regard to two contrasting sets of activities that are at the heart of a major methodological issue in FL teaching, namely the place to be given to formal, conscious learning as opposed to unconscious, communicative learning.

### *Data analysis*

A total of 65 high school students and their teachers took part in the study. In order to capture the general picture of students' preferences, mean scores and frequencies were calculated. More specifically, the learning activity items were analysed using the rank-ordering of items according to the highest percentage level of response, that is, the percentages of respondents who gave the highest ratings to items. The use of such percentages was thought to highlight students' preferences in a more suggestive way than through the use of mean scores.

Factor analysis procedures were applied to both the motivational orientation and the learning preference items in order to identify the clusters that define the subjects' orientations and their learning style preferences.

As regards teacher ratings of students' classroom motivation, students were allocated scores ranging from one to five, according to their level of motivation. Diagrams showing the relationship between teacher rating scores, motivational orientations and, activity preferences were also plotted.

In order to find out the relationships and the links between students' motivational orientations and type of activity preferences, correlational analyses were conducted.

### ***5.5.3 Phase two research***

#### ***Aims***

The main purpose of Phase Two research was to give as accurate a picture as possible about what motivated students to learn the language and how they thought they preferred to go about it. To this effect, it was felt necessary to probe more deeply into the nature and intensity of their motivations, and into their preferences. It was also thought to be worth bringing teachers into the scene to give their views about what activities they thought were useful to their students. The aim was to enlighten and make students' perceived preferences stand out in a more vivid way. In order to give more supportive evidence to the questionnaire data, it was thought desirable to conduct follow up interviews with both teachers and students. Phase two research addressed the following areas and their relationships:

1. Students' preferred ways of learning in relation to a number of instructional practices,
2. Students' sources of motivation (in relation to three dimensions: intrinsic, instrumental and integrative) and strength of motivation (both self-reported and teacher-rated),
3. Teachers' views about the usefulness of different instructional practices.

#### ***Instrumentation***

The instruments used consisted of questionnaires addressed to students and teachers, as well as follow up interviews conducted with both teachers and students. A full description of the instruments used is given below.

*Student questionnaire*

A total of 336 high school students took part in the study. A self-report, fixed choice, 59-item questionnaire was developed, whose aim was to measure (1) students' motivational orientations, (2) students' strength of motivation, (3) students' activity preferences. To match each of these measures, the questionnaire was divided into three sections (see appendix C).

The first section contained a total of 19 items aimed at probing students' motivational orientations with respect to three scales, intrinsic, instrumental and integrative. The items chosen for inclusion in these three scales took into account the subjects' interest, socio-cultural and educational context, and were mainly adapted from Study Two. Out of the 15 items used previously, 12 proved valid and reliable enough to be re-used, such as *because I like English*, *because I am interested in English*, *to have more job opportunities*. Two items were dropped: (1) *to appreciate songs/films in English* was problematic because it did not, as expected, load on the cultural orientation factor; (2) the item *to be able to learn computer science* was detrimental to the Cronbach's alpha of the factor it loaded on. Similarly, one item had to be rephrased to avoid ambiguity: *I like the musicality of English* became *English has a pleasant pronunciation*. Six new items had to be added with the view of reinforcing the validity and reliability of the scales, such as *to get informed about science and technology*, *I like the character and manners of Anglophones*, *to understand the way of life of Anglophones*.

The intrinsic orientation items aimed at measuring students' emotional involvement with, and interest in, English per se, namely its phonological distinctive features, beautiful expressions, which represent the most striking and appealing aspect of English for many learners.

The instrumental orientation items had to do with learning the language for practical and utilitarian reasons, i.e. learning it as a means to an end, not as an end in itself. The items included were related to various types of needs associated with learning English as a FL in the context investigated such as using English for academic pursuits, job purposes or to facilitate transfer of technology. Other types of orientations, general in scope, or specific to the educational context, were perceived to be relevant such as: *to get good grades*, *to understand documents*, and *get informed about the world*.

The integrative orientation items had to do with interest in native speakers and their culture. All the items on these scales were sequenced in a random order so as to avoid response bias. Students had to rate each item on a four-point scale from totally agree to not agree at all.

#### *Strength of motivation scale*

The aim of this scale was to measure students' perceptions about the strength of their motivation, i.e., the intensity of their desire or willingness to learn the language and the amount of effort they thought they were prepared to invest in the learning task. The scale consisted of eight items, four of which were negatively worded in order to minimise the effect of response bias due to evaluation apprehension.

Reliability analysis for the strength of motivation scale was computed. Results showed that the Cronbach's alpha was large enough (.77) to indicate that the scale was adequately reliable for research purposes.

In order to further validate and delineate clusters that would define the strength of motivation in this particular context, factor analysis procedures were applied. Results confirmed the hypothesis that there were two factors at work in measuring strength of motivation: 1) the desire to learn, 2) the amount of effort deployed.

#### *Learning activity preferences items*

The third section of the questionnaire concerned itself with identifying subjects' preferences for a set of 32 activities. Most of these were either communicative or traditional in orientation and were adapted from phase one studies.

Results from the previous study demonstrated that students preferred by far traditionally oriented activities over communicative ones, except for the item 'participate in class discussion' which fared high on the activity ranking table. It was decided then to introduce four more items related to class discussion in order to explore in more detail students' preferences to engage in discussions. Similarly, students' marked preference for engaging in traditional activities raised the question as to whether students' favoured approach to learning tended to be traditionally oriented as well. To answer this question, new items related to active learning were included such as problem-solving, discovering and guessing.

A number of considerations were taken into account in selecting the types of activities to be included into the questionnaire. As there had been frequent paradigm shifts in FL teaching methodology, it was thought interesting to examine students' reactions towards the various instructional procedures that subsequently invaded the FL classroom. Thus, the activities included reflected major methodological trends such as the structural approach, the communicative approach, cognitive learning and active learning.

Another concern in selecting the questionnaire items was to match the work of a number of researchers (see Chapter Three) like Alcorso and Kalantzis (1985), Nunan (1988), and Willing (1988), whose aim was to highlight EFL learners' preferences and learning styles, using questionnaire items similar to those selected for the present study.

The last consideration taken into account in developing the preference part of the questionnaire was to select activities most likely to be familiar to students and which could be described and communicated to the students in a straightforward, unambiguous, and economical manner. More specifically, activities which require an elaborate description like for example 'information gap' tasks were not included.

#### *Teacher questionnaire*

A self-report, Likert-type, 32-item questionnaire, identical to the activity preference part in student questionnaire, was addressed to 25 teachers, 13 of whom were students' own teachers, the others came either from the same schools that participated in the survey or from similar schools. Care was taken to include both male and female teachers in the sample.

Teachers had to rate each of the items on a four-point scale ranging from "very useful" to "not useful at all". The rationale behind evaluating teachers' ratings of the usefulness to their students of such activities was to find out whether there was a match or mismatch between what students preferred and what their teachers thought was useful to them.

#### *Follow-up interviews*

Interviews were conducted among 26 students and 11 teachers about a week after they had completed the questionnaires. The principal aim was to probe more deeply into

students' motivations and preferences, and examine teachers' views about the usefulness of certain instructional devices. Having direct contact with subjects was considered as an opportunity to: 1) have subjects account for their views, attitudes, and preferences, 2) check on some of the apparent contradictions or inconsistencies in their responses to some of the questionnaire items.

Before setting out to conduct the interviews, it was thought worthwhile to have an overview of the questionnaire responses for two purposes: (1) to get the general profile of the interviewees, (2) to determine which issues or questions needed to be given more attention or more emphasis during the interview sessions.

One of the main constraints imposed by the research context was the lack of subjects available for interviews. On the whole, teachers were not easily accessible and generally not available, for all sorts of reasons, namely full timetables together with personal commitments. Students were generally very enthusiastic about being interviewed, but they could not be approached directly. They had to be introduced by their teachers, and had to miss a class to find time for the interview session.

Given such circumstances, every interview opportunity was considered as a special event that had to be taken advantage of as effectively as possible. Care was taken to make the interviewees as comfortable as possible, and reduce the potentially threatening influence engendered by interview situations. The purpose of the interview was briefly explained, without overemphasising the importance of subjects' responses, so as not to encourage them to bring about desirable answers. Attention was generally directed to the area of concern, but ground was left for respondents to volunteer answers or impose their own agenda. The purpose was to strike a balance between a direct and an indirect mode of interviewing in order to have access to different sources of data.

### *Student interviews*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted among 26 (15 males, and 11 females) students registered in the schools which had participated in the questionnaire surveys, about a week after the administration of the questionnaire. The interview sessions took place in the schools, lasted about 30 to 60 minutes, and were conducted individually to avoid any negative pressure that could be occasioned by pair or group interviews. Both French and Arabic were used for communicating with interviewees, depending on which

language they felt more inclined to use. Taking notes proved to be quite efficient and effective for recording the data and care was taken to write down the exact words of interviewees. In reporting on the interview results, a close translation of the exact quotes from respondents was used in order to retain the flavour of what was said in French or Arabic. Student interviews aimed essentially at providing more evidence for the questionnaire data by:

1. Having students account for their preferences and their orientations;
2. Probing into specific aspects of their attitudes towards the language and its culture, and also understanding the mechanisms behind their preferences.

The interviewees were asked two main questions:

1. To identify and account for their most preferred activities;
2. To account for their attitudes to the language, its culture, and the TL community as delineated by the profile of their questionnaire answers. Very often, students' agenda had to be attended for; especially when it was considered potentially enlightening.

#### *Teacher interviews*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 teachers (3 males and 8 females) who had already completed the questionnaire on the usefulness of classroom learning activities. The interviews were conducted in schools, on an individual basis, lasted about one hour, and followed a pre-established interview schedule. They generally took place a week or two after the administration of the questionnaire. The questions addressed related to the following points:

1. The activities teachers found most useful;
2. The activities they found difficult to use;
3. The activities they used just because they had to;
4. The activities they did not use because of constraints;
5. The activities they considered useful, apart from those mentioned in the questionnaire.

For all these questions, teachers' agenda had to be attended for whenever it was felt relevant or useful. The purpose was to have access to their inner reality and see whether it was congruent with their students' concerns.

The interviews were conducted in French or English depending on the personal orientation of the teachers. The same interviewing procedures used with students were

equally applied with teachers. They were put at ease, and a compromise was made between the direct and indirect style of questioning.

### *Data analysis*

Statistical procedures such as factor analysis, correlations, t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used for analysing the data.

Following Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1994), factor analysis procedures were applied to the motivational items in order to delineate subjects' orientations for learning, and dimensions to their strength of motivation.

Mean scores and percentage level of response were calculated in order to rank-order activities according to students' preferences and teachers' usefulness. Clusters of learning activity preferences or learning styles were also determined using factor analysis procedures.

On the other hand, in order to examine the relationships that may exist among all the motivational and preference variables, and factors involved, it was thought necessary to calculate the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients among them.

In order to determine whether the variation in students' motivations and preferences across gender, school status, and level of motivation was significant, a t-test was performed. Similarly, to check if the variation in students' motivations and preferences across subject of specialisation was significant, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Scheffe's test were used.

The present chapter provided a general view about the design and approaches used in the two phases of the study. It also tackled some of the issues involved in dealing with the validity and the reliability of the measuring instruments.

The next three chapters will give a fuller description of the two studies undertaken in phase one and the study which makes up Phase Two research. For each of one of these three studies, results will be analysed and discussed in connection with some of the methodological issues not treated in the present chapter.



## Chapter Six

### *Learning Style Preferences of EFL Students in Morocco*

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#### 6.1 Introduction

In second language acquisition research, there has been a shift of emphasis away from the teaching methods, towards learning styles and strategies. Research findings have shown that individual learners approach the task of learning a new language very differently (Wenden and Rubin, 1987). One way of accounting for this difference is in terms of learning style. Different constructs of learning style have been developed by researchers in their attempt to identify the learning styles of foreign language (FL) learners (Reid, 1987; Willing, 1988; Ellis, 1993). Each model has its own 'view' of learning style, and uses different taxonomies to characterize the learning behaviour of individuals. For the purposes of this study, learning style may be defined as learner preferred ways of learning and relating to the learning environment. This includes the following components:

1. Classroom activities such as learning grammatical rules, using the dictionary, games.
2. 'Perceptual modality' preferences (that is, learner-preferred ways of accessing the information through the eyes, by reading, through the ears, by listening, or through whole person involvement/with 'hands on', i.e, by performing things in the classroom like writing or acting out dialogues) as well as ways of being grouped (in groups or alone).
3. Teacher behaviour (corrector of mistakes, transmitter of knowledge, provider of affective support, etc...).
4. Motivational orientations, and attitudes towards the learning environment including English, its culture, and English class.

The primary objective of this preliminary study was to gain insights into the perceived learning style preferences of EFL learners in Moroccan secondary schools. To this end, five questions were addressed:

1. *What are students' perceived learning activity preferences: communicative activities or traditional ones? On the basis of their instructional preferences, what type of learning do they favour?*
  - *Studial learning, i.e., formal, form-focused, accuracy-based, conscious learning?*
  - *Experiential learning, i.e., informal, fluency-based, communication-oriented learning?*
  
2. *What are students' sensory modality preferences? In other words, which perceptual channel(s) do they favour: a) Visual, b) Auditory, c) Kinesthetic? And what are their preferred ways of being grouped?*
  
3. *What are their preferred modes of teacher behaviour?*
  - *Teacher as provider of support, e.g., sympathy, security?*
  - *Teacher as provider of instruction, e.g. knowledge, feedback, variety?*
  - *Teacher as facilitator?*
  - *Teacher as provider of appropriate learning conditions?*
  
4. *How do students relate to the language, its culture and the learning environment, and how is this reflected on their motivational orientations?*

A secondary concern of the present study was to assess the frequency with which a number of key learning activities were used in class, as perceived by the students investigated. The rationale behind this was to explore the extent to which there was a match or a mismatch between the activities they preferred and the frequency with which these were used in class. The question was: as consumers of ELT did the students get what they wanted?

Before describing the methodology and instruments used in this study, it is worth defining two types of learning activities that are of primary importance to the area investigated in the two phases of research, namely traditional and communicative activities.

### *Communicative activities vs. traditional activities*

The theoretical background to learning activity preferences has already been dealt with in Chapter 2. However, for the purpose of the present study, two terms need to be conceptualized.

The terms 'communicative' and 'traditional' are well-established notions in FL teaching methodology, and are generally associated with two distinct types of classroom practice. However, in order to gain a better understanding of the learning activity preferences dealt with in the present study, it is judged necessary to highlight the main features that characterise the two types of activities.

Communicative activities have emerged with the advent of the communicative approach in the 1970s, and as a result, all the non-communicative activities have been referred to as traditional. So, on the whole, the two types of activities differ from each other in many respects, i.e., in their objectives, the way they are conducted in the classroom, and their theoretical underpinning about language and language learning.

Communicative activities are message-oriented and, as a result, they emphasize fluency and communicative interaction in the classroom. They are generally conducted in group or pair work, in which students are expected to use communicative functions, exchange messages, and bridge information or opinion gaps. Such activities are based on theories which view language as a system of meanings and language learning as a subconscious process.

Traditional activities, by contrast, are thought to be knowledge-oriented activities which emphasize accuracy and the mastery of language forms and systems. They are generally conducted individually or in teacher-fronted classes in which students are expected to learn discrete language items, and to compose grammatically correct sentences. Language is seen as a system of forms and language learning as primarily a conscious process.

## **6.2 Methodology**

### *Measuring instrument*

A self-report, Likert-type, questionnaire was designed, based on personal experience with ELT in schools, and drawing on the learning style measures used in the research literature (Reid, 1987; Nunan, 1988; Willing, 1988; Ellis, 1993). In order to explore and

investigate a wide range of questions, 86 items were incorporated in the questionnaire. To make the task more manageable for the subjects, the questionnaire was divided into five sections. Each section was designed to cover one research question (a copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix A).

The purpose of *section 1* was to evaluate students' perceived frequency, in class, of 10 learning activities, in order to provide evidence that they had been exposed to such activities in class, and also to highlight the match or the mismatch between what they preferred and what they got in class. For practical reasons, only key activities that were either communicatively-oriented or traditionally-based were included in this section.

*Section 2* consisted of a total of 34 items aimed at evaluating students' preferences relative to a wide array of activities reflecting different learning orientations. The selection of these activities was determined by the following criteria:

- a concern for selecting activities which best reflected ELT in Moroccan schools, and which, incidentally, were strikingly similar to the ones investigated in the studies by Alcorso and Kalantzis (1985), Nunan (1988), and Willing (1988), all of which have been already discussed in chapter 3.
- an attempt to include activities based on the various methodological approaches which had markedly influenced foreign language instruction, such as the structural approach, the cognitive-code learning approach, and the communicative approach.
- care was taken to include activities related to different levels of language, and language skills, namely the phonological, lexical, and grammatical levels, together with reading, listening, writing, and communicative skills.
- a major and decisive criterion was to give more priority to activities that could readily be described and communicated to the students through a questionnaire.

Based on the criteria outlined above, the following set of items was developed:

- Activities based on grammar learning and accuracy
  - understand grammar explanations/rules
  - do grammar exercises
  - ask the teacher to correct my mistakes
  - correct my own mistakes

- Activities based on vocabulary learning and pronunciation practice
  - use the dictionary
  - copy new words
  - use words in sentences
  - have the translation of words
  - practise pronunciation
  
- Activities based on language skills
  - write paragraphs and letters
  - read texts/stories
  - read aloud
  - listen to, and understand texts in class
  - answer questions whose response is in the text
  
- Activities based on oral communication and fluency
  - whole class discussion
  - pair class
  - problem-solving
  - pair/group work
  - games
  - answer comprehension questions to express my ideas
  - express my ideas without paying attention to mistakes
  
- Mechanical activities
  - repeat words/sentences after the teacher
  - learn sentences/dialogues by heart
  
- Naturalistic and other activities
  - follow programmes on the TV/radio
  - listen to texts recorded on cassettes
  - learn English through songs
  - look at visual aids to help me understand

- study in my textbook

The aim of this section was not simply to explore the pattern of students' preferences in terms of the activities themselves, as was done, for example by Alcorso and Kalantzis (1985), but also to identify students' learning style in terms of studial or experiential learners as was suggested by Ellis (1993).

*Section 3* contained 15 items aimed at identifying students' perceptual and grouping modality preferences: (1) visual mode, (2) kinesthetic mode, (3) auditory mode, (4) working alone and (5) working in groups.

*Section 4* comprised 15 items whose aim was to identify students' preferred teacher behaviour. The selection of these items was influenced by two major, conflicting views of the teacher: (1) the teacher as transmitter of knowledge, provider of guidance, structure, discipline and homework; (2) the teacher as facilitator, provider of a relaxed and supportive learning environment, and promoter of independent learning. The other factor that determined the choice of items in this section was that teacher behaviour could be described along three different dimensions: teacher personality, teaching style, learning environment.

Finally, *section 5* contained 12 items, and aimed at exploring students' reasons for learning English, ranging from an interest in the language, its culture, and the target language group, to an interest in the English class, or the prospect of using the language for academic or job purposes. This was assumed to reveal students' sources of motivation as well as their attitudes towards the language and its culture. The rationale behind including this measure in the present study was to give an affective or emotional dimension to students' learning styles.

The questionnaire was written entirely in French to avoid possible misunderstanding of English, especially by beginning students. The questions were phrased as simply and as clearly as possible. Negative questions were avoided so as not to tax the subjects' language processing powers and confuse them. The items were arranged in random order, and, as far as possible, key items like those relating to games and grammar explanation were included twice to act as a check on consistency of response.

Apart from section 1 which offered only three options, all the questions in the other four sections were to be evaluated on a four-point, Likert-type scale, with 1 assigned to the lower rating and 4 to the highest. An off the scale, no opinion option was provided in order

to discriminate between those who gave their opinion with confidence and those who were uncertain about their responses. Subjects were expected to rate their views from different perspectives, i.e., degree of importance, strength of preference or of agreement, depending on the type of questions they had to answer.

### ***Participants***

Fifty-four secondary school students aged sixteen to eighteen participated in the study. Sixteen were male, and thirty eight were female. They came from two different schools in Rabat, and included literary as well as scientific students, beginners (in English) as well as more advanced students. The rationale behind this arrangement was to have as representative a sample as possible.

The questionnaire was administered to the students during regular class time by their normal teacher, in the Autumn term of 1993. It took them twenty to twenty-five minutes to complete the questionnaire. They seemed to have no problem in understanding or filling out the questionnaire, as reported by their teachers.

In order to account for some of the students' preferences, follow-up unstructured interviews were conducted with two 18-year old students from the schools which participated in the survey.

## **6.3 Results**

The analysis of results was mainly based on the percentage level of respondents who gave the highest rating to a given item. The reason for this was to make results more easily interpretable. However, in determining students' preferred learning modalities, average mean scores were thought to be more useful.

An analysis of the frequency of the 'no opinion' option revealed that the 54 subjects gave their opinion with confidence about most of the questions. Out of the 76 questions, included in the questionnaire, 22 did not receive a 'no opinion' response, 20 received each a 'no opinion' answer from one respondent and 13 questions each received a 'no opinion' answer from two respondents. For the remaining 21 items, 3 to 6 subjects gave a 'no opinion' answer. For example, in answering the question about 'songs', five subjects gave this item a 'no opinion' response, probably because, as beginners, some of them had not been

familiarised yet with the use of songs in the classroom.

Whenever appropriate, an attempt was made to display percentages of results in an ordered manner into clusters or bands, ranging from very high to low. Since it was not always possible to divide up the range of percentages into meaningful and even bands, a compromise was made between natural clusters and even intervals.

### *Frequency of selected activities used in class*

Table 6.1 shows the frequency of selected activities used in class, as measured by the percentage of respondents who rated such activities as 'frequently used'. The results strongly suggest that in such classrooms, the focus was on grammar explanation, and to some extent on pronunciation practice. About 83 % of the respondents agreed that grammar explanation was used frequently by their teachers. This emphasis on the formal aspect of the language was perhaps dictated by the curriculum, and the materials available. Class discussion and pair work appeared to be only moderately used. This comes as no surprise in a classroom where grammar is given a prominent place.

What is perhaps more surprising is that class discussion appeared to be used much more frequently than other types of communicative activities, such as role-play, games, or group work, which were given the lowest ratings, (ranging from 2 % to 6 %, against 32 % for class discussion). The reason for this could be that class discussion compared to other communicative activities may be more adapted to teacher-fronted classrooms, and as a result involve the whole group and give them the opportunity to discuss relevant and interesting topics. On the other hand, communicative activities generally require careful preparation and favourable classroom conditions. Another important result revealed by Table 6.1 was that mechanical activities of rote-learning and repetition appeared to be scarcely used by the teachers investigated, suggesting that audio-lingual practices were not very popular in their classrooms. Songs, too, appeared to be sparingly used probably because of time constraints, or lack of facilities.



		% of respondents who rated these activities as 'frequently used'
Q4	Grammar explanation	83 %
Q10	Pronunciation practice	54 %
Q2	Pair work	39 %
Q1	Class discussion	32 %
Q9	Songs	24 %
Q6	Repetition by students	20 %
Q7	Rote learning	11 %
Q5	Games	6 %
Q8	Role play	2 %
Q3	Group work	2 %

*Table 6.1: Rank-order of learning activities according to perceived frequency by respondents who rated such activities as 'frequently used'*

### ***Students' learning activity preferences***

The 34 items intended to measure students' activity preferences were rank-ordered according to the percentage of respondents who gave the highest rating corresponding to 'prefer very much'. As shown in Table 6.2, three clusters of activities could be identified: high (82% to 52%), medium (46% to 41%) and low (35% to 11%). These three sets of activities were not defined by equal bands or proportions, which would have been rather artificial. Instead, they were determined by reasonably coherent clusters of activities which tended to measure similar types of learning.

Results indicate that students' most highly preferred activities were traditional in orientation, and included 'grammar explanation', 'using the dictionary', 'doing grammar exercises', 'pronunciation practice', 'error correction', the only exception being 'participating in class discussion', which came high at the very top of the list of preferences with a percentage of 82 %. These activities probably reflect students' needs for mastering the systems of the language including communicative competence. Exam requirements could hardly be claimed to be entirely responsible for students' preferences, since neither pronunciation nor discussion, for example, were ever tested or given great emphasis by the teacher. Yet, as revealed by interviews with students, pronunciation of English was held to be the single most important and attractive feature of English.

	Activity	% of respondents
<b>HIGH</b>	Q1 Class discussion	82 %
	Q19 Understand grammar rules	80 %
	Q3 Practise pronunciation	78 %
	Q2 Understand grammar rules	72 %
	Q29 Copy new words	70 %
	Q34 Use the dictionary	69 %
	Q12 Understand grammar explanations	67 %
	Q20 Ask teacher to correct my mistakes	67 %
	Q31 Ask teacher to correct my mistakes	65 %
	Q6 Do grammar exercises	59 %
	Q13 Write paragraphs/letters	59 %
<b>MEDIUM</b>	Q23 Discuss in English in class	54 %
	Q21 Do grammar exercises	52 %
	Q18 Listen to and understand texts read by teacher	46 %
	Q32 Read aloud	44 %
	Q15 Use words in sentences	43 %
	Q11 Answer questions whose response is in the text	43 %
<b>LOW</b>	Q17 Read texts/stories in English	43 %
	Q26 Look at pictures that help me understand	41 %
	Q14 Answer questions to express my ideas	35 %
	Q28 Problem-solving	32 %
	Q24 Study in my textbook	30 %
	Q33 Have the translation of words	28 %
	Q9 Listen to and understand songs	26 %
	Q10 Repeat after the teacher	24 %
	Q27 Listen to cassettes, Q16 Games	22 %
	Q22 Listen to programmes on radio/TV	20 %
	Q5 Learn sentences/dialogues by heart	19 %
Q7 Learn through games, Q4 practise in pairs	17 %	
Q8 Practise in groups	15 %	
Q25 Correct my own mistakes	15 %	
Q30 Speak without paying attention to mistakes	11 %	

*Table 6.2: Rank-order of the learning activities according to the percentage of respondents who rated them as 'prefer very much'*

The popularity of class discussion among students was accounted for by Adel, an 18-year-old male interviewee, who argued that class discussion helped him to acquire new words and exchange his opinions with others. Evidence from personal experience with

observing English lessons in schools for many years, suggested that class discussion seemed to be enjoyed by students, as they generally felt engaged and enthusiastic when they realized that they could discuss realistic issues with peers and, at the same time, use English under the control and support of the teacher. As a result, students seemed to derive some sort of inner rewards and a sense of achievement from actually using the TL to express themselves in class. On the other hand, results on Table 6.2 suggest that activities concerned with listening, reading and answering comprehension questions were moderately appreciated by students. The reason may be that they appeared challenging for them, and did not meet their concern for conscious learning and accuracy.

Communicative activities such as problem-solving, group/pair work, games and 'speaking without paying attention to mistakes' appeared to be rejected by students. These activities represent the artificial part of the communicative approach.

It is not exactly clear why, on the whole, students did not seem to attach much value to the communicative activities examined above. They probably felt that they did not get much out of such communicative activities, because they were not focused on the conscious learning of discrete language forms, and were generally conducted without the direct control and guidance of the teacher. Evidence in support of the view that communicative activities could be boring for foreign language learners is provided by Swan in Rossner and Bolitho (1990), who severely criticised the communicative approach arguing that some artificially contrived communicative activities, involving "information gaps" may appear to be shallow and demotivating for students, despite their claims of being communicative.

As is shown in Table 6.2, audio-lingual practices such as repetition and rote-learning were among students' least favoured activities. Such mechanical activities did not seem to appeal to students, who were too much concerned with using their cognitive powers.

Remarkably, the least favoured activity in Table 6.2 'expressing myself without paying attention to mistakes' suggests that the students were particularly concerned about accuracy, as noted by Larby, an 18-year-old interviewee:

*We cannot allow ourselves to commit mistakes when speaking. We feel very bad when laughed at by other students, or criticised by the teacher.*  
(Larby)

These views and beliefs probably reflected the pressure put on students to perform

accurately and teachers' intolerance of mistakes.

From all the activity preferences outlined above, a clear pattern emerged as to how the students investigated preferred to learn the language in class. Their greater preferences for traditional activities having to do with the mastery of the grammatical, lexical, and phonological systems of the language, to the exclusion of the mechanical side of learning, suggested that they were generally more oriented towards a cognitively-based type of learning, which emphasized conscious learning of rules and concepts, and accuracy. Class discussion, which apparently seemed to be an exception, could in itself be considered as a cognitively-oriented activity, engaging students thoughts and emotions more than the trivialities often associated with the use of games and certain types of pair/group work activities. Class discussion, in this particular context, involved more guidance and error correction from the teacher.

Another feature that characterised the students' pattern of preferences was their moderate preference for acquiring the language through listening or reading and comprehension tasks. Such activities came at an intermediate position between traditional activities and communicative activities.

Students' instructional preferences have thus far been examined and interpreted in the light of SLA, and FL teaching theories. However, other perspectives derived from learning style research (Willing, 1988; Ellis, 1993) could also be applied. As was discussed in chapter one, Ellis identified two FL learning styles: 1) studial learning, which is characterized by a concern with accuracy and conscious learning of grammar; 2) experiential learning, which is defined by a concern with fluency and engaging in real communication. Based on Ellis' taxonomy of learner style, the students investigated in the present study appeared to be rather studial in their learning style preferences, putting a higher premium on learning activities that focus on accuracy and the conscious learning of grammar than on communication and fluency oriented activities.

It is worth noting that the results in this section bear striking similarities with research findings by Alcorso and Kalantzis (1985), and Nunan (1988), who showed that ESL learners in Australia, coming from various ethnic backgrounds, favoured traditionally-oriented activities over communicative ones, with the exception of class discussion, which figured among students' top priorities. Such findings, together with results from the present study,

suggest that learners across cultures and ethnic backgrounds tend to have similar instructional preferences when it comes to learning a new language in a formal setting.

Having established students' preferred instructional preferences, the next question that needed to be addressed was the extent to which the students investigated got what they wanted, in terms of the frequency with which some key learning activities were used in the classroom, as perceived by the students themselves.

A comparison between results in Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 suggested a number of conclusions. The students' high preferences for 'grammar explanation', and their low preferences for communicatively-oriented activities were matched by comparative frequencies of such activities in the classroom. In this respect, there seemed to be a perfect match between what students needed and what they were provided with.

However, students' high preference for pronunciation practice was met with just moderate frequency of such an activity. What is more striking was that class discussion which was students' top priority (82 %) appeared to be used quite sparingly in the classroom (32 %), which means that students did not get as much of this activity as they needed. Conversely, pair work, one of students' least favoured activities seemed to be given much more emphasis than was felt necessary by the students.

Having identified students' instructional preferences, from both a SLA and educational psychological perspective, I would like to turn to examining students' perceptual, and grouping modality preferences.

### *Students' perceptual and grouping modality preferences*

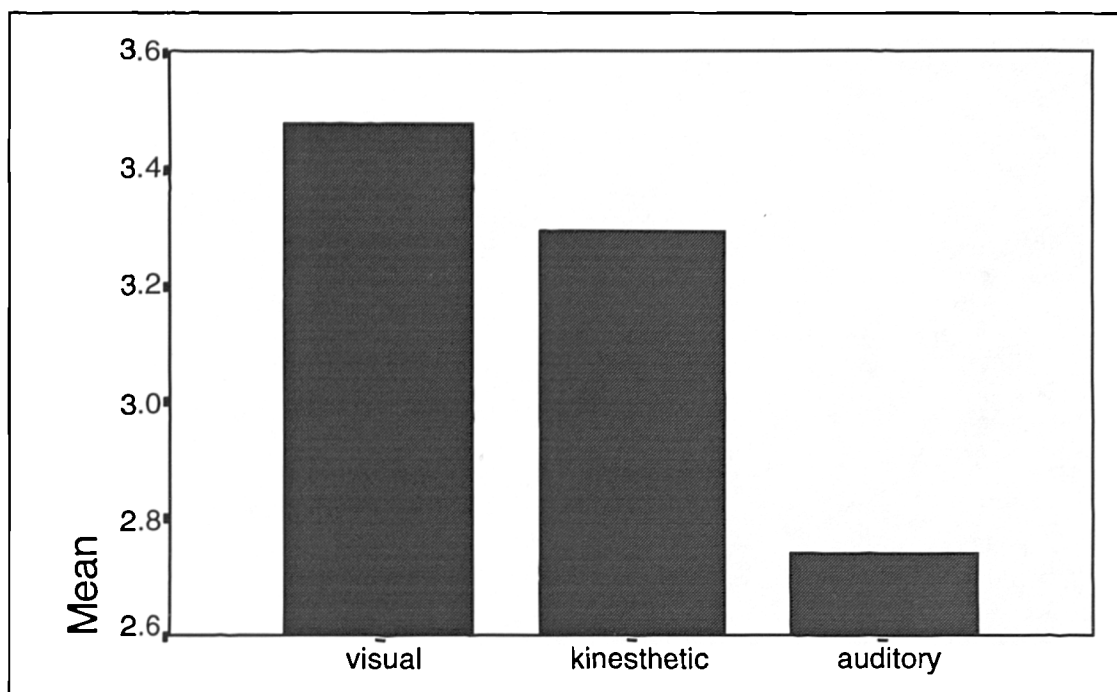
Table 6.3 displays the mean scores and standard deviations for each of the 15 items used to measure students' learning modality preferences, as well as a global score for the set of items used to assess each learning mode. Results in Table 6.3 indicate that the visual mode came at the top of students' preferences (3.47), followed closely by the kinesthetic mode (3.29). The least preferred perceptual modality seemed to be the auditory mode (2.75). The bar chart in Figure 6.1 shows that students were strongly visual and kinesthetic, but only moderately auditory. The implication is that they preferred to access input through the eyes by reading or through whole body involvement like writing, acting out, or repeating, rather than through listening.

Item	Mean score	Std. dev.	Global Mean score
VISUAL MODE			3.47
Q1 Seeing words helps me best to retain them	3.57	.88	
Q11 I learn best when I read what T. writes on BB	3.47	.77	
Q7 I learn sentences best when I read them	3.35	.96	
KINESTHETIC MODE			3.29
Q15 I learn words best by doing exercises	3.63	.80	
Q13 I learn words best by repeating them	3.45	.93	
Q14 I learn sentences best by repeating them	3.38	.78	
Q9 I learn best when I do role-play	3.09	1.15	
Q8 I learn best when I do things in class	2.87	1.15	
AUDITORY MODE			2.75
Q12 I learn best when I listen to the teacher	3.01	.85	
Q2 Listening to words helps me best to retain them	2.81	.91	
Q5 I learn sentences best when I listen to them	2.41	1.13	
WORKING ALONE			2.78
Q3 I learn best when I work alone	2.83	1.12	
Q10 I learn best when I practise alone	2.74	1.24	
WORKING IN GROUPS			2.78
Q6 I prefer to practise English in groups	2.83	1.14	
Q4 I learn best when I work in groups	2.74	1.13	

Table 6.3: Mean scores for students' learning mode preferences

It is to be noted, at this point, that students' high preference for accessing the input through reading is not to be confused with their moderate preference for reading comprehension activities, as shown earlier. These represent two levels of preference, one perceptual, and the other instructional.

As concerns students' grouping preferences, working alone or in groups did not, interestingly, seem to make any difference for them. As the figures in Table 6.3 indicate, exactly the same ratings were allocated to these two grouping modes. The reason might be that students perceived the two modes as serving purposes of equal importance in different learning situations. What is surprising, though, was that both groupings were just moderately preferred by students, suggesting perhaps that they preferred instead working with the whole class under the guidance of the teacher.



*Figure 6.1: Students' perceptual modality preferences*

One argument in favour of the validity of the measuring instrument used to assess students' learning modes was that items intended to measure each mode tended to form relatively natural clusters as shown in Table 6.3. The only exception was the kinesthetic mode items which showed a wider divergence in terms of scores. This disparity may be partly due to the greater number of items used to measure this perceptual mode. Another reason could be related to the fact that the kinesthetic mode seemed to be more difficult to operationalise in terms of behaviours that were specific to a FL learning context, and also in a way that made sense to the subjects investigated.

### ***Students' preferred teacher behaviour***

Table 6.4 shows the percentage of respondents who rated selected teacher behaviours as "very important". Results indicate that students' preferred teacher behaviours consisted of guiding students, encouraging them, correcting their mistakes, showing dynamism, enthusiasm and sympathy in class. Such behaviours suggest the profile of a teacher who is profoundly committed to students' progress and well-being, and who provides them with much attention, care and support, as expressed by Hanan, an 18-year-old female student:

*The teacher should understand our feelings, and put herself in our place when she explains things to us, or corrects our mistakes. If the teacher is tough, we cannot ask her for explanations... You should first love the teacher before loving the subject matter.* (Hanan)

These results suggest that in their evaluation of teacher behaviour, the students investigated placed a higher premium on teacher personality than on anything else related to the instructional environment such as teaching method, or classroom atmosphere.

In contrast to the highly preferred teacher behaviours, which emphasized teacher personality, the next set of behaviours seemed to be mainly concerned with classroom atmosphere and teaching method, such as 'creating a relaxed atmosphere', 'using a variety of activities', 'transmitting knowledge about the language', 'helping students to discover things by themselves', and 'encouraging them through praise'.

The least favoured teacher behaviours, as shown in Table 6.4, have to do with providing a 'serious atmosphere', 'controlling discipline' and shifting the responsibility of learning to the students. These aspects of teacher behaviour seemed to be concerned with both classroom conditions and teaching method. At this level, it is worth pointing out that the students seemed to establish priorities in their teacher behaviour preferences. First, they appeared to capitalise more on personality-based teacher behaviour than on aspects of behaviour related to teaching method or classroom environment. Second, they showed different degrees of preferences within each type of teacher behaviour. For example, students seemed to appreciate a "relaxed" and "secure" atmosphere more than a "serious" and "controlled" one. Interestingly, they seemed to favour a teacher who transmitted knowledge and provided praise more than one who gave assignments and put the responsibility of learning on students. Interestingly, students did not perceive themselves as totally passive. They preferred much more a teacher who "helps students to discover things by themselves" (52 %) to one who simply "encourages students to learn by themselves" (41 %). The implication is that they appeared to prefer self-discovery learning to self-access type of learning.



Teacher behaviour	% of respondents who rated these as 'very important'
Q1 To control and guide students	87 %
Q8 To correct students' mistakes	83 %
Q5 To encourage students to participate in class	69 %
Q7 To be dynamic and enthusiastic	67 %
Q13 To be sympathetic with students	65 %
Q3 To create a relaxed atmosphere	59 %
Q11 To provide students with a feeling of security	57 %
Q2 To help students discover things by themselves	52 %
Q12 To use a variety of activities	50 %
Q4 To transmit knowledge about the language	50 %
Q10 To encourage students by using praise	46 %
Q6 To create a serious atmosphere	43 %
Q14 To encourage students to learn by themselves	41 %
Q9 To control discipline in the classroom	35 %
Q15 To give students a lot of homework	24 %

*Table 6.4: Rank-order of students' preferred teacher behaviour*

To summarize, the students in this study appeared to attach more value to the personality of the teacher than to the instructional method, or learning environment. In addition, they preferred to function in a relaxed and nourishing atmosphere than in an anxiety provoking climate. At the same time, they preferred to be more dependent learners, working under the guidance and control of the teacher, rather than completely independent learners.

#### *Students' motivation and attitudes towards English, its culture, and learning environment*

Table 6.5 shows the percentage of respondents who rated the selected reasons for learning English as "very important". Results suggested that "love for English", in itself, seemed to be one of students' most important reasons for learning that language, followed by *instrumental purposes* such as using English for a job, getting good grades, and studying at university. Interestingly "knowing about British culture" figured among their top priorities, as shown in Table 6.5. Curiously enough, this item received a higher rating than "knowing about American culture". There may be various reasons for this difference, one

of which was mentioned by Hanan, a female interviewee who argued that Britain had a

Reason for learning English	% of respondents who rated items as 'very important'
Q9 Because I like English	56 %
Q7 To use English for a future job	56 %
Q2 To get good marks at the Baccalaureate exam	50 %
Q1 To know English culture	46 %
Q4 To study at university	44 %
Q6 To know American culture	39 %
Q5 To correspond in English	33 %
Q8 To travel abroad	30 %
Q10 Because I like English class	24 %
Q12 To copy good aspects of English/American culture	24 %
Q3 To learn songs	19 %
Q11 Because English is the symbol of a good education	15 %

Table 6.5: Rank-order of students' motivational orientations

richer cultural heritage than the USA. Students' interest in getting informed about the TL culture was expressed by Larby, a male student, who felt particularly frustrated by the lack of a cultural dimension that characterised the textbooks used in class:

*Before starting the course, I expected to learn how English people live...I know, for example, that they have their lunch at breakfast, but I have no idea what it is like.*  
(Larby)

In fact, the national textbooks, used in class, contained hardly any aspects of the TL culture. It seemed that the intention to deculturise the manual came from certain members of the textbook committee.

On the other hand, having contacts with native speakers through 'correspondence' and 'travel' appeared to be just moderately important for them as a reason for learning English. Students' least important orientations for learning English consisted of four items: 'enjoyment of English classes', 'copying the target language culture', 'learning English songs', and the view that 'English is the symbol of a good education'. A number of comments should

be made regarding these less popular orientations.

Students' low rating of the item 'enjoy English class' implies that the group of students investigated generally tended to have a negative orientation towards the English classes. This may be partially due to the type of textbook used in class, as Larby reported below:

*This manual is rubbish. When I open it, I feel stifled. The topics aren't stimulating, and it contains no explanations, no translation. So, I can't catch up on a lesson I have missed, or use it on my own for revising at home.*  
(Larby)

Students' low ratings for the item "copy positive aspects of English/American culture" did not seem to match their interest in knowing these cultures. Clearly, interest in a target language culture does not necessarily imply that one is necessarily ready to relinquish one's cultural heritage and adopt a new culture, as this may be perceived as leading to loss of identity or anomie. However, it is still important to notice that a non-negligible proportion of subjects, 24 %, (almost one in four) thought that it was important for them to copy positive aspects of the target language culture. Bearing in mind that good aspects of a culture probably means different things to different people, the focus of interest of the question was on 'copy', rather than on 'culture' itself. The details of the frequency distribution results displayed below indicate that students were equally divided on this issue.

As Figure 6.2 demonstrates, there were approximately similar percentages of respondents across the scale rating the importance of "copying culture" as a perceived goal for learning English. The reason could be that students differed in their views and attitudes towards the target language culture depending on their social and educational background.

On the other hand, viewing English as "the symbol of a good education" was minimally rated by students as a reason for learning English. This implies that English was not perceived as a symbol of high status or a factor that could contribute to ego-enhancement. This finding reinforces the view that their personal involvement with English was purely intrinsic in nature, not necessarily based on socially-grounded, inner rewards.

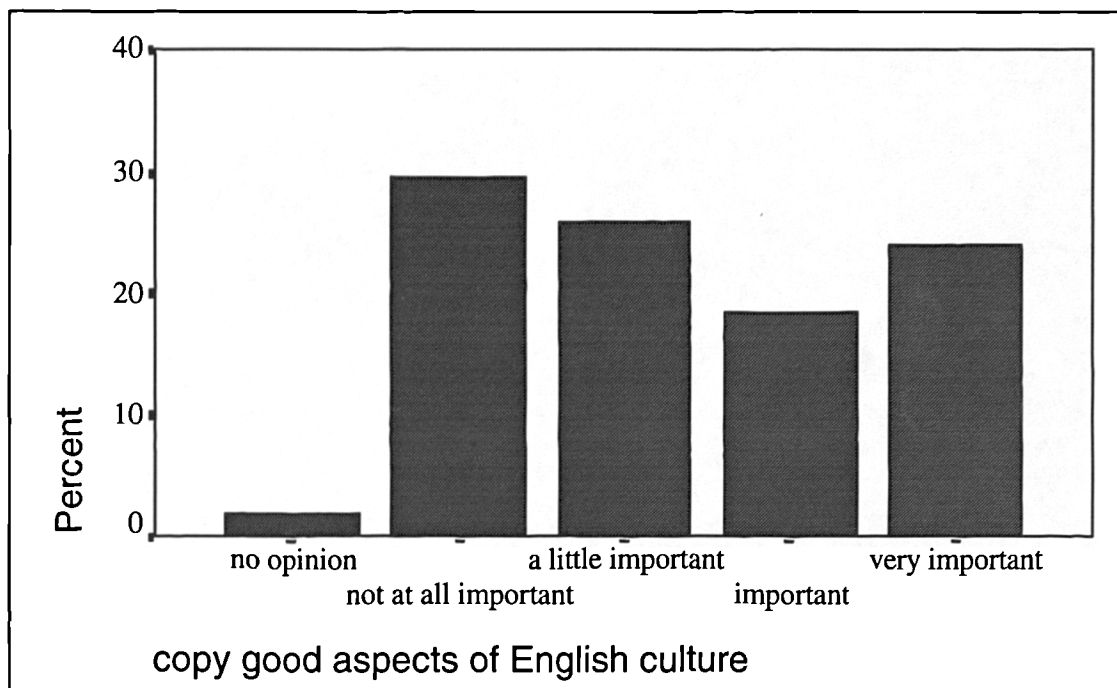


Figure 6.2: Frequency distribution of the ratings of 'copy good aspect of English culture'

Another item that did not seem to be popular among students, as a major goal for learning English was "learning songs in English". Only 19 % of the responded placed the learning of songs among their top priorities. Interestingly, this weak orientation matched students' low preferences for "songs" as a learning activity in the classroom. This finding seemed somewhat in contradiction with the widely held expectations about the popularity of songs among young learners of English in Morocco.

In summary, results in Table 6.5, suggested a number of generalisations about students' sources of motivation for learning English. First, the students investigated seemed to be more motivated by English than by its culture, but also more interested in knowing about this culture than in copying or adopting it. Second, students' intrinsic interest in the language per se appeared to be as important as their instrumental orientations, both of which seemed to be more important for students than integrative reasons for learning the language such as having contacts with the target language group and its culture.

## 6.4 Summary and conclusion

The main purpose of this preliminary study was to explore the general pattern of the

perceived learning style preferences of a group of EFL secondary school learners in Rabat, along a number of dimensions: 1) instructional preferences, 2) learning mode preferences, 3) favoured teacher behaviour, 4) affective orientations towards English, its culture, the TL group, and the learning environment.

Results revealed a number of findings relative to each dimension of students' preferences. As concerns their instructional preferences, students seemed to be more studious than experiential in their learning style preferences. They appeared to favour a form-focused, cognitively-oriented, accuracy-based approach to learning. This involved the mastery of grammatical, lexical, and phonological systems, through the conscious learning of discrete language items. This studious style was perhaps determined by their perceived needs, and by their views about how foreign languages are learnt.

Other instructional practices like the artificially contrived communicative activities, and the mechanically designed procedures like rote learning and repetition, appeared to fall short of students' preferences. The reason might be that they did not seem to meet their needs and their views about language learning, and as such they did not probably work for them.

Skill-based activities such as reading/listening comprehension activities were just moderately appreciated by students. Serving as a link between form-focused, studious learning and communicatively-oriented, experiential learning, such activities were not among students' top priorities.

Curiously enough, in contrast to artificially designed communicative activities, class discussion seemed to be extremely popular among students, probably because it allowed them to exert their cognitive powers, their thoughts and their emotions, under the guidance of the teacher.

The pattern of students' instructional preferences that emerged from this study lends support to the findings of research studies conducted among ESL learners in Australia, who also preferred traditional activities over communicative ones, with the exception of class discussion (Alcorso and Kalantzis, 1985; Nunan, 1988).

Concerning their favoured perceptual channels, the subjects appeared to be strongly visual in their perceptual mode, less strongly kinesthetic, and negatively auditory. As regards their grouping preferences, neither working alone nor in groups seemed popular among the students, suggesting that perhaps they favoured a teacher-fronted environment.

As regards their preferred teacher behaviours, students appeared to have established hierarchical priorities in the pattern of their preferences. In the first place, they seemed to capitalise more on teacher personality than on teaching method or classroom atmosphere. Their top priorities emphasised teacher behaviours in which the personality of the teacher was in evidence. Thus, they preferred the teacher to be (in decreasing order): a controller, a guide, a corrector of mistakes, someone dynamic, enthusiastic, and sympathetic.

Students' secondary priorities highlighted teacher behaviour in which teaching method, or classroom atmosphere were in evidence. But, they seemed to favour a relaxed, and a secure atmosphere to a serious and disciplined ambience. They also appeared to attach more value to a teaching style which emphasised self-discovery or transmission of knowledge than to a teaching style which put the responsibility of learning on the students and overloads them with assignments.

Finally as concerns the affective motivational dimension of students' learning style, results suggested a highly positive orientation towards the language itself, and actually using it for instrumental purposes; a moderate orientation towards the TL culture and TL group; and a rather negative orientation towards English class.

Clearly, as a source of motivation, learning the language itself appeared to be more powerful than learning about its culture. Similarly, students seemed to be more positively oriented towards knowing about the culture than adopting it. Interestingly, English classes did not seem to match students' emotional involvement with the language.

In order to capture the profile of students' learning style preferences, results were summarised in Table 6.6. As can be seen, with regard to each learning style dimension, students' strongest and weakest style orientations were contrasted to each other. For example, students appeared to be strongly studial and weakly experiential; predominantly visual and kinesthetic, but weakly auditory. Similarly, they tended to be strongly oriented towards the language, and well-structured learning, but less-oriented towards the culture and independent learning.

Students' dominant style	Students' less dominant style
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>studial learning</b> formal, form-focused, accuracy-based, conscious learning</li> <li>• <b>visual/kinesthetic learning mode</b></li> <li>• <b>dependent learning</b> structured, teacher-centred</li> <li>• <b>language-oriented learning</b> intrinsic, instrumental orientations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>experiential learning</b> informal, fluency-based, communication-oriented</li> <li>• <b>auditory learning mode</b></li> <li>• <b>independent learning</b> unstructured, group-centred</li> <li>• <b>culture-oriented learning</b> integrative orientation</li> </ul>

*Table 6.6: Students' dominant and less dominant learning styles*

### ***Pedagogical implications***

By and large, students' preferences for studial learning appeared to be matched by the teaching style they were provided with. However, results indicated that class discussion and pronunciation practice which figured among the three top priorities of students were comparatively underused by the teachers. This perhaps implies that greater efforts should be invested by teachers and textbook writers to provide students with engaging topics to discuss, and to develop simple phonetic transcription systems including stress and weak forms that could be easily used by students.

On the other hand, students' interest in acquiring the complexities of the language system suggests the need for more support materials that give students ample guidance and backup related to grammar and pronunciation, together with the provision of glossaries. This type of self-help material would probably encourage students to be more self-reliant, and would reduce the anxiety provoked by the need to understand everything in class and be dependent for it on the teacher.

Students' strong reliance on the visual mode suggests that they feel more comfortable with accessing input through the eyes. One implication for FL teaching would be that the written form of words should not be downplayed or discarded when introducing new language items, as was argued by the audio-lingual method according to which words should be presented orally so as to anticipate pronunciation errors due to negative transfer

from the written forms. This problem can for example be counteracted by giving due emphasis to pronunciation whenever possible.

Similarly, FL teachers should allow visually-minded students to look at the printed form of texts they access aurally, and gradually train them to rely on the ear alone.

In addition, students' kinesthetic mode of learning should not be neglected in the classroom. Students' propensity towards getting physically involved in learning the language could well be used as a source of variety and a source of motivation in the classroom. A number of devices could be exploited by the teacher, such as, acting out utterances or dialogues, incorporating drawing in the learning process, and reacting physically to commands in the way it is used in Asher's (1977) Total Physical Response or learning another language through actions.

As concerns students' learning style preferences, the teachers' role is twofold. They should accommodate students' various learning preferences by using greater variety in the classroom and allowing their students to use the learning devices they are comfortable with. Alternatively, they should optimise their students' learning by encouraging them to go beyond their preferred ways of learning, and providing them with a successful experience, using their less dominant mode or style.

Data about students' preferred teacher behaviour suggested that teacher personality was the single most important factor for students. The implication is that teachers should make sure that they have positive relationships with their students so as to avoid teacher-induced negative attitudes towards the language, or the learning situation, on the part of students.

Finally, students' great interest in English is an important asset that should be fully and adequately explored in a variety of ways such as providing interested students with relevant extra material to consume, in or out of class. Teachers should also aim at maintaining students' positive orientation towards the language by avoiding negative relationships or environment likely to depress students' intrinsic motivation.

#### *Directions for further research*

The present study was mainly exploratory and results should be interpreted with caution. In the first place, the sample was not large enough to allow for wide generalisations. The study needs to be replicated in another context using a larger sample.



Given its exploratory purpose, the present study was broadly based and was limited by the type of questions that could be asked through self-report questionnaires. A more focused and in-depth approach to learning style should be applied using more precise tools and interviewer-applied questionnaires.

## Chapter Seven

### *Students' Motivational Orientations and Activity Preferences*

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#### 7.1 Introduction

The present study was guided by three major purposes. The first purpose was to explore motivational orientations of a group of high school EFL learners along three dimensions: the integrative and instrumental dimensions, based on Gardner's social psychological approach to motivation, and the intrinsic dimension, inspired by the educational psychological perspective on motivation. The main reason behind incorporating these three dimensions in the present study was that, to date, few research studies had as yet applied SLA and educational perspectives to investigating learners' orientations towards learning English in a FL context. Therefore, it was thought interesting to test the applicability of Gardner's model of integrative/instrumental orientations to the Moroccan EFL context, and at the same time, to contrast these orientations with intrinsic motives for learning English, hypothesized to be pervasive among EFL learners in Moroccan schools, as revealed by results in the previous study.

The second goal of the present study was to assess students' levels of motivation in the classroom. Students' motivational orientations do not tell us much about students' actual motivation for learning, as manifested by their interest, and their willingness to learn, in class. So, it was thought necessary to obtain information about students' motivational levels, in terms of interest, participation, and effort expended, as measured by their teachers' ratings. The aim was to use this information, first to discriminate between highly motivated students and poorly motivated students, second to explore the link, if any, between students' type of orientation for learning the language and their motivational levels.

The third goal of the study was to capture students' preferences with regard to a set of learning activities derived from the previous preliminary study (see Chapter 6). It was thought worthwhile to reassess students' instructional preferences among a different group of learners, and, at the same time, to establish the relationship between students' preferences and motivations.

## 7.2 Theoretical framework

Research on attitudes and motivation towards foreign language (FL) learning has been an important line of inquiry that has had a profound effect on our understanding of second language acquisition (SLA) (e.g., Gardner, 1972; Roger, Bull & Fletcher, 1981; Clément & Kruidenier, 1983; Ely, 1986). However, different researchers have attached different meanings to motivation and have developed different constructs adapted to their purposes and to the social and linguistic context of their investigations (see Dörnyei, 1990; Crookes & Schmidt, 1991).

In their classic seminal studies, Gardner and Lambert (1959) introduced the constructs of 'integrative' and 'instrumental' motivation in learning a non-native language. Integrative motivation was characterized by a desire to learn a language in order to take part in the culture of its people and become a member of its community. Instrumental motivation reflected a more utilitarian value placed on language study, such as an anticipated usefulness in one's career.

The assumed universality and exhaustiveness of the integrative-instrumental dichotomy have been questioned by a number of studies which attempted to assess their adaptability to other foreign language contexts. Clément and Kruidenier (1983), for example, conducted a study in Canada in an attempt to assess the influence of ethnicity, milieu, and target language on the emergence of orientations to L2 acquisition. Interestingly, the results did not lend support to the construct validity of integrative motivation as defined by Gardner and Lambert (1959).

There has been little research conducted to determine what other types of motivation students may have in learning foreign languages apart from the integrative/instrumental construct. Dörnyei (1990) assumed that the results obtained from

SLA contexts were not directly applicable to FL learning situations. He sought to conceptualize the constructs of motivation in a Hungarian FL learning context, and came up with four motivational subsystems: (1) instrumental, (2) integrative, (3) achievement, and (4) 'attributions about past failures'. In Dörnyei's model the 'integrative motive' appeared to be complex and heterogeneous. It included a host of dimensions ranging from an interest in foreign languages and cultures, to the desire to spend some time abroad. On the other hand, 'attributions about past failures' was an odd motivational dimension which appeared to emerge as an independent factor. Dörnyei took the view that negative learning experiences were a very common phenomenon in FL learning contexts and were, as a result, expected to affect students' motivation.

The most interesting finding that emerged from these studies was that no strong claim could be made about the assumed universality and exhaustiveness of the integrative and instrumental orientations. It is rather suggested that the emergence of orientations is to a large extent determined by "who learns what in what milieu". It therefore seems imperative that future studies of the relative power of orientation should consider the reliability of specific orientation constructs for the target population.

Other areas of research have revealed different types of motivation. In mainstream education, the construct of motivation does not coincide with either integrative or instrumental. Educational psychologists (e.g., Child, 1983; Kyriacou, 1986) have, for example, reported on three main types of motivation, (1) intrinsic motivation which arises out of a pure interest for the subject of study, (2) extrinsic motivation which suggests that the goal of the learner is to seek rewards from the teacher or parents, (3) achievement motivation which is characterised by a generalised desire to achieve across a range of situations.

The conclusion to be derived from this brief literature review is that, in order to capture the full spectrum of learners' motives for learning a FL, research on motivation needs to draw on notions pertaining to the fields of both applied linguistics, and educational psychology, taking into account students' specific learning context and situation. To my knowledge, no research has, as yet, been conducted in a Moroccan setting, attempting to uncover both students' motivational orientations and psychological drives for learning English as a FL.

Another area of research particularly important to FL learning, and which has been under-researched as compared to motivation is learning style and learning preference. These research areas have been fully documented in chapter three. An interesting question that arises, in this connexion, concerns the relationship that may exist between students' preferences and their motivations. The effect of language learning techniques on students' motivation is a well documented issue. Educationalists have often complained about the boredom generally engendered by some audio-lingual (AL) practices among students. Prator (1980) noted that as a result of AL techniques "much of the motivation for studying the language [was] lost" (p. 15). However, the precise relationship between learners' motivational orientations and their learning preferences remains to be explored.

## 7.3 Method

### *Participants*

The subjects participating in this study consisted of 65 high school students, 55 male, and 10 female, aged 17 to 18, taking English as part of their baccalaureate studies, in two lycées in the centre of Rabat. These two lycées were selected because they were considered to be typical state schools, among the biggest and oldest in Rabat. The participants formed a homogeneous group, majoring in sciences, and had been learning English as a foreign language for three years. The students' teachers also took part in the study. They were asked to rate their students according to their level of classroom motivation.

### *The measuring instrument*

A self-report, Likert-type, 33-item questionnaire was developed, aimed at measuring students' motivational orientations and learning preferences (a copy of this questionnaire is provided in appendix B). The questionnaire comprised two parts to deal with the two main goals of the study. The first part contained 3 scales aimed at measuring students' motivational orientations along three dimensions: *intrinsic*, *instrumental* and *integrative*. Each scale consisted of five statements reflecting one of the three potential sources of motivation for students to learn English. Students were asked to rate each item

on a four-point scale ranging from 'very important' to 'not important at all' for them to learn English. The items used in each scale are reproduced below.

*Intrinsic motivation scale*

- To speak English with a good accent
- Because I like the musicality of English
- Because I like English
- Because I am very interested in English
- Because I like to learn/use beautiful expressions

*Instrumental motivation items*

- To get good baccalaureate grades
- To become better informed about the world
- To study at university
- To find a job
- To learn computer science

*Integrative motivation items*

- To know more about English/American culture
- To appreciate films/songs in English
- To correspond, make contacts with Anglophones
- To travel/know Anglophones countries
- To copy positive aspects of Anglophone cultures

The items chosen for inclusion in these scales were based on the subjects' learning situations and socio-cultural contexts, and were selected to represent a wide range of reasons for studying English for intrinsic, instrumental and integrative reasons in Morocco.

The second part of the questionnaire was concerned with identifying subjects' preferences for a set of learning activities; all of which were extracted from the previous preliminary study. Seven were communicatively oriented and included activities like games, role play, and discussion. Eight were broadly traditional in orientation, and

involved activities such as understanding grammar, rote learning and using the dictionary. (see Chapter six for a definition of communicative and traditional activities). Three other items having to do with reading, TV and songs were also included in the questionnaire.

All the items in the questionnaire were written entirely in French to avoid possible misunderstanding of English. The questions were phrased as simply and as clearly as possible. Negatively worded questions were avoided so as not to tax the subjects' language processing powers and confuse them as a result. The questions were sequenced in a random order.

In an attempt to compare students' orientations with their actual motivation in class, it was thought necessary to obtain teachers' ratings of students' classroom motivation in terms of level of participation and enthusiasm shown in English classes. For each student in the study, the rating was made by the students' own English class teacher, on a five-point scale ranging from 'strongly motivated' to 'not motivated at all'. Since those teachers were in the best position to judge their students' behaviour, inter-rater reliability was not determined. Teacher ratings made it possible to categorise students into highly motivated students with a score of four to five, moderately motivated students having a score of three, and poorly motivated students with a score ranging from one to two.

The questionnaire was administered to students by their regular English class teacher in the spring term of the 1993-94 academic year. The instructions and objectives of the questionnaire were written on the cover page of the questionnaire and the students were left to complete the questionnaire at their own pace, which took them about 20 minutes to complete. Teachers were asked to look for problems that the students might encounter in understanding or completing the questionnaire, but none were reported.

### ***Data analysis procedures***

The data in the two parts of the questionnaire were analysed using various procedures:

1. The motivational items and learning activity items were rank-ordered according to the percentage level of response of those who rated such items as "very important" or "very much", depending on the type of item involved. This procedure aimed at giving a clear-cut idea about the relative importance of each motivational item as a perceived

- source of motivation, and about the relative popularity of each learning activity among students.
2. In order to delineate students' patterns of motivational orientations and learning preferences, factor analytic procedures were applied to both sets of items in the questionnaire. Factor analysis is one way of simplifying the analysis by grouping items which go together, and which measure the same thing.
  3. Cronbach's alpha was used to estimate the reliability of the scales generated by factor analysis.
  4. The endorsements by subjects of each type of motivational orientation and each type of learning preference as suggested by factor analysis were computed and mean score results were correlated with each other in order to highlight the pattern of relationships that might exist between students' motivational orientations and their learning preferences.
  5. Students' classroom motivational levels as measured by teacher rating scores ranging from 1 to 5 were plotted against students' endorsement levels of each type of motivational orientation and each type of learning preference. This was an attempt to highlight the relationship between classroom motivation and motivational orientations on the one hand, and classroom motivation and learning preferences on the other.

## **7.4 Data analysis and results of motivational orientations**

### ***Rank order of motivational items***

In order to give a clear picture about the relative importance of each motivational item as a perceived source of motivation among students, a rank-order of the 15 items according to percentage level of response of those who rated such activities as very important is presented in Table 7.1. As can be seen, the wide range of percentages suggests that students had very articulated views about which reasons they perceived as very important, and which reasons they considered as less important for learning English. Students' top priorities were mainly concerned with interest in, and involvement with, English, which they strongly desired to speak with a good accent, with curiosity about



knowing Anglophone countries, appreciation of songs and films, and interest in getting good grades.

However, students' great interest in the language, the Anglophone world, music and films was not matched by a correspondingly keen interest in knowing Anglophones, having contacts with them or 'adopting their culture'. Learning English for cultural purposes was not perceived as essentially important for them.

Item	% who marked this as 'very important' (N = 65)
Q4 To speak English with a good accent	74 %
Q3 To get good baccalaureate grades	59 %
Q6 Because I like English	54 %
Q9 Because English is interesting	48 %
Q15 To know and visit Anglophone countries	44 %
Q2 To appreciate songs/films in English	40 %
Q10 Because I like learning beautiful expressions	37 %
Q12 To have more job opportunities	35 %
Q5 To get more informed about the world	34 %
Q14 To learn computer science	31 %
Q1 To know Anglophone culture/life-style	31 %
Q11 To have Anglophone friends/contacts	28 %
Q7 Because I like the musicality of English	25 %
Q8 To study at university	22 %
Q13 To copy good aspects of Anglophone culture	12 %

*Table 7.1: Rank-order of motivational items according to percentage level of response*

On the other hand, learning English for instrumental reasons such as finding a job, getting more informed about the world or learning computer science were generally perceived as moderately important reasons for learning English. In a nutshell, the language itself seemed generally to be more motivating for the students than its socio-cultural or instrumental uses.

### ***Factor Analysis of the motivational orientation variables***

Following Clément and Kruidenier (1983) and, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1994), factor analysis procedures were applied to the 15 motivational items in order to delineate clusters that would define the subjects' orientations for learning English. Factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted, using Principal Components Analysis. The first factor explains 25.5 % of the variance and each of the remaining four factors each accounts for 8 % to 13 % of the variance. Table 7.2 also displays the communality values ( $h^2$ ) for each item. These refer to the proportion of variance explained by the five factors.

A varimax rotation was selected because such a method attempts to minimise the number of variables that have loadings on a particular factor, thereby enhancing the interpretability of the factors (see SPSS for professionals, p. 65). The pattern matrix, sorted by factor, appears in Table 7.2. For ease of interpretation, I have subjectively bolded the highest loadings.

As can be seen, factor 1 receives quite heavy loadings from four variables, all concerned with general interest in, and involvement with English for its own sake, and also a desire to learn it and excel in it as an end in itself. This factor, therefore, corresponds to what is considered as an intrinsic orientation.

Factor 2 evidences appreciable loadings from three variables concerned with utilitarian uses of English like 'finding a job', 'learning computer science', and 'getting better informed about the world'. This factor reflects Gardner's instrumental dimension, and can therefore be given the same label.

Factor 3 receives a heavy loading (.78) from the variable 'to appreciate songs, films in English'. It also evidences a substantial loading (.63) from the variable 'I like the musicality of English', which, unexpectedly, was perhaps misinterpreted by many respondents as meaning something related to 'English music', instead of its intended meaning which refers to 'the musical intonation of English'. This perhaps explains why this variable loads on the same factor as the one concerned with songs/films. Factor 3 also receives a negative loading (- .58) from the variable 'to study at university', which suggests that factor 3 is negatively related to such a variable. Factor 3 then, seems to be mainly dominated by variables having to do with songs, films, and 'musicality', all of which reflect an aspect of culture closely related to entertainment. So,

this factor can be given the same label. This entertainment-oriented aspect of culture emerges on its own and seems to be distinct from an orientation for culture as a whole. Furthermore, the negative loading of 'study at university' on this factor suggests that learning English for entertainment, among this group of students, is at cross-purposes with learning the language for academic reasons.

Item	Factor					h <sup>2</sup>
	1	2	3	4	5	
Q6 Because I like English	<b>.90</b>	-.09	.05	.13	.04	.84
Q9 Because I am interested in English	<b>.88</b>	-.10	-.03	.15	.13	.83
Q10 To learn/use beautiful expressions	<b>.76</b>	.18	.22	.16	-.02	.69
Q4 To speak with a good accent	<b>.73</b>	<b>.32</b>	.05	-.28	.22	.76
Q12 To have more job opportunities	-.09	<b>.87</b>	-.04	.04	-.07	.78
Q5 To get informed about the world	.18	<b>.64</b>	.08	.26	.27	.59
Q14 To learn computer science	.08	<b>.49</b>	<b>-.35</b>	-.30	.00	.46
Q2 To appreciate songs/films	.18	.03	<b>.78</b>	-.10	.03	.65
Q7 I like the musicality of English	<b>.43</b>	.07	<b>.63</b>	-.06	.16	.62
Q8 To study at university	<b>.35</b>	.27	<b>-.58</b>	-.05	.09	.54
Q1 To know about Anglophone culture	.09	-.08	.05	<b>.80</b>	.15	.68
Q13 To copy Anglophone culture	.10	.22	-.17	<b>.74</b>	-.03	.64
Q3 To get good Baccalaureate grades	.14	.21	.19	-.11	<b>-.82</b>	.78
Q11 To make friends with Anglophones	.29	.19	.23	-.12	<b>.58</b>	.53
Q15 To know Anglophone countries	.23	.27	.13	.17	<b>.52</b>	.44
Eigenvalue	3.8	1.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	
Factor 1 = Intrinsic	Factor 4 = Cultural integration					
Factor 2 = Instrumental	Factor 5 = Social integration					
Factor 3 = Entertainment						

Table 7.2: Varimax rotated factor matrix for the 15 motivation variables

Factor 4 evidences substantial loadings from two variables, 'to know Anglophone culture', and 'to copy Anglophone culture'. These variables relate the learning of English to a desire to learn about, and adopt, the TL culture. This factor could then be referred to as a 'cultural dimension'.

Factor 5 exhibits appreciable loadings from two variables concerned with 'corresponding, having contacts, friendships with Anglophones', and 'knowing more about Anglophone countries'. This factor also receives a high negative loading from the variable 'to get good baccalaureate grades'. Factor 5 appears then to be essentially defined by variables concerned with establishing contacts and friendships with the TL group. It can therefore be given the label of social orientation. Remarkably, factor 4 and factor 5 together form the social cultural dimension as defined by Gardner's integrative orientation. In other words, Gardner's integrative motivation seems to be split into two dimensions: cultural and social as represented in factor 4 and 5 respectively. This lends support to the study conducted by Clément and Kruidenier (1983) which questioned the construct validity of integrative motivation as defined by Gardner and Lambert (1959). As concerns the negative loading of the variable 'to get good grades' on factor 5, this suggests that those learners who had strong social orientations towards learning the TL did not seem to perceive "getting good grades as a source of motivation".

A closer look at the factor matrix represented in Table 7.2 reveals a few, weak, cross-factor loadings. For example, the variable 'I like the musicality of English' loaded on two factors: F1 (intrinsic) and F3 (entertainment), suggesting that the subjects attached a dual interpretation to it. Likewise, the item 'to learn computer science' loaded positively on F2 (instrumental), but loaded negatively on F3 (entertainment) and F4 (cultural), suggesting perhaps that 'learning computer science' was perceived as de-motivating by those students who were culturally-oriented.

### *Reliability analysis of the motivational orientation scales*

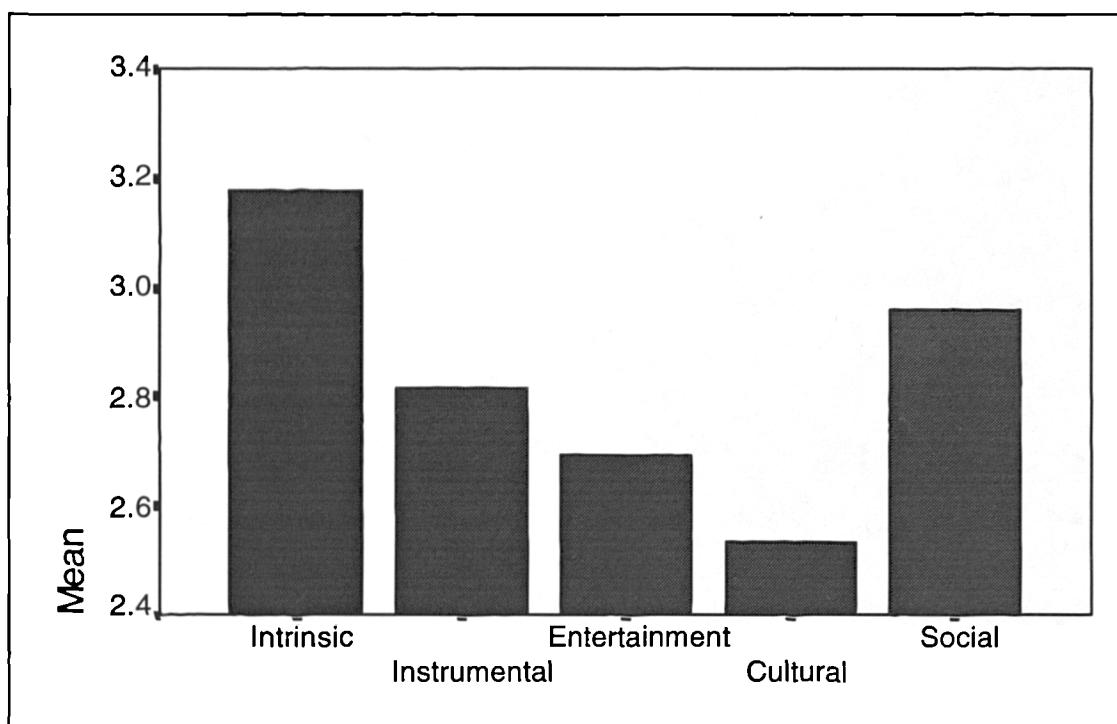
Cronbach's alpha for each of the five factors are displayed in Table 7.3. Results showed that the alpha value for intrinsic orientation was very high (0.86) suggesting that the items used in this scale were highly reliable. The alpha values of the other four scales appeared to be weaker, ranging from 0.41 to 0.62. This suggests that the items included in such scales were relatively less reliable than the items included in the scale of intrinsic orientation, or that they were reduced in number.

Orientations	Items	Alpha if Item Deleted	Alpha
Intrinsic	Q4 Good accent	0.87	0.86
	Q6 Like English	0.78	
	Q9 Interested in English	0.79	
	Q10 Beautiful expressions	0.83	
Instrumental	Q5 Get informed	0.38	0.48
	Q12 Find a job	0.13	
	Q14 Learn computer science	0.58	
Entertainment	Q2 Songs/Films	.	0.62
	Q7 Musicality	.	
Cultural	Q1 Know culture	.	0.51
	Q13 Copy culture	.	
Social	Q11 Correspondence	.	0.41
	Q15 Travel	.	

*Table 7.3: Cronbach's alpha for the motivational orientations*

#### ***Levels of endorsement of motivational orientations***

Given the mixture of orientations that emerged in this study, it was thought appropriate to evaluate the level of endorsement of each orientation. This was computed by taking the average score (minimum = 1; maximum = 4) for those items shown to load positively on each factor. Items that cross-loaded onto two factors were included in the index of the factor that they defined most highly.



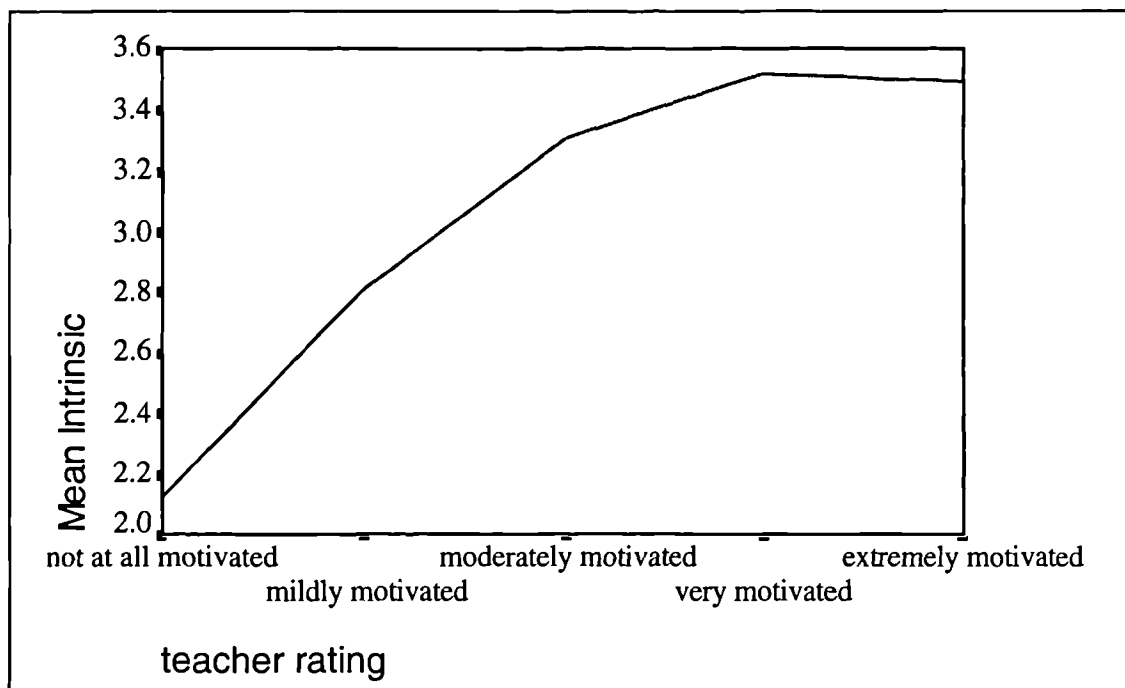
*Figure 7.1: Mean scores for the motivational orientation endorsements*

The results presented in Figure 7.1 indicate a strong endorsement of the intrinsic orientation and a moderately high endorsement of the social, instrumental, and entertainment orientations. Endorsement of the cultural orientation appears to be the weakest of all. Such results suggest that interest in learning the language for its own sake appeared to be the most powerful source of motivation, followed by the social, instrumental and entertainment orientations. However, students seemed to give more priority to establishing contacts with native speakers than to using English for instrumental or entertainment purposes. Interestingly, the cultural orientation was perceived as the least important source of motivation. These results implied that the group investigated were more motivated by the language itself than by its culture and that they were more interested in getting actively in touch with native speakers and socializing with them than in passively absorbing their culture.

#### ***Relationships between motivational orientations and teacher ratings of students' motivation***

An attempt was made to pinpoint the pattern of relationships between students' endorsement of motivational orientations (intrinsic, instrumental, entertainment, cultural,

social) and their levels of classroom motivation as rated by their teachers on a scale ranging from 1 (poorly motivated) to 5 (strongly motivated). The rationale behind this was to see whether students' perceived sources of motivation had any link with the motivation level they manifested in class. The results for each of the five motivational orientations are plotted on Figures 7.2 to 7.6.



*Figure 7.2: Relationship between intrinsic orientation and teacher ratings*

Figure 7.2 represents the relationship between intrinsic orientation and teacher ratings. Results show that the mean scores for intrinsic motivation increase with teacher rating scores, thereby suggesting that there is a positive correlation between students' intrinsic motivation and classroom motivation. In other words, those students who were driven by intrinsic interest to learn the language manifested higher motivational levels in the classroom.

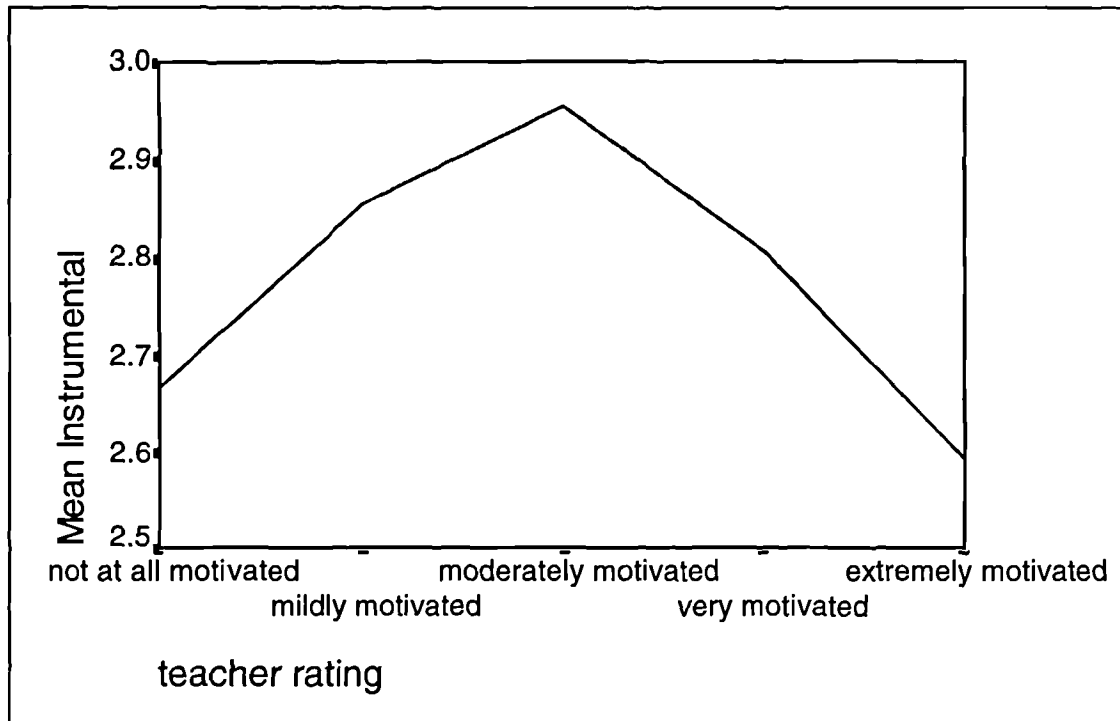
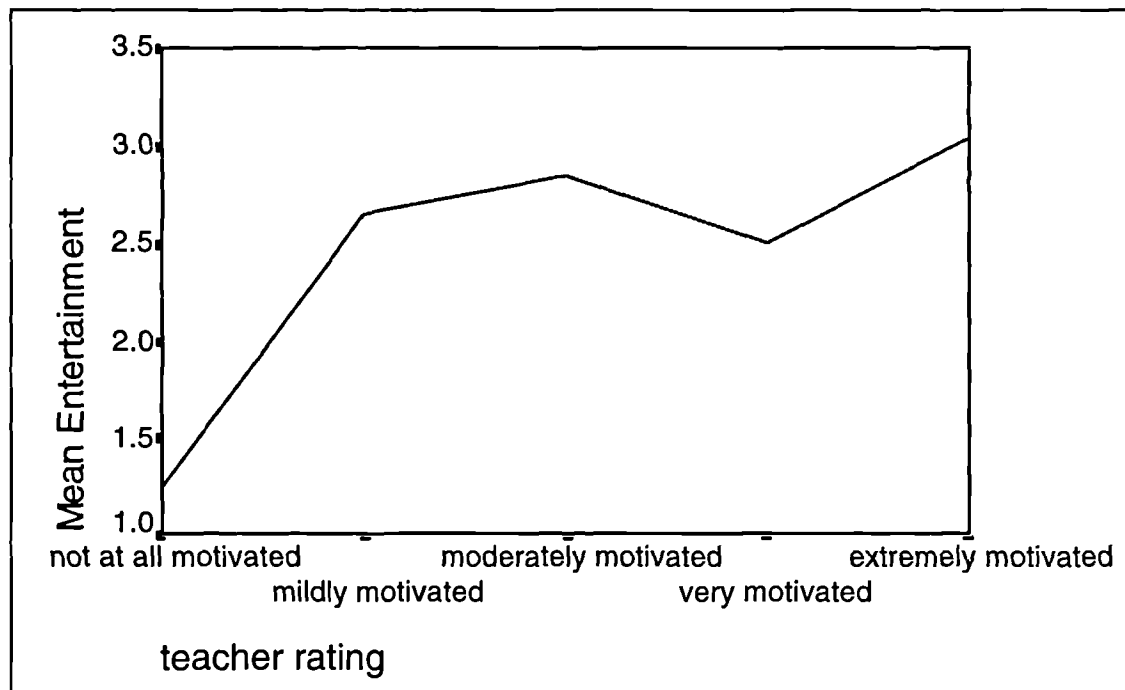


Figure 7.3: Relationship between instrumental orientation and teacher ratings

Figure 7.3 indicates mixed relationships between instrumental orientation and teacher ratings of students' motivational levels. Instrumental orientation first increases then, decreases as a function of students' motivational levels. It reaches its peak point with moderate levels of classroom motivation. This perhaps means that instrumental orientation does not clearly manifest itself in terms of participation and interest in class. Another interpretation could be that teachers do not readily detect or attach much value to the manifestations of instrumental motivation.

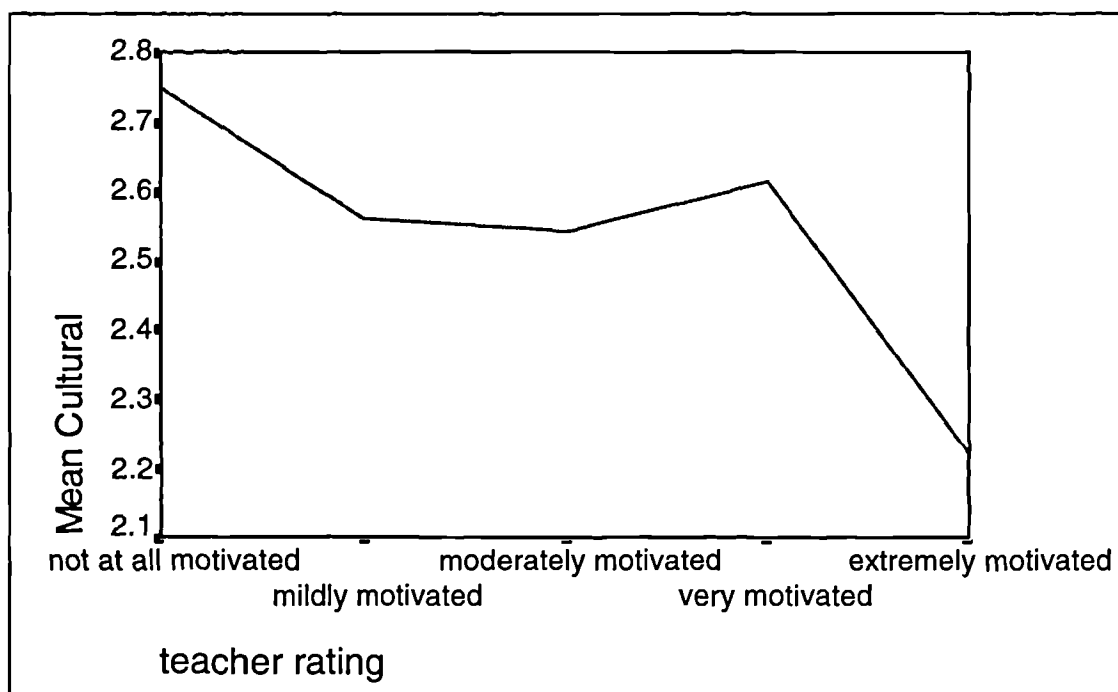




*Figure 7.4: Relationship between entertainment orientation and teacher ratings*

Figure 7.4 indicates a lower endorsement of entertainment among poorly motivated students, and a higher endorsement of the same orientation among students with moderate or high motivational levels.

This suggests that by and large, entertainment seemed to be a popular orientation among most students with the exception of weakly motivated ones, who tended to reject entertainment as an important source of motivation for learning the language.



*Figure 7.5: Relationship between cultural orientation and teacher ratings*

Figure 7.5 represents the relationship between cultural orientation and students' motivational levels in class. Interestingly, those students whose cultural orientation was the highest got the lowest scores of motivational levels. Conversely, students whose cultural orientation was the weakest received the highest teacher-rating scores of classroom motivation. These results indicate that among the group investigated, some students had a high interest in the target language culture, yet they did not seem to manifest much motivation to learn the language in class. In contrast, other students with lower interest in the target language culture appeared to show a higher motivation and interest in learning the language. The best that can be said is that students who have a positive orientation towards the target language culture may not necessarily find English class very engaging, or manifest high levels of motivation to learn the language. This view sharply contrasts with the finding highlighted in Figure 7.2 which showed that students with stronger intrinsic orientations towards the language tended to display higher levels of motivation in the classroom. Interestingly, the picture that emerges is that higher levels of motivation in the classroom seem to be positively linked with intrinsic interest in the language but negatively linked with interest in the culture.

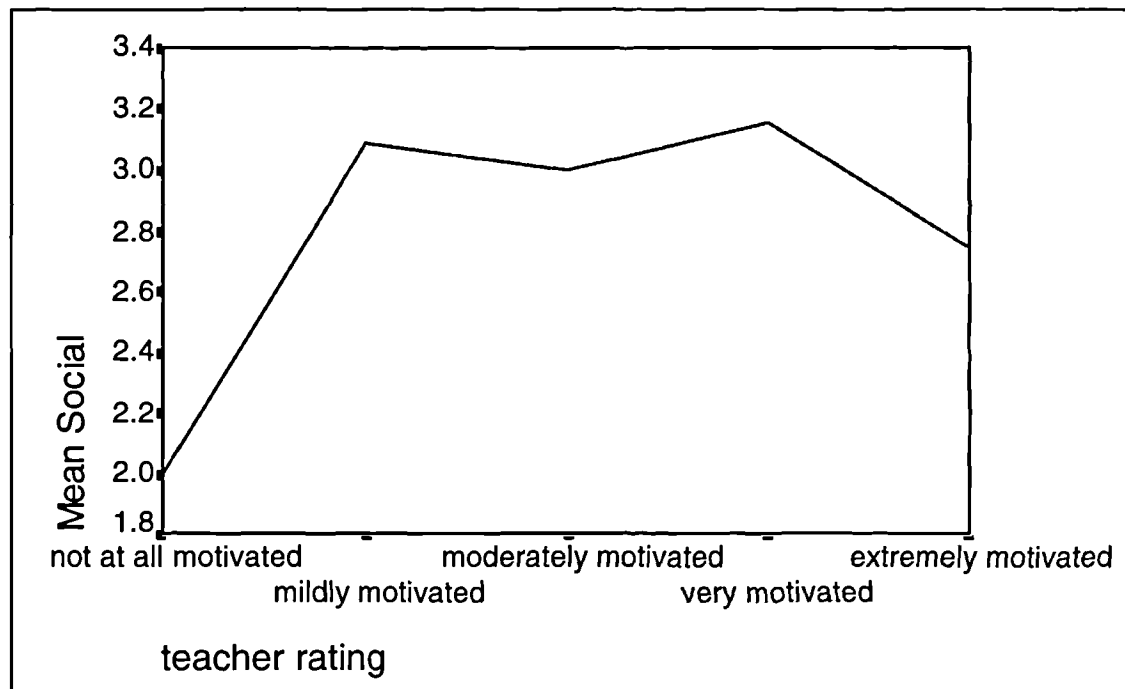


Figure 7.6: Relationship between social orientation and teacher ratings

Figure 7.6 highlights the relationship between social orientation, as defined by the desire to establish contacts with Anglophones, and teacher ratings of students' motivational levels. Results indicate that highly and moderately motivated students showed a higher endorsement of a social orientation than do poorly motivated students. This suggests that by and large, the social orientation, just like the entertainment dimension examined in Figure 7.4, appeared to be popular among most subjects with the exception of poorly motivated ones, who seemed to reject such an orientation as a source of motivation for learning the language.

To summarize students' levels of motivation tended to increase as a function of intrinsic orientation, and by contrast they seemed to decrease as a function of cultural orientation. Social and entertainment orientations appeared to be relatively high for most students but dramatically low for poorly motivated students. What characterized instrumental orientation was that it peaked with moderate motivational levels but dropped otherwise.

## 7.5 Data analysis of learning activity preferences

The purpose of this section was to highlight the patterns of students' learning preferences, and to explore the relationship, if any, between their preferences and their motivations.

Table 7.4 displays the rank-order of the 18 learning activities according to the percentage level of response of those who rated these activities very high. Activities were grouped into three categories: traditional, communicative and naturalistic, in order to differentiate between students' preferences for each category.

Traditional		Communicative		Naturalistic	
Pronunciation	77 %	Class discussion	43 %	Songs	46 %
Learn grammar	49 %	Games	35 %	TV/radio	39 %
Learn paradigms	46 %	Conversation	32 %	Reading books	28 %
Accuracy	40 %	Fluency	32 %	Talks/projects	14 %
Use dictionary	34 %	Problem-solving	29 %		
Gram. exercises	29 %	Role play	21 %		
Repetition	15 %				
Rote learning	11 %				

*Table 7.4: Rank-order of learning activities according to percentage level of response*

Table 7.4 suggests that within each group of activities, certain activities seemed to be more popular than others implying, that generally students did not have a wholesale preference for any single type of learning. For example, their relatively more pronounced preference for the traditional type of learning was not an all or nothing matter. Results on the left side column of Table 7.4 indicate that whereas pronunciation practice and grammar understanding were by far the most popular of all activities, rote learning and repetition seemed to be generally rejected by students. This implies that the mechanical side of traditional learning was not appreciated by students.

As regards communicative activities, class discussion appeared to be more favoured than problem-solving or role-play, implying perhaps that the artificial side of the

communicative approach was less popular among students than teacher-guided, natural discussion.

Among the naturalistic activities displayed on the right side of Table 7.4, songs and TV appeared to be more enjoyable than reading books or giving talks.

The general pattern that emerged from these results was that students preferred to be cognitively and emotionally involved in the act of learning by understanding abstract rules, exchanging opinions in class discussion, and listening to songs. The last two may well reduce the effect of anxiety provoked by the FL learning situation. Unsurprisingly, the students appeared to be concerned about accuracy (paying attention to mistakes before speaking) more than they were about fluency (expressing oneself without paying attention to mistakes).

Another point that needs to be made about the figures in Table 7.4 is students' compelling preference for pronunciation practice, which came at the top of their preferences, with 77 % of respondents giving this activity the highest rating. This finding is consonant with earlier results in Table 7.1 which pointed out that students' top reason for learning English was 'to speak with a good accent'.

This concern with pronunciation supports the results in the first preliminary study, in Chapter six, which demonstrated that 'pronunciation practise' was one of students' most preferred activities, with 78 % of respondents rating such activity very high (see Table 6.2).

Students' concern with impeccable pronunciation of English, appeared to be reflected in their preferences for teachers who had an excellent pronunciation and accent. In a subsequent survey carried out among the subjects in this study, students were asked to name five characteristics of their ideal teacher of English. One of the most frequently cited characteristics in response to the open-ended question, was that the pre-requisite quality for a good teacher was to have an excellent pronunciation.

These findings would seem to suggest that more emphasis should be given to pronunciation in order to meet students' needs and orientations. This clearly conflicts with beliefs among FL teaching professionals who generally argue that FL learners should settle for intelligibility, disregarding students' needs for excellence. For example, Harmer (1983) argued that "it is by no means certain that it is desirable to speak like a native

speaker" (p. 25). He went on to suggest that "teachers and students, then, should insist on a level of pronunciation that ensures communicative efficiency" (p.25).

The picture that emerges about students' preferences lends support to the findings reported in the previous preliminary study reported in Chapter six. Both studies revealed that the students seemed to favour the cognitively engaging aspect of the traditional activities over passive mechanical practice; and they also seemed to prefer the natural side of the communicative approach over the artificially contrived aspect. Such results also bear striking similarities with research findings by Alcorso and Kalantzis (1985) and Nunan (1988). EFL learners across cultures seem to have a common view about grammar, pronunciation, and class discussion, and regard some communicative activities like games and role-playing as useless.

The rank-ordering and categorising of students' learning preferences in Table 7.4 helped determine students' preferences with regard to individual activities, but no clear cut pattern of these preferences was established. The aim of the next section is to show how factor analytic procedures provided a more precise picture of students' preferences both in terms of learning style, and endorsement of such learning style by students.

### ***Factor analysis of the learning activity variables***

Factor analysis procedures were applied to the 18 learning activity preferences. Using an eigenvalue greater than one conducted to the extraction of six factors. However, only four factors were retained because the fifth and the sixth factors had a very low percentage of variance of 6.7 and 5.7 %. The factor matrix sorted by factor is reproduced in Table 7.5. For ease of interpretation, loadings over .30 have been bolded. The first factor explains 27 % of the total variance and the remaining three factors each account for 9 % to 12 % of the variance. Table 7.5 also displays the communality values ( $h^2$ ) for each item. These refer to the proportion of variance explained by the four factors.

As can be seen in Table 7.5, factor 1 receives substantial loadings from five variables all related to a studial type of learning, concerned with conscious grammar-focused, accuracy-based type of learning involving the use of the learners' cognitive powers. This factor is similar to Ellis's (1993) studial learning, and can therefore be given the same label.

Items	Factor				h <sup>2</sup>
	1	2	3	4	
Q15 To learn paradigms	<b>.83</b>	-.02	.22	.16	.76
Q1 To understand grammar explanations	<b>.80</b>	.13	.03	.04	.66
Q12 To do grammar exercises	<b>.76</b>	-.04	.08	<b>.34</b>	.69
Q4 To use the dictionary	<b>.58</b>	.22	<b>.37</b>	<b>-.34</b>	.63
Q8 To practise pronunciation	<b>.51</b>	<b>.42</b>	.19	<b>-.41</b>	.63
Q11 To do role-play	.04	<b>.76</b>	.16	.01	.61
Q7 To do problem-solving	.27	<b>.71</b>	-.23	-.01	.63
Q2 To participate in class discussion	.20	<b>.71</b>	.18	-.01	.57
Q10 To learn through games	-.15	<b>.52</b>	.13	.10	.32
Q3 To listen to and understand songs	.04	<b>.45</b>	.40	-.09	.37
Q14 To read books/stories in English	<b>.35</b>	.16	<b>.74</b>	-.19	.73
Q16 To pay attention to mistakes	<b>.32</b>	-.11	<b>.67</b>	.05	.56
Q5 To converse in English with students	.09	<b>.52</b>	<b>.55</b>	-.05	.58
Q18 To do projects and give presentations	-.09	.23	<b>.51</b>	.12	.34
Q6 To listen to the radio/TV	<b>.35</b>	.21	<b>.45</b>	.07	.38
Q17 To repeat sentences after the teacher	.20	.04	-.17	<b>.82</b>	.74
Q9 Speak with no attention to mistakes	.21	.30	<b>-.42</b>	<b>-.53</b>	.60
Q13 To learn dialogues by heart	.25	.23	.14	<b>.52</b>	.41
Eigenvalue	4.84	2.21	1.61	1.55	
Factor 1 = Studial learning			Factor 3 = Naturalistic learning		
Factor 2 = Communicative learning			Factor 4 = Mechanical learning		

Table 7.5: Factor analysis summary of activity preference items

Factor 2 evidences appreciable loadings from variables mainly concerned with communicative activities like discussion, role-play, and problem-solving. Following Willing (1988), this factor can be referred to as communicative learning.

Factor 3 is dominated by variables that reflect the type of learning that students can carry out on their own, outside class, in the same way languages are learnt/used in natural settings by reading books, watching TV or having conversations. This factor can therefore be given the label naturalistic learning.

Factor 4 receives positive loadings from two variables that are purely mechanical in approach, concerned with repetition and rote learning. It also receives a negative loading

from a variable related to fluency: "speak without paying attention to mistakes". This factor, which is mainly dominated by an interest in mechanical audio-lingual practices can best be referred to as mechanical learning.

### *Reliability analysis of learning preference scales*

Cronbach's alphas for each of the four factors are displayed in Table 7.6. Results show that the alpha values for studial, communicative, and naturalistic types of preferences are relatively high, ranging from 0.67 to 0.78. The Cronbach's alpha for the mechanical preference is relatively moderate (0.54) probably because of the limited number of items used to operationalise this type of learning.

Learning preferences	Items	Alpha if item is deleted	Alpha
Studial	Q15 To learn paradigms	.72	.78
	Q1 Understand gram. explanations	.72	
	Q12 To do grammar exercises	.73	
	Q4 To use the dictionary	.74	
	Q8 To practise pronunciation	.77	
Communicative	Q11 Role-play	.57	.67
	Q7 Problem-solving	.62	
	Q2 Class discussion	.56	
	Q10 Games	.68	
	Q3 Songs	.66	
Naturalistic	Q14 Read books/stories	.58	.70
	Q16 Pay attention to mistakes	.68	
	Q5 Converse with peers	.62	
	Q18 Do projects/presentations	.70	
	Q6 TV/radio	.66	
Mechanical	Q17 Repeat sentences	.	.54
	Q13 Learn dialogues by heart	.	

*Table 7.6: Cronbach's alpha for the learning preferences*

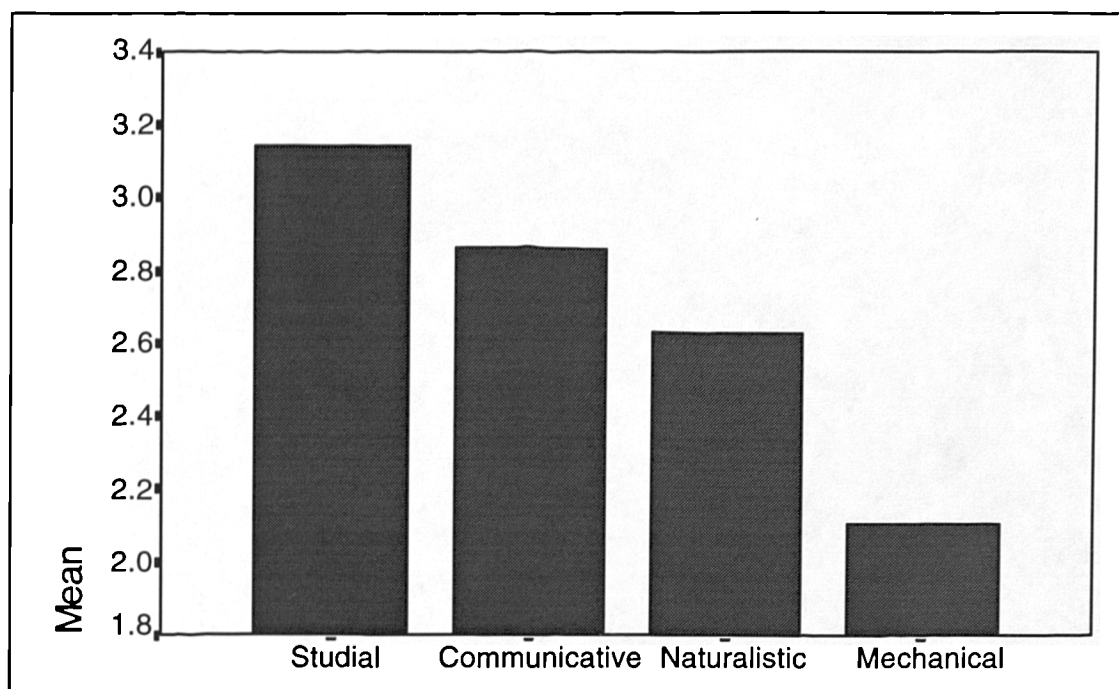


***Endorsement of types of learning preferences***

In order to evaluate the priority given to each learning preference by students, it was thought necessary to compute the level of endorsement of each type of learning preference. This was calculated by taking the average score (minimum = 1; maximum = 4) for those items shown to load positively on each factor. Items that cross-loaded onto two factors were included in the index of the factor that they defined most highly. The results presented in Table 7.7 and Figure 7.7 indicate a strong endorsement of the studial preference (3.13), and a moderate endorsement of the communicative and naturalistic preferences. Mechanical learning appeared to receive the minimal support by the students. Such results suggest that learning the abstract systems of the language through the use of conscious learning processes appeared to be the most popular way of learning among the group of students investigated. On the other hand, learning the language through communication, TV and reading seemed to be just moderately favoured. By contrast, the audio-lingual practices of rote learning and repetition seemed to be rejected by students.

Learning preference	Mean	SD
Studial	3.13	.67
Communicative	2.89	.67
Naturalistic	2.63	.72
Mechanical	2.26	.62

*Table 7.7: Levels of endorsement of learning preferences*



*Figure 7.7: Endorsement for the learning preferences*

#### ***Relationships between students' activity preferences and motivational levels***

Analysis of the data revealed that the relationships between students' activity preferences and teacher ratings of students' motivational levels were not always neat and straightforward. However, certain learning activities showed a remarkable link between students' motivations and preferences. For the following analyses I shall assume that the teacher ratings were in fact accurate.

Figures 7.8 to 7.16 display the graphs representing the relationships between students' levels of motivation and their preferences for a number of communicative and naturalistic activities like class discussion, games, songs, and projects/talks. Figure 7.8 suggests that preference for class discussion increased as a function of classroom motivation. Highly motivated students tended to prefer engaging in class discussion more than did poorly motivated students.

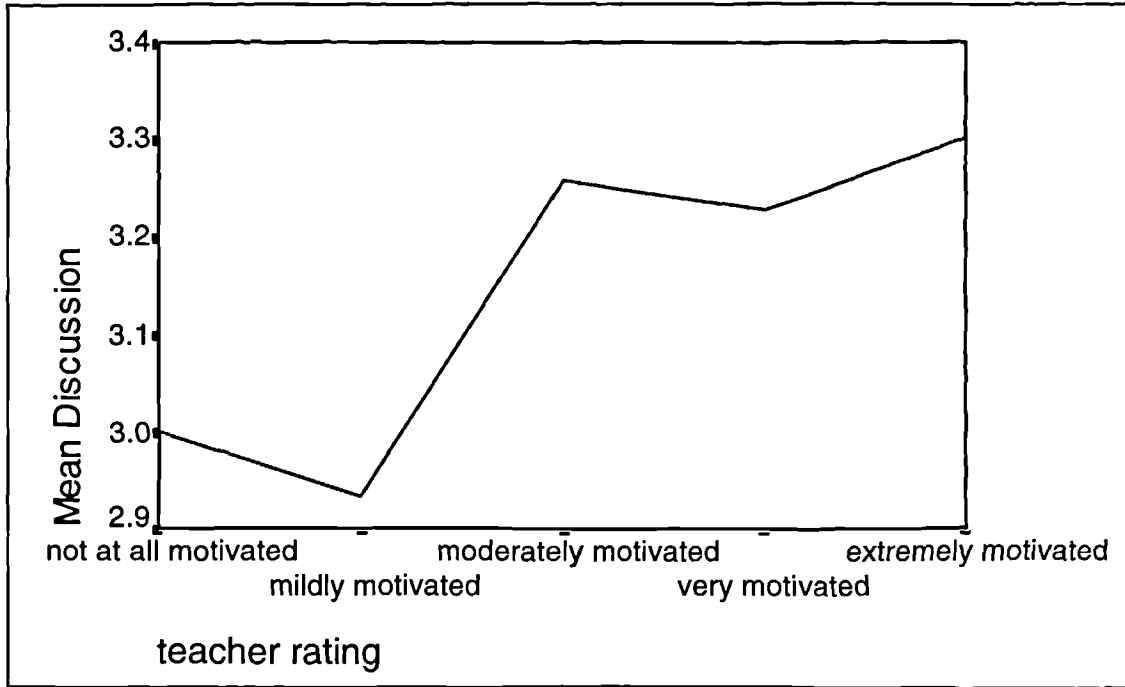


Figure 7.8: Relationship between students' motivation and preference for class discussion

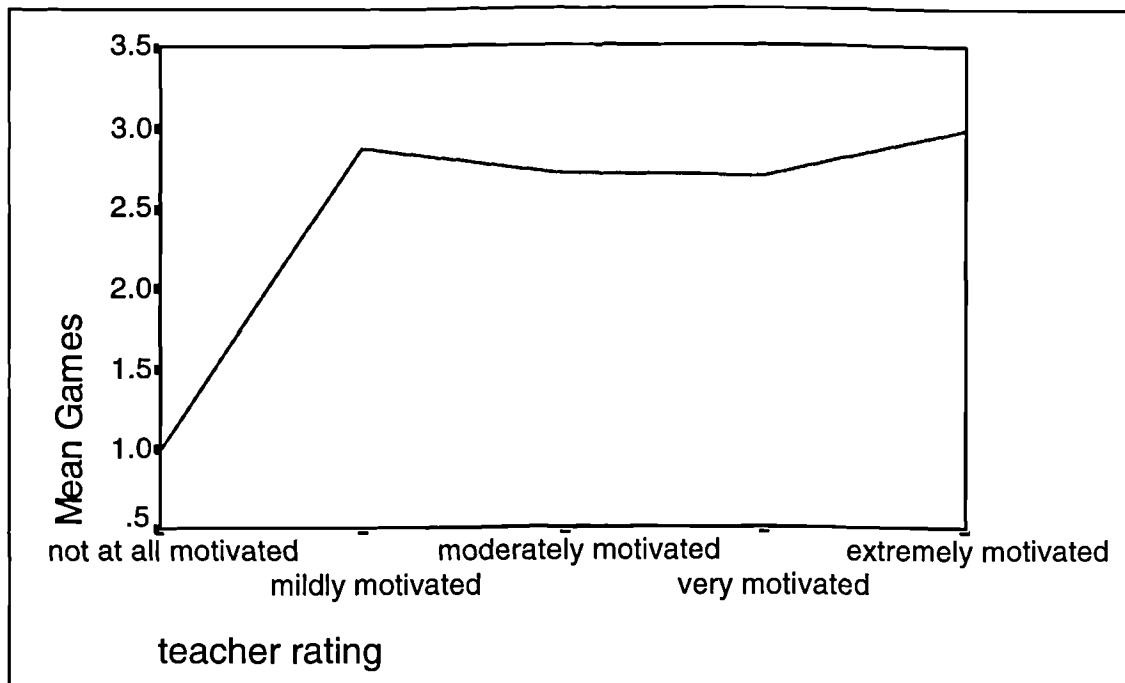


Figure 7.9: Relationship between students' motivation and preference for games

As shown in Figure 7.9, games tended to be generally more popular among highly motivated students than among poorly motivated ones. Similarly, as suggested by Figure 7.10, songs seemed to be more appreciated by highly motivated students than by students with lower motivational levels.

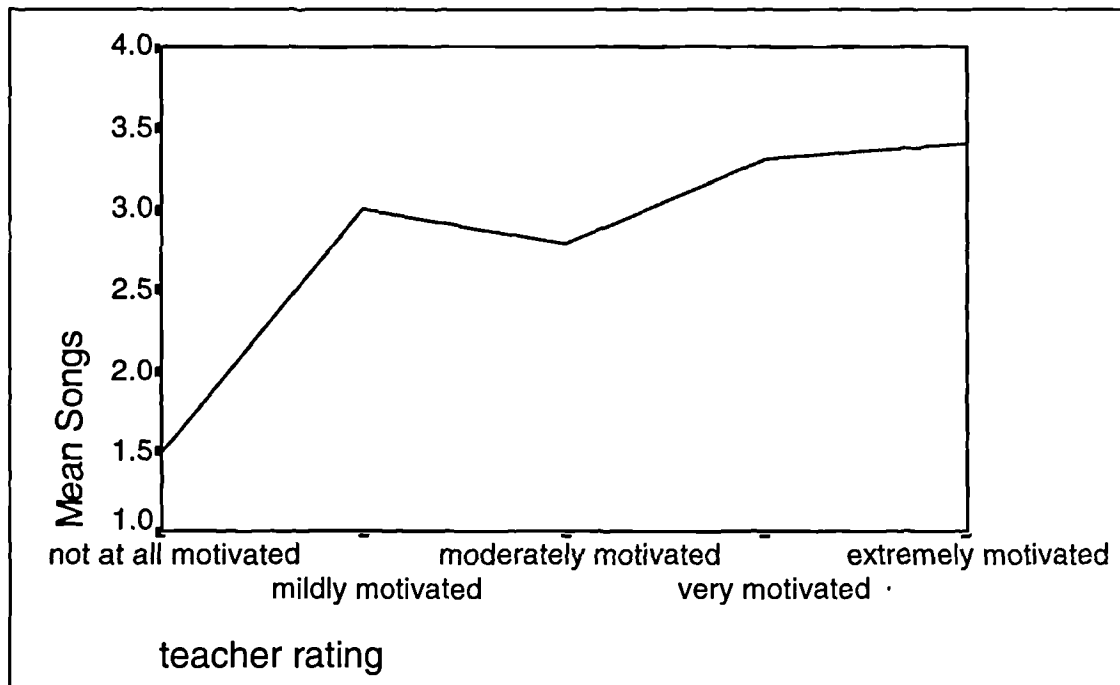


Figure 7.10: Relationship between students' motivation and preference for songs

On the other hand, Figure 7.11 suggests that preference for doing projects and giving talks seemed to increase steadily as a function of students' motivation. In other words, motivation could act as a predictor of willingness to engage in talks and projects.

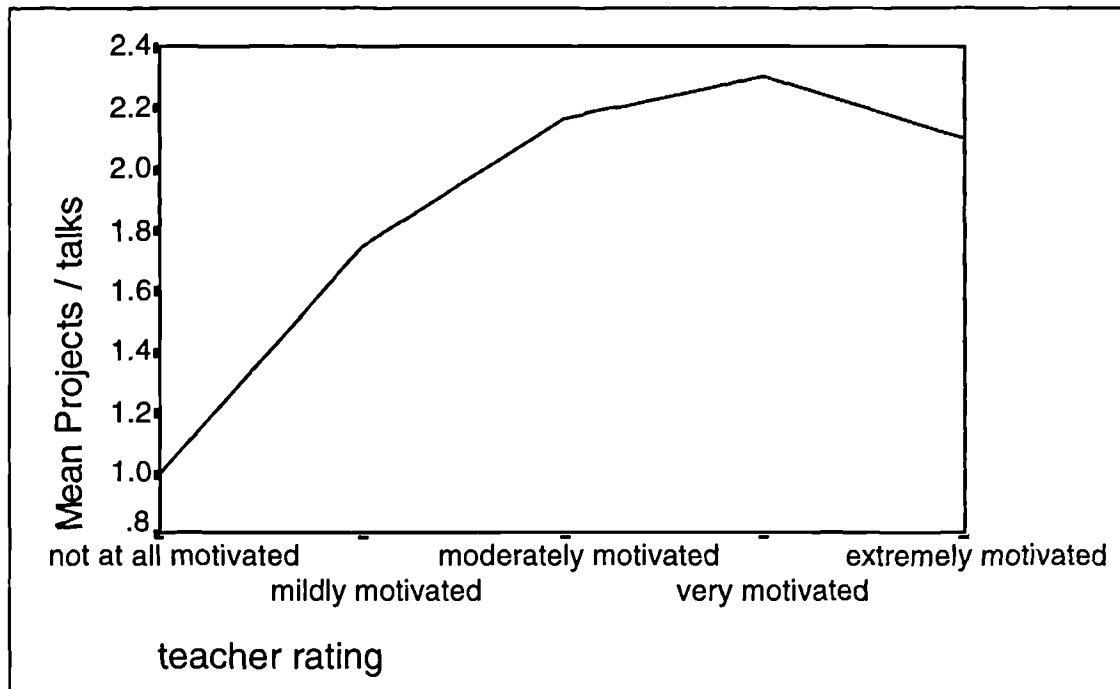
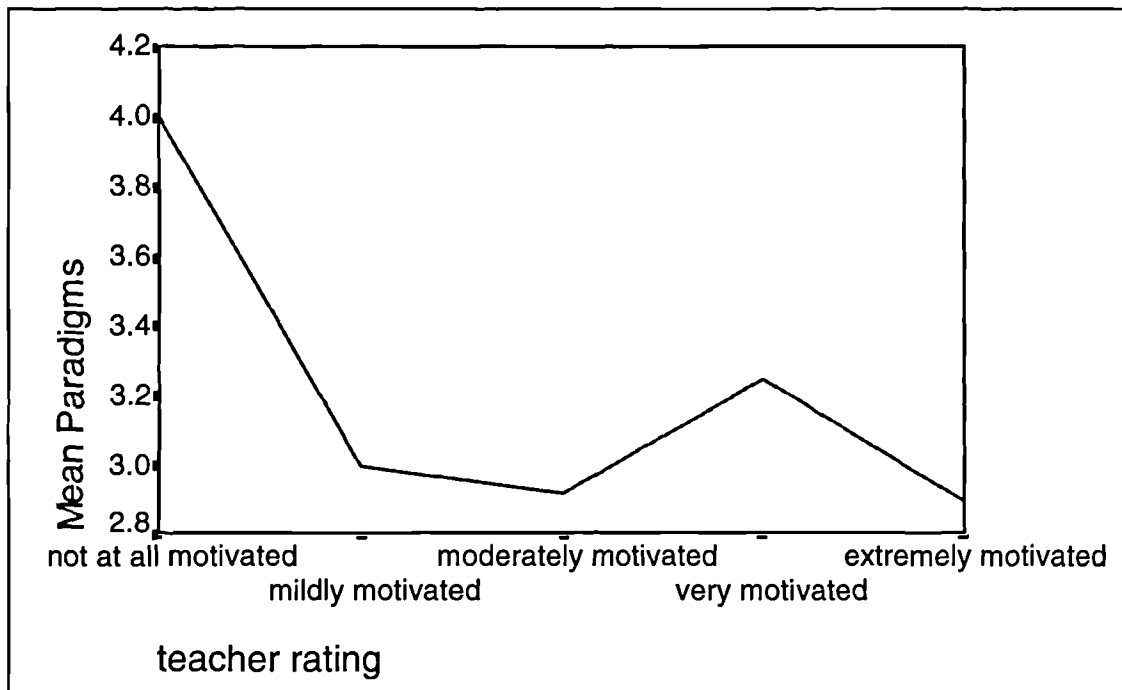


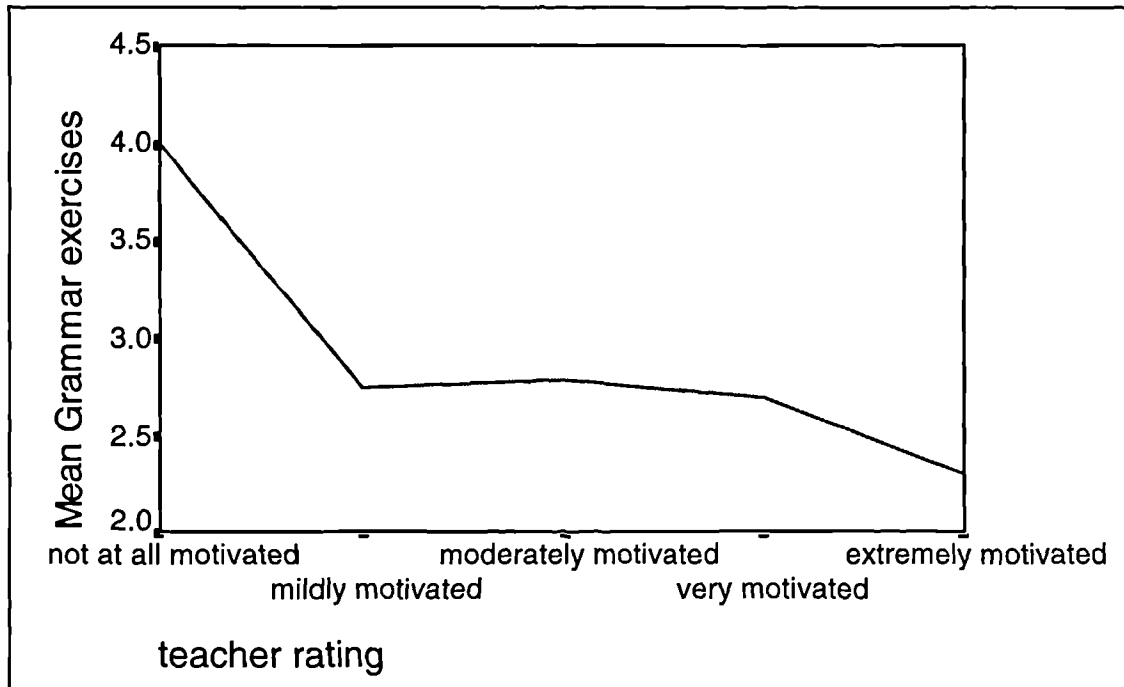
Figure 7.11: Relationship between students' motivation and preference for projects/talks

The illustrations provided above showed that students' preferences for communicative and naturalistic activities increased when motivation went up. This suggests that motivated students would be more willing to engage in learning the language through communicative or naturalistic devices. The next section will highlight the relationship between students' motivation and preferences for a number of traditional activities such as grammar exercises, repetition, and learning paradigms.



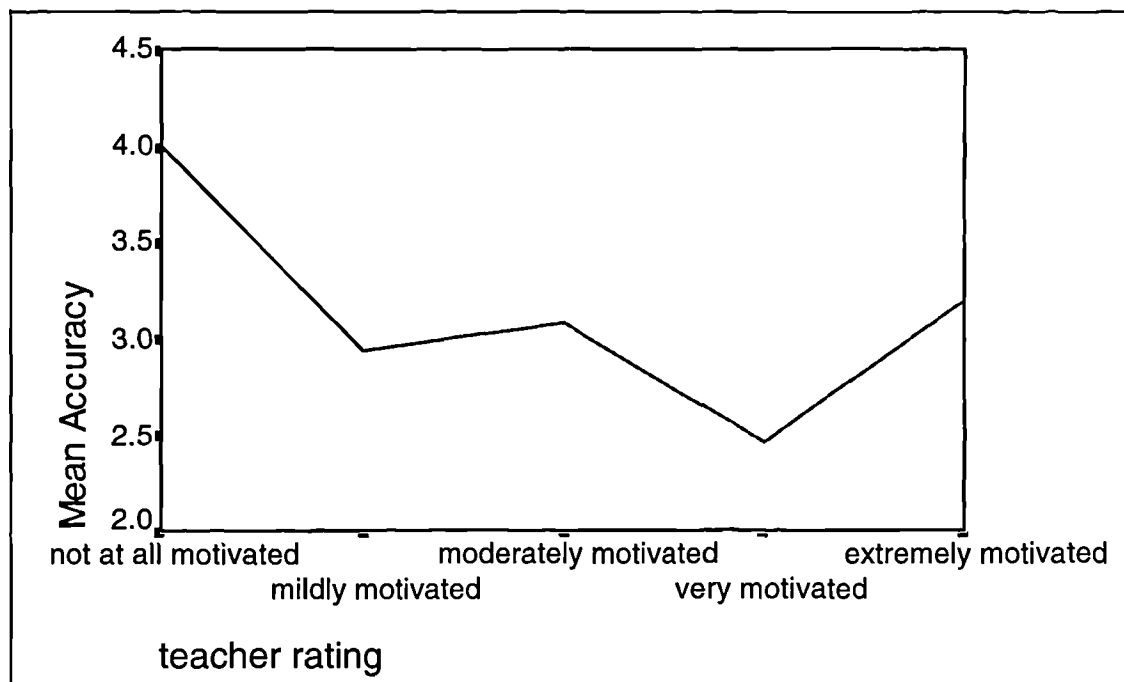
*Figure 7.12: Relationship between students' motivation and preference for learning paradigms*

Figure 7.12 suggests that preference for paradigm learning increased as students' motivation decreased, implying that such an activity was remarkably popular among poorly motivated students.



*Figure 7.13: Relationship between students' motivation and preference for grammar exercises*

Figure 7.13 shows that preference for grammar exercises was also strikingly higher among poorly motivated students than among the rest of the group.



*Figure 7.14: Relationship between students' motivation and preference for accuracy*

As shown in Figure 7.14, students with lower motivation appeared to be much more concerned about accuracy than was the rest of the group.

Figure 7.15 indicates that preference for repetition appeared to decrease as a function of motivation, implying that students with poor motivation appreciated repetition very much.

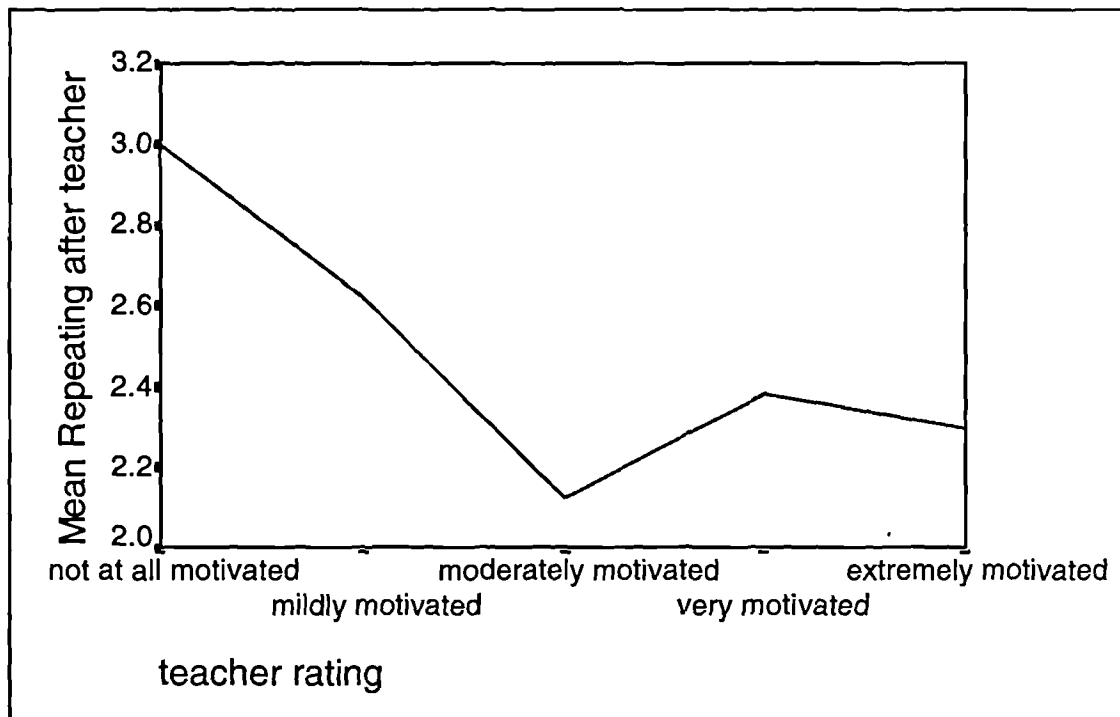
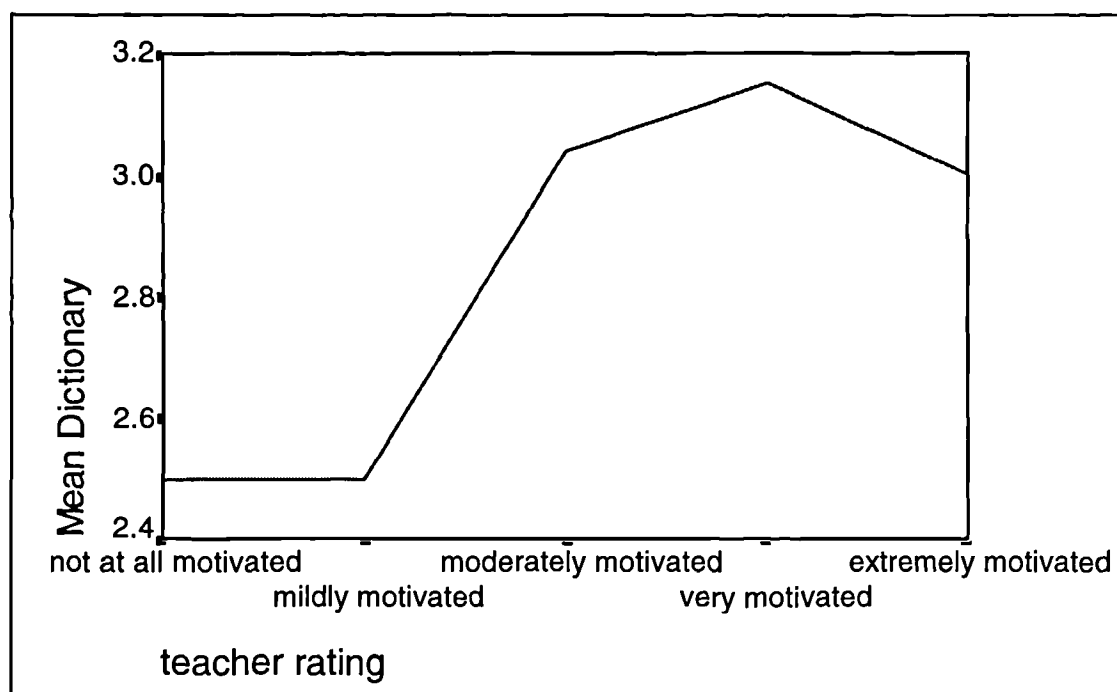


Figure 7.15: Relationship between students' motivation and preference for repetition





*Figure 7.16: Relationship between students' motivation and preference for using the dictionary*

Figure 7.16 shows that using the dictionary was much more popular among moderately or highly motivated students than among poorly motivated students.

It is to be noted that the graphs dealing with the traditional activities above showed that the relationship between motivation and preference for traditional activities depended largely on the type of traditional activity involved. For example, mechanical activities like repetition, doing grammar exercises were remarkably popular among weakly motivated students. By contrast, more challenging activities which involved more thinking and effort on the part of learners were less popular among poorly motivated students.

To summarise, in the context investigated, classroom motivation would seem to play a role in predicting students' learning preferences. For example, classroom motivation would be a predictor of preference for communicative naturalistic activities, and also for more challenging traditional activities like use of the dictionary. Conversely, poor motivation would be a predictor of preference for less challenging and more passive traditional activities like learning paradigms, or repetition. The reason for the contrasting pattern of preference between motivated and unmotivated students is not easy to account for. However, it could be speculated that other factors such as students' proficiency level

would be at the basis of their classroom motivation and learning preferences. For example, weaker students would probably be demotivated in class and at the same time, they would find mechanical, unchallenging activities like repetition and exercises more congenial than engaging in talks, projects, or class discussion.

***Endorsement of the learning styles by highly and poorly motivated students***

An attempt was made to investigate how highly motivated students differed from poorly motivated students in terms of the 4 learning style preferences, identified earlier. The purpose behind this was to highlight the link between students' levels of classroom motivation and their favoured ways of going about the task of learning the foreign language. Using teacher-rating scores (minimum = 1; maximum = 5), two groups of students differing in their motivational levels were isolated and contrasted. The highly motivated group, scoring between 4 and 5, consisted of 23 students. The poorly motivated group scoring between 1 and 2, consisted of 18 students. For each group, endorsements of the four learning style preferences were computed. Results are presented in Table 7.8. A glance at this table reveals that both groups showed the same order of preference relative to the four learning styles. They seemed to apply the same hierarchy to their preferences, with studial at the top, mechanical at the bottom, and communicative and naturalistic in between. This suggests that whatever their level of motivation in class, students preferred more the studial style than the communicative or the naturalistic styles. Their least favoured style was the mechanical way of learning. Students' level of motivation did not seem to affect their preferences at least in terms of hierarchical order.

Preference	Highly motivated students		Poorly motivated students	
	Mean score	SD	Mean score	SD
Studial	3.19	.48	2.99	.91
Communicative	2.98	.81	2.77	.48
Naturalistic	2.63	.75	2.46	.79
Mechanical	2.23	.56	2.35	.65

*Table 7.8: Endorsement of learning preferences by highly motivated and poorly motivated students*

A closer look at the scores displayed in Table 7.8 reveals that highly motivated students showed stronger endorsements of the studial, communicative, and naturalistic styles, but weaker endorsement of the mechanical style than poorly motivated students. This suggests that whereas the highly motivated group appeared to be more open to studial, communicative and naturalistic learning, the poorly motivated group were more open to mechanical learning, which involved repetition and rote learning. This lends support to the findings highlighted in the preceding section.

### *Correlations between motivational orientations and learning preferences*

Table 7.9 displays the results of the correlations between students' motivational orientations and learning style preferences. The intrinsic orientation correlated significantly with three types of learning: studial, communicative and naturalistic. This suggests that learning the language out of pure interest appeared to be a predictor of a broad spectrum of learning activity preferences. By contrast, the social and entertainment orientations showed significant correlations with communicative and naturalistic learning, but not with studial learning. Studial learning, which involves grammatical awareness and practice appeared to be the priority of intrinsically motivated students. Curiously, the instrumental and cultural orientations did not show any correlation with any type of learning, suggesting that these motives for learning the language did not seem to predict preference for any type of learning.

	Intrinsic	Social	Instrumental	Entertainment	Cultural
Studial	.54 * p< .001	.05 p=.720	.16 p= .233	.06 p= .633	-.20 p= .122
Communicative	.31 * p= .015	.26 * p=.043	.03 p=.797	.29 * p=.024	-.19 p=.154
Naturalistic	.41 * p=.001	.31 * p=.014	.07 p=.605	.38 * p=.002	-.18 p=.166
Mechanical	.05 p=.689	.12 p=.352	-.02 p=.878	.04 p=.770	.06 p=.640

df=63, two tailed test

\* : significant values at  $p < .05$

*Table 7.9: Correlations between motivational orientations and learning preferences*

By and large, three important findings emerged from the above results. First, the intrinsic motive, once again, seemed to be the most powerful motivational orientation. Here, it correlated significantly with students' learning preferences just as it was shown to correlate positively with students' classroom levels of motivation, earlier in this study. Second, the instrumental and cultural sources of motivation did not seem to have a predictive effect on students' preferences. Third, mechanical learning did not show any correlation with any type of motivation, suggesting perhaps that preference for this kind of learning operated independently of students' sources of motivation.

## **7.6 Conclusion**

The present study was conducted to explore three main areas and their interrelationships: (1) students' motivational orientations, (2) students' levels of classroom motivation as measured by teacher ratings, and (3) students' perceived preferences for a selected number of communicative, and traditional activities.

Several conclusions seemed to emerge from the findings of this study. The most important was that intrinsic motivation or learning the language for its own sake appeared to be the most prominent motivational orientation for the students investigated. This orientation was manifested by a general interest in the language itself and a desire to acquire a good accent and a rich repertoire of 'beautiful expressions'. Intrinsically motivated learners seemed to derive satisfaction from developing competence in the target language.

Dimensions similar to Gardner's integrative orientation did emerge, but they took the form of two distinct factors, as generated by factor analytic procedures, namely a social, and a cultural orientation. With respect to the context being investigated, it could be said that Gardner's integrative construct was in a way split into two distinct components, the social, and the cultural dimension. Clearly, in the Canadian L2 learning context, for example, the social and the cultural aspects of integration entailed one another, and were therefore indissociable. In such a context, where native and non-native groups are close to each other, learning the language, its culture, and identifying with the TL community are often part of the same process. However, in a FL context, remote

from the TL community and culture, learning the language, adopting its culture, and having contacts with native speakers are not inextricably linked with one another. Some learners for, example, may be more socially oriented, and may as a result perceive contacts or identification with natives as a source of motivation for learning the language. For others, more driven by ideas or values, interest in the TL culture may be perceived as a motivating factor.

What remains to be clarified, though, is why the social orientation was more strongly endorsed by the students investigated than the cultural dimension. One reason could be that foreign culture was perceived as potentially leading to acculturation and loss of identity. As such, it was perhaps considered as a more threatening source of motivation. The social orientation, on the other hand, might be perceived as a more enriching and enjoyable experience which implied communication and inter-cultural exchange, rather than a restricting interest in passively absorbing the target language culture.

Instrumental orientation, as a source of motivation, was just moderately endorsed by students and as such it was given less support by students than either intrinsic or social orientation. Clearly, English was perceived by this group of students, less as a means to an end than as an end in itself.

A rather unpredicted orientation "entertainment", concerned essentially with songs and films, emerged on its own, completely distinct from general interest in Anglophone culture. Given the general involvement of students with English music, it was no surprise that this orientation was given a greater support than the cultural orientation.

Another interesting finding was that the intrinsic motive correlated positively with students' levels of classroom motivation. This suggested that intrinsically motivated students not only exhibited a genuine interest in the language itself, but they also appeared to manifest higher levels of classroom motivation than students with less intrinsic motivation. By contrast, instrumental orientation was more linked with moderately motivated students. The social and entertainment orientations showed more links with both moderately, and highly motivated students. What is perhaps surprising was that cultural orientation seemed to correlate negatively with students' levels of motivation, implying, perhaps, that culturally oriented students showed less interest in what was going on in the classroom. Clearly, teachers were reacting positively to the

intrinsically motivated students. They were not picking up instrumental motivation and were reacting negatively to the cultural integrators which could be regarded as the classroom rebels.

As concerns students' activity preferences, results indicated that subjects generally appeared to favour the more traditionally oriented activities. Nevertheless, a closer look at their preferences suggested that communicative activities such as class discussion were more popular among learners than the artificially designed tasks like role-play, and problem-solving. What was clear, though, was that audio-lingual practices like rote-learning and repetition seemed to fall short of students' preferences.

Factor analysis of the 18 learning activities yielded four major types of preferences. Studial learning seemed to be the most popular of all, followed by the communicative, and the naturalistic types of learning, with the mechanical learning preference getting the least support by students. Such results seemed to be very much consistent with findings in the previous preliminary study which showed a similar pattern of preferences among another group of students.

The thrust of the results that emerged from this study was that the intrinsic motive was the most powerful source of motivation for the students. In addition, the intrinsic motive appeared to be predictive of higher motivation in class and of a wider range of learning preferences, namely the studial.

Another major generalisation that emerged from this study, was that students had articulated views about how they preferred to learn the language, and motivation had a crucial role to play in this respect. Highly motivated students had stronger and more varied learning preferences than poorly motivated students. By contrast, poorly motivated learners seemed to be inhibited in their learning preferences perhaps because they were weaker or were predominantly concerned about grades.

The overall picture that emerged was that, in contrast to other educational contexts worldwide, the EFL context investigated appeared to be dominated by an intrinsic orientation, which seemed to be consistent with teachers' views of classroom motivation, and which functioned as a predictor of a wider range of students' activity preferences, namely studial learning.

Based on the insights gained from the present study, some pedagogical recommendations could be made for both teachers and textbook writers. Whereas

students' primary interest for English per se has to be adequately met, their integrative and instrumental orientations need not be neglected or ignored by the teacher, whose aim is to engage all learners and promote effective learning.

As there seems to be no limit to the amount of language that intrinsically motivated students would be prepared to absorb, more opportunities for enlarging students' lexical repertoires, practising pronunciation or discussing in class, should be made available. Similarly, the particularly high interest in culture exhibited by poorly motivated students needs to be explored to enhance their motivation and keep them involved in learning, by providing them, for example, with interesting, culturally-oriented material to read.

On the other hand, teachers need to be aware of their students' learning preference patterns and adjust classroom instructional practices to the real needs of individual students. More support materials need to be provided to meet students' studial preferences. Motivated students need to be exposed to a wider range of activities and less motivated students should be encouraged to go beyond their preferred styles.

The insights gained from this study should be taken with caution. More research needs to be done to assess the validity of the conclusions derived from such results.

## Chapter Eight

### *Motivational Orientations and Activity Preferences*

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#### 8.1 Introduction

##### *Rationale for the present study*

Why students opt for learning a foreign language (FL), and how they prefer to learn it, are fundamental questions in learner-centred FL programmes. A major purpose behind investigating students' motivational orientations is to gain insights into how learners perceive FL study: (1) as a means to an end, i.e., to satisfy instrumental/integrative goals, or (2) as an end in itself, i.e., to fulfil intrinsic needs. The second fundamental question relates to how students prefer to approach the task of learning a FL. Chambers (1994) made the point very well when he wrote:

*How often do we ask pupils what they think of lessons? Some of us do not ask because we are not sure we wish to know the answers. Only in the light of pupils' views, however, are we in a position to get the balance more correct between what they want to do and what they have to do (p. 16).*

This suggests that investigating students' learning preferences has a place in the FL research agenda.

##### *Background*

The questions mentioned above have already been addressed in the previous study in Chapter seven. Students' motivational orientations and activity preferences were investigated, and an attempt was made to find out how they related to students' levels of motivation as measured by their teacher ratings. Five motivational orientations had emerged: (1) intrinsic, (2) instrumental, (3) entertainment, (4) cultural integration, and (5) social integration. Results concerning activity preferences indicated that the subjects favoured traditional activities over communicative ones. More specifically, they seemed



to endorse the cognitively-engaging activities more than the mechanical ones, and they also appeared to favour the natural side of the communicative approach more than its artificial aspect.

By and large, the most interesting finding in the previous study was the emergence of a well-defined intrinsic dimension as factor 1 which seemed to be a prominent orientation in the context investigated and had not been highlighted by researchers in the area of SLA approach to motivation. In addition, the intrinsic motive showed positive correlations with teacher validated motivation and students' activity preferences.

The second part of the present study aimed essentially at exploring the research areas tackled previously, in more detail and with more accuracy. As will be explained later, the items on the orientation scales were improved upon, and their number increased in order to enhance the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument. Similarly, more items were incorporated into the activity preference questionnaire in order to explore how much traditional, and how much communicative, students' preferences were.

As an alternative to the teacher ratings of students' motivation used in the previous study, a new scale was developed, which aimed at measuring students' perceived level of motivational intensity.

It was also judged relevant to contrast students' preferences to their teachers' views of the usefulness of such activities. For this purpose, a questionnaire to teachers was developed. Finally, to provide more evidence for the results, it was thought necessary to conduct follow up interviews with both teachers and students.

### ***Aims of the study***

The present study sought to explore the following three areas and their interrelationship:

1. students' sources of motivation (in relation to three dimensions: intrinsic, instrumental, and integrative) and self-reported strength of motivation,
2. students' preferred ways of learning in relation to a number of learning activities,
3. teachers' views about the usefulness of different learning activities.

## 8.2 Method

### *Participants*

The participants were 336 (183 males, 145 females, with 8 missing gender data) high school students aged 17-18, who had been learning English for three years as part of their Baccalaureate studies. They made up 13 groups, coming from four different sections (science, maths, arts and English), and registered in seven different schools in various parts of Rabat. Special care was taken to select a mixture of schools in terms of sex, status and location. As shown in Table 8.1, the sample contained five mixed schools, one girls' school, and one boys' school.

School	Male	Female	Missing gender	Total
A	17	20	-	37
B	34	30	-	64
C	69	-	-	69
D	34	9	7	50
E	-	48	-	48
F	13	12	-	25
G	16	26	1	43
Total	183	145	8	336

*Table 8.1: Sex distribution of students in schools*

### *Instrumentation*

The instruments for data collection consisted of a questionnaire addressed to the students, and a questionnaire addressed to the teachers, as well as data from follow-up interviews. A description of the materials will be provided below and a translation from French of both questionnaire items and interview protocols will be used.

### *Student questionnaire*

A self-report, Likert-type, 59-item questionnaire was developed, whose aim was to measure (1) students' motivational orientations, (2) students' strength of motivation, and (3) students' activity preferences. To match each of these three measures, the questionnaire was divided into three sections (see appendix C).

Section one contained a total of 19 items aimed at probing students' motivational orientations with respect to three scales, integrative, instrumental, and intrinsic. The items chosen for inclusion in these three scales took into account the subjects' interests and educational context, and were mainly adapted from the previous study. Out of the fifteen items used previously, ten proved reliable enough to be re-used, three had to be rephrased, and six new items had to be added with a view to reinforcing the general validity and reliability of the scales. The 19 items meant to measure the three scales are reproduced below:

### 1. Items intended to measure intrinsic orientation

- |     |   |            |
|-----|---|------------|
| Q3  | Because I like English                            |            |
| Q6  | Because I am interested in English                |            |
| Q9  | Because English has a pleasant pronunciation      | <i>new</i> |
| Q14 | To speak English with a good accent               |            |
| Q18 | To speak fluently like natives                    | <i>new</i> |
| Q11 | To learn and use beautiful expressions in English |            |

### 2. Items intended to measure instrumental orientation

- |     |   |            |
|-----|---|------------|
| Q5  | Because I may need English for a job later    |            |
| Q12 | Because I may need English at university      |            |
| Q15 | To get informed about science and technology  |            |
| Q2  | To get informed about the world               |            |
| Q17 | To understand documents/references in English | <i>new</i> |
| Q8  | To get good grades at the baccalaureate exams |            |

### 3. Items intended to measure integrative orientation

- |     |   |            |
|-----|---|------------|
| Q1  | To know Anglophone culture                                |            |
| Q4  | To understand the way of life of Anglophones              |            |
| Q16 | To copy Anglophone culture                                |            |
| Q7  | To know English/American people                           | <i>new</i> |
| Q19 | To visit Anglophone countries                             |            |
| Q13 | Because I like the character and manners of Anglophones   | <i>new</i> |
| Q10 | Because my favourite singers/writers are English/American | <i>new</i> |

The respondents had to rate each of the 19 orientation items on a four-point scale ranging from 'totally agree' to 'not at all'. No mid-point was included, simply because such

an option could perhaps be interpreted as a 'no opinion' option with the risk of falsifying the scoring values. The type of scale used, ranging from "totally agree" to "not at all" seemed to be less confusing for the students.

The third section of the questionnaire sought to measure subjects' strength of motivation, using an eight-item scale. Four items aimed at assessing students' attitudes to work and effort. The other four items were concerned with tapping students' perceptions about the efforts they actually engaged in (see Appendix C). In order to maximise objectivity by students when they answer the questions, half of the items were positively worded, and the other half were negatively phrased. Subjects had to rate the eight statements on a scale ranging from 'totally agree' to 'not at all'.

The second section of the questionnaire concerned itself with identifying subjects' preferences for a set of 32 learning activities, including communicative, traditional activities, active learning procedures, as well as other activities such as watching TV or reading the newspapers (see Appendix C).

Most of the activities chosen for inclusion in this questionnaire were adapted from the previous studies, but seven new items had to be incorporated in the questionnaire for the following reasons:

1. Results from Chapter seven demonstrated that the students showed a clear preference for traditionally oriented activities over communicative ones, except for the item 'participate in class discussion' which fared high on the activity ranking table. It was decided to introduce more items related to classroom discussion such as 'for and against' debates, 'evaluating and interpreting ideas', 'sharing ideas and experience with peers' and 'describing pictures' (see appendix C). The rationale behind introducing such items was to explore in more detail students' preferences for engaging in discussions.
2. Similarly, students' marked preference for engaging in traditional activities (see Chapter seven) raised the question as to whether their favoured approach to learning tended to be traditionally oriented as well. To answer this question, a number of new items (related to active learning) were included such as 'discovering' and 'guessing'. The intention was to see whether they preferred to play an active role in learning through discovery learning and guessing.

***Open-ended question***

At the end of the questionnaire, an open-ended question was included, asking students to make personal observations about the teaching/learning of English. It was assumed that respondents generally appreciated being given the chance to express their own views, which, it was thought, might also provide further evidence of students' motivations and preferences.

***Teacher questionnaire***

A self-report, Likert-type, 32-item questionnaire, identical to the activity preference part in the student questionnaire, was given to 25 teachers, 13 of whom were the subjects' own teachers. The others came from the schools which participated in the questionnaire survey, or from similar schools. The teachers were asked to rate each activity in terms of its perceived usefulness to their students, on a four-point scale ranging from 'very useful' to 'not useful at all'. The objective of this questionnaire was to contrast students' perceived preferences with their teachers' perceived usefulness of a number of classroom activities. To control for interfering variables, the format of the activity questionnaire addressed to teachers and students was kept the same, except for the rating modality instructions.

***Student interviews***

Semi-structured interviews were conducted among 26 (15 males and 11 females) students registered in the schools which had participated in the questionnaire survey, a week or two after the administration of the questionnaire. The interview sessions took place in the schools, lasted about 60 minutes and were conducted on an individual basis. All the students were very enthusiastic and cooperative in accounting for their attitudes and preferences. Detailed notes proved to be quite efficient and effective for recording the data. In reporting on the interview results, a close translation of the exact quotes from respondents was used in order to retain the flavour of what was said in French.

The focus of the student interviews was on gaining insights into what determined students' orientations and preferences. Very often, the students' own concerns and interests had to be attended to, especially when they were considered potentially helpful

for interpreting the questionnaire data. Interviewees were asked two major questions: (1) the reasons why they chose to learn English, (2) the reasons behind their activity preferences. Whenever it was judged necessary, students were asked to account for their responses to some of the items on the questionnaire in order to clarify an ambiguity or apparent contradiction in their answers.

### ***Teacher interviews***

Semi-structured interviews were conducted among 11 teachers who had already filled out the questionnaire on the usefulness of classroom learning activities. The interviews were conducted in schools, on an individual basis, lasted 30 to 60 minutes, and followed a pre-established schedule. The questions addressed related to the following points:

1. The activities teachers found most useful.
2. The activities they found difficult to use.
3. The activities they used just because they had to.
4. The activities they did not use because of constraints.
5. The activities they found useful, apart from those mentioned in the questionnaire.

For all these questions, teachers were expected to account for their responses. In addition, teachers' concerns and interests had to be attended to whenever they were felt relevant or useful.

The rest of this chapter will be devoted to discussing the results of: (1) students' motivation, (2) students' preferences, (3) variation between groups of students and (4) the open-ended question.

## **8.3 Results and discussion of students' motivation**

The aim of this section was twofold, to probe students' motivational orientations, and to assess their strength of motivation.

***Rank-order of motivational orientation items according to perceived importance***

In order to evaluate the perceived importance of the various items included in the motivational orientation scales, these items were rank-ordered according to the percentage level of respondents who rated such items as very important. Table 8.2 displays percentages together with corresponding mean scores and standard deviations.

Items	% SA*	Means	SD
Q14 To speak English with a good accent	60 %	3.36	.91
Q5 Because I may need English for a job	54 %	3.11	1.13
Q8 To get good baccalaureate grades	53 %	3.22	.98
Q17 To understand documents	52 %	3.29	.86
Q18 To speak fluently like natives	49 %	3.09	1.04
Q3 Because I like English	48 %	3.13	.98
Q12 Because I may need English at university	46 %	2.92	1.18
Q11 To learn/use beautiful expressions	45 %	3.06	1.02
Q9 Because English has a pleasant pronunciation	44 %	2.98	1.09
Q6 Because I am interested in English	40 %	2.94	1.10
Q2 To get informed about the world	39 %	3.01	1.00
Q19 To visit Anglophone countries	36 %	2.93	1.00
Q10 My favourite singers/writers are English/American	31 %	2.57	1.18
Q7 To know English/American people	28 %	2.66	1.10
Q15 To get informed in science/technology	24 %	2.46	1.14
Q1 To know about Anglophone culture	23 %	2.50	1.10
Q16 To copy Anglophone culture	13 %	2.18	.98
Q4 To understand the way of life of Anglophones	10 %	2.12	.98
Q13 I like the character/manners of Anglophones	9 %	1.94	.99

\* : percentage of respondents who rated these items as "strongly agree"

*Table 8.2: Rank-order of motivational items according to perceived importance*

As can be seen, among the six top items in Table 8.2, three are intrinsic reasons for learning English, and three are instrumental. Similarly, among the following six items, three represent intrinsic reasons, two represent instrumental reasons, and one item is integrative in orientation. The remaining seven items, at the bottom of the list, are integrative in orientation, with the exception of item Q15 which is instrumental. These results indicate that students' reasons for learning English seem to be principally intrinsic and instrumental and only secondarily integrative.

### *Factor analysis of motivational orientation items*

Following Clément and Kruidenier (1983) and Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1994), factor analysis procedures were applied to the 19 motivational items in order to delineate clusters that would indicate the subjects' orientations for learning English. Five factors were extracted by Principal Components Analysis, using, as before, the extraction criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1. The first factor explains 24.6 % of the total variance, and each of the remaining four factors account for 9.4 to 6.5 % of the variance. It is worth mentioning that Table 8.3 also contains the communality values ( $h^2$ ) for each item. These values refer to the proportion of variance explained by the five factors).

A varimax rotation was selected because this method attempts to minimise the number of variables that have high loadings on a factor, thereby enhancing the interpretability of the factors (see SPSS for professionals, p. 65). The factor matrix produced appears in Table 8.3. Two points need to be made concerning factor analysis. First, loadings over .30 are considered significant and have therefore been bolded. for ease of reading. (see, for example, Clément and Kruidenier, 1983 and Dörnyei, 1990). Second, factors are sorted out and defined by the items that give them the highest loadings. For example, in the case where an item cross-loads on two factors, this item defines the factor on which it has the greatest loading.



	Factor					h <sup>2</sup>
	1	2	3	4	5	
Q3 Because I like English	<b>.78</b>	.14	.05	.10	-.15	.66
Q6 Because I am interested in English	<b>.77</b>	.25	.12	.14	-.02	.69
Q14 To speak with a good accent	<b>.65</b>	.07	.20	.07	<b>.38</b>	.62
Q18 To speak fluently like natives	<b>.60</b>	.23	.26	-.02	.24	.54
Q9 English has a pleasant pronunciation	<b>.57</b>	-.19	.28	.15	.20	.51
Q12 Because I may need English at university	.21	<b>.75</b>	.12	-.08	.07	.63
Q15 Get informed in science and technology	-.07	<b>.74</b>	-.00	.23	.12	.62
Q5 Because I may need English for a job	<b>.32</b>	<b>.72</b>	.08	-.04	-.05	.63
Q7 To know English or American people	.18	.23	<b>.69</b>	.04	-.06	.57
Q10 Favourite singers/writers are Engl./Americ.	.24	.10	<b>.63</b>	-.07	-.05	.48
Q19 To visit Anglophone countries	.13	.05	<b>.63</b>	.04	<b>.31</b>	.51
Q13 I like the character/manners of Anglophones	.06	-.23	<b>.61</b>	<b>.35</b>	-.03	.55
Q1 To know Anglophone culture	.24	.09	-.16	<b>.70</b>	-.06	.58
Q4 Understand the way of life of Anglophones	.16	-.11	.15	<b>.69</b>	-.09	.55
Q16 To copy Anglophone culture	-.13	.17	.23	<b>.60</b>	.30	.55
Q8 To get good grades	.01	-.15	-.12	-.16	<b>.67</b>	.51
Q11 To learn beautiful expressions	<b>.48</b>	.13	.23	-.00	<b>.55</b>	.60
Q17 To understand documents	.29	<b>.32</b>	.11	.07	<b>.49</b>	.44
Q2 To get informed about the world	-.01	.18	.04	<b>.33</b>	<b>.47</b>	.37
Eigenvalue	4.68	1.78	1.52	1.38	1.23	
Factor 1 = Intrinsic	Factor 4 = Cultural					
Factor 2 = Instrumental long-term	Factor 5 = Instrumental short-term					
Factor 3 = Social						

*Table 8.3: Factor analysis summary of motivational orientation items: varimax rotated factor matrix, communalities (h<sup>2</sup>) and eigenvalues*

As can be seen, factor 1 receives quite heavy loadings from five variables, all concerned with general interest in English and a desire to excel in it. This factor, therefore, corresponds to what is considered as an intrinsic orientation.

Factor 2 evidences reasonably heavy loadings from three variables (Q12, Q15 and Q6) concerned with utilitarian uses of English in jobs, at university, or for scientific and

technological purposes. These orientations appear to be related to long-term uses of English, that is, in future studies at university, for a future career, including potential access to science and technology. It can therefore be labelled 'long-term instrumental'.

Factor 3 is dominated by four variables related to identification and contact with the Americans and the English. It seems to be different from Gardner and Lambert's (1972) integrative orientation, because it lacks the cultural dimension. Therefore, it can best be labelled 'social integration'.

Factor 4 receives substantial loadings from three variables having to do with interest in the target language (TL) culture and way of life, and also in copying aspects of that culture. Compared with factor 3, this factor is more concerned with contact with the culture itself rather than the TL group. It can therefore be given the label of 'cultural integration'. Interestingly, Gardner et al.'s (1972) integrative orientation appears to be split here into two separate parts: (1) the social dimension, uncovered in factor 3, and the cultural dimension in factor 4.

Factor 5 is defined by four items which relate learning to 'getting good grades', 'learning beautiful expressions', as well as 'understanding documents' and 'getting informed about the world'. This factor reflects a more restricted, and short-term orientation. It can therefore be given the label of 'short-term instrumental'. The items which load on this factor may appear to be loosely related. However, they could be seen as representing a tendency to learn the language as a means for 'getting informed', 'learning beautiful expressions', 'understanding documents', which were perceived as facilitating the obtention of 'good grades'. These items seem in a sense related to the general and immediate use of English in school, in contrast to its long-term uses at work or at university. The split between the long-term and the short-term uses of English suggests that there are two distinct instrumental orientations among the students investigated.

The results from this study contrast sharply with the patterns of orientations uncovered by current research in other SL/FL learning contexts. One striking difference is the emergence of an intrinsic orientation which appears to be specific to the context investigated. This is another aspect of motivation which does not fit into either the

integrative or instrumental category very neatly. The intrinsic motivation towards FL learning is described by Lennon (1993) as follows:

*Some advanced learners have an interest in improving their English proficiency per se. They regard it as a skill, an accomplishment of which they may be proud, which is an extension of their personality and is self-actualising for them. Just as a proud car-owner may polish and preen it in a way that goes far beyond its functional role as a means of transport from A to B, so learners may delight in increasing proficiency, in advance of their communicative instrumental needs or their desire to integrate fully into an English speaking society which many of them know they will probably not live in on a permanent basis (p. 42).*

The traditional Gardnerian integrative/instrumental orientations have also been uncovered in the present study, but in a way that diverges somewhat from that of Gardner's model. As observed above, Gardner's integrative dimension is represented here as two factors. The first, social integration, is concerned with getting in touch with native speakers, identifying with them, and admiring their character and manners. The other factor is cultural in orientation and relates to a desire to know, and copy Anglophone culture. This dichotomy suggests that native speakers and their culture may be perceived as distinct from one another. Making contacts with, or identifying with native speakers may prove to be different from becoming imbued with their culture. However, envisaging a dichotomy between native speakers and their culture does not necessarily imply that the two are perceived as mutually exclusive. In this respect, Lennon (1993) argued: "... just as motivation to become part of the speech community does not necessarily arise from prolonged residence in the society, so it is by no means excluded merely because the learner is physically rather isolated from the speech community" (p. 42). Thus, it seems that even in a Moroccan context, characterised by the absence of Anglophones from the immediate environment, the integrative motive was at work.

Similarly, the instrumental motivation was split into two subsets: (1) a long-term orientation which implies using the language for future jobs or university studies; (2) short-term uses of the language, restricted to 'understanding documents', 'getting informed', 'learning beautiful expressions' in order to 'get good grades'. Clearly, an instrumental dimension seemed to find its place in a context in which English is widely

recognized as an international, high status language which symbolises progress and development. However, this dichotomous instrumental orientation in the present study does not seem to fit in well with Gardner's construct, probably because the scales used in the present study were particularly adapted to the context investigated. As was mentioned earlier, learning English in order to obtain good grades appeared to be distinct from the motivation to use the language as a basis for scientific progress at work or at university.

Before examining the students' endorsements of the motivational orientations suggested by the factor analysis, it is worth analysing the reliability of the motivational orientation scales.

### ***Reliability analysis of motivational orientation scales***

Since it was not possible to establish the external reliability of the scales, using the test-retest method, it was thought necessary to establish the internal consistency, using Cronbach's alpha measures. Table 8.4 displays the Cronbach's alphas for each of the five types of motivation. Types 1 and 2 reach .79 and .70, which is generally considered adequate for research purposes. Types 3, 4 and particularly 5 are a little on the low side. This may be the result of using a reduced number of rating categories.

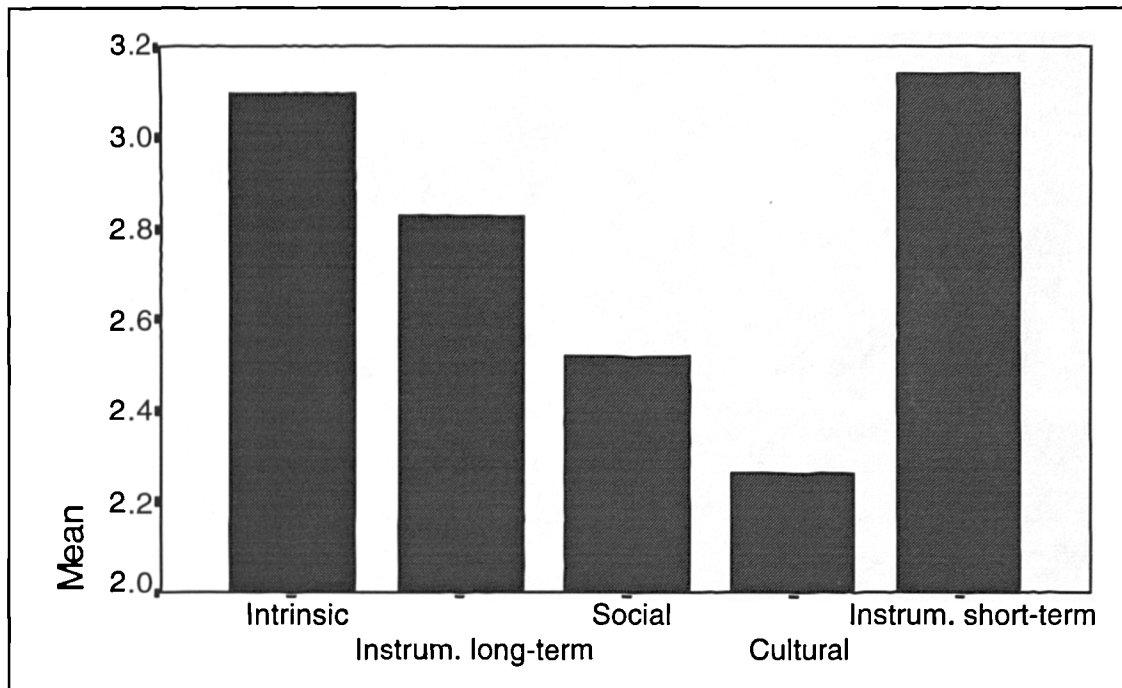
Table 8.4 also indicates that the items included in the scales seem to be adequate, except for the items 'getting informed in science and technology' and 'getting good grades', which belong to the long-term instrumental and short-term instrumental respectively. If any of these two items is deleted, the alpha for its respective scale will increase, implying that the contribution of these two items to the scales they belong to is not optimal.

Types of motivation	Items	Alpha if Item Deleted	Alpha
Intrinsic	Because I like English	0.75	0.79
	Because I am interested in English	0.73	
	To speak with a good accent	0.74	
	To speak fluently like natives	0.75	
	English has a pleasant pronunciation	0.78	
Instrumental long-term	I may need English at university	0.50	0.70
	To get informed in science and technology	0.75	
	I may need English for a job	0.53	
Social	To know English or American people	0.52	0.62
	Favourite singers/writers are Engl./Americ.	0.54	
	To visit Anglophone countries	0.54	
	I like the character/manners of Anglophones	0.59	
Cultural	To know Anglophone culture	0.42	0.51
	Understand the way of life of Anglophones	0.33	
	To copy Anglophone culture	0.48	
Instrumental short-term	To get good grades	0.51	0.49
	To learn beautiful expressions	0.32	
	To understand documents	0.35	
	To get informed about the world	0.48	

*Table 8.4: Cronbach's alpha for the motivational orientations*

#### ***Endorsement of motivational orientations***

Given the mixture of orientations that emerged in this study, it was thought appropriate to evaluate the level of endorsement of each orientation. This was computed by taking the average score (minimum = 1; maximum = 4) for those items shown to load on each factor. Items that cross-loaded onto two factors were included in the index of the factor that they defined most highly. The results represented in the bar-chart below, show a strong endorsement of the intrinsic and the short-term instrumental orientations, a



*Figure 8.1: Levels of endorsement of motivational orientations*

moderate endorsement of the long-term instrumental and the social integration dimensions, and a comparatively weak endorsement of the cultural orientation.

As shown in Figure 8.1, all the five orientations received mean ratings of 2 or more. However, the subjects appeared to give more priority to the intrinsic and the instrumental orientations than to the integrative ones. In the same way, the short-term instrumental dimension received higher support than the long-term one probably because the former seemed to be of more immediate relevance to the subjects investigated. Likewise, social integration was given more support than the cultural dimension. Interviewees tended to appreciate having contacts with native speakers through visits or correspondence. They admired in particular their manners of coping, of communicating, and their sense of cooperation and discipline. This relatively strong orientation among students reflects the openness and desire for rapprochement with European and Anglophone countries, which has characterised Morocco over the centuries.

The lower endorsement of the cultural dimension was accounted for differently by different students during the interviews. Some of them did not seem to be interested in knowing the target language culture at the risk of losing their own identity and culture, as the following quotations suggest:

*I am not interested in English and American people or their culture. There is some divergence between our two cultures, especially in moral standards.* (Huda)

*We must keep our own principles and personality. We cannot use their way of life or culture. We have our own traditions.* (Huda)

Other interviewees admitted that they did not know much about Anglophone culture, adding that what they knew was taken from films, part of which could be misleading. Hence, they could not express their views about this culture.

In contrast, other students expressed great interest in Anglophone culture and way of life, as was expressed by a male student from a higher status school:

*I would like to know everything about Anglophone society, their way of life and thinking, as well as the historical phases they have gone through, and which allowed them to reach their present stage of development.*

*I like their way of behaving and communicating. If I have the possibility to live there one day, why not?* (Amyne)

These interviews raised a number of questions concerning the issue of culture. First, the concept itself appears to be nebulous and may lend itself to different interpretations. Robinson (1985) suggested that culture contained three main categories. She observed that: "Bilingual and second language educators most frequently conceive of culture in the categories of *ideas, behaviours, or products* which are shared by members of a given group" (p. 12).

This quotation indicates that 'culture' is too encompassing a term when it comes to measuring endorsement. Whereas some individuals may enjoy a culture for its artistic products, others may appreciate its values and beliefs, or they may simply like the customs and foods of its people.

On the other hand, culture in FL/SL learning contexts may strike a sensitive cord in that it impinges on individuals' sense of identity. Yazigy (1994), who studied the attitudes towards English culture of Lebanese learners of English made an interesting observation in this respect:

*That more students showed positive attitudes towards English speaking people and 'artists and writers', but more or less neutral attitudes towards the culture, tending toward low level - may be because 'culture' is more inclusive than individuals. That is, students may have a relatively negative attitude toward a culture which they believe has some effect, in one way or another, on their own culture or identity, whereas individuals of that foreign culture are not perceived as having direct influence. This may also be related to the students' degree of ethnocentrism, where the higher the level of ethnocentrism is, the more negative their attitude towards the foreign culture is expected to be (p. 71).*

It needs to be noted that while endorsement of the cultural dimension holds the lowest position on the scale of reasons for learning English, endorsement of the intrinsic motive comes at the top. This, interestingly, suggests that for such students, learning English can be dissociated from its culture.

In summary, factor analysis results revealed the existence of intrinsic, instrumental and integrative orientations among a group of Moroccan learners of English. However, the results had to be seen as modifying the traditional orientations developed by Gardner. In this study, the instrumental orientation was collapsed into two dimensions, which seemed to match learners' short-term and long-term goals for learning English. Similarly, the integrative motivation was split into a social and a cultural orientation, which appeared to fit into a FL context, in which acculturation may not prove to be as relevant as in a second language learning context.

In the section below, interview protocols will be used to provide more evidence for the motivational orientations revealed by the factor analysis.

### ***Evidence from student interviews***

Students' interview data gave ample support to the various motivational orientations evidenced by the factor analysis. A number of articulated profiles emerged, each embodying a particular mix of orientations. Excerpts from six student interview protocols will be reported below.

Nadyne is a seventeen-year-old female student, from a higher status school. She illustrates well the interplay between intrinsic and instrumental orientations. In the



questionnaire, she rated very high all the items tapping intrinsic and instrumental orientations. In her response to the open-ended question, she wrote:

*I like English very much. It is a beautiful language. I wish it were my mother tongue.* (Nadyne)

During the interview, Nadyne extensively expressed her involvement with English:

*I like English more than French. I have been attracted to it since childhood.*

*I enjoy listening to the English, not American, accent because it has much more class.*

*I keep a large collection of beautiful expressions and proverbs. I appreciate all those who are proficient at English, and I will do everything I can to master this language just for my own satisfaction.*

(Nadyne)

Nadyne added that she had already attended courses both at the American and British language centres. Her intention was to pursue her education in English at Al Akhawayn University at Ifrane, and become a diplomat.

*It is my love for English that determined my choice for a diplomatic career.* (Nadyne)

Surprisingly, she admitted that she was not particularly keen on, or curious about knowing Anglophone culture. Generalizing from a negative experience she had had with a native English teacher, she said that she was not keen on getting in touch with native speakers. When asked about whether she appreciated English songs, she said:

*I like the rhythm of English music but I find the words empty and superficial. I am rather hooked on Arabic music in which the melody and the poetic words go hand in hand.* (Nadyne)

Malika is another female student from a higher status school. She seemed to be both intrinsically and integratively motivated as she reported below:

*Personally, I have always been fascinated with English. I like it more than I like French. I cannot explain why, it is innate in me. Its pronunciation is very special, it is better than any other language.*

*Every time I learn a new word, I get the impression that I have found out something extraordinary.*

*I am crazy about English songs because they express what is deep inside me. I have some American friends, and I enjoy corresponding with them.*

*I like and admire the cool blood and manners of English people. They are very cooperative, and have no taboos... There are many aspects of their culture that are typical of them, and that can hardly be imitated...but we cannot live like them, we are in Morocco. (Malika)*

The two students above showed a high level of motivational strength, and were apparently successful students. In contrast, Salwa, a female student from a lower status school exhibited a low level of motivation as shown by her score on the strength of motivation scale. She seemed to be disaffected by her previous teacher and by the system as a whole. She reported having a negative experience with English in her first year, which had detrimental effect on her motivation, achievement, and attitudes towards English and its culture:

*I do not like English. It is the teacher who makes you love or hate the subject matter. The first step for the teacher is to make students like English. (Salwa)*

Larby is a male student from a lower status school, whose profile shows a purely pragmatic orientation. He rated the instrumental orientations quite high (3.25), but his response to all other orientations was quite low (2.22). He seemed to be highly motivated as shown by the strength of motivation scale results (3.50). This is how he expressed his views about learning English:

*English is the trend of this century. We have to follow this fashion, we have to learn English because French is nothing now; everything is in English. Yet, English is not my passion, our language is Arabic. (Larby)*

This student views the learning of English as a means to keeping up to date especially in the field of scientific and technological development, which were rated very high in his responses to the questionnaire items (3.66).

Dris is a male student from a higher status school, who seemed to have a mixture of orientations for learning English: intrinsic, instrumental, and social. This is reflected in both his preferences and his motivational orientations, as quoted below:

*I prefer to learn English through films, cassettes and songs. I like to practise pronunciation because I want to have an excellent accent. I find the pronunciation of English very sweet, and attractive, better than that of French or Arabic.*

*My dream is to have an excellent pronunciation in order to become a sports commentator and emigrate to the USA. I would like to learn slang, too, so as to be exactly like an American.*

*I prefer American/English music to either Moroccan or French music, which have a heavy rhythm and complicated words. (Dris)*

Another example is Omar's case in which the social dimension is much more in evidence than the cultural dimension. He said:

*I am not interested in knowing about the Anglophones' culture or way of life, because it is incongruent with our traditions. However, I like to know English people because I like their manners and character. And since I like sports very much, I would like to join a football team in England, like Manchester United or Liverpool. (Omar)*

This case typically represents the split between identification and cultural dimensions.

The profiles of students depicted above lend support to the existence among students of intrinsic, instrumental and integrative goals, as was shown by the questionnaire results. They also suggest that individuals vary in the nature and blend of their orientations.

It needs to be noted that follow-up interviews revealed that the plight of weak/unmotivated students was at the heart of both teachers' and students' agenda. Low achieving students felt disaffected, and blamed their failure on their first-year teachers who allegedly gave more attention to brighter students who had attended extra courses outside school. On the other hand, teachers complained about weak, unmotivated

students who could not catch up with the rest of the class and who, as a result, tended to lose interest in class and drop out.

Having identified the reasons why students learn English, I would like to assess their motivational levels, that is to say, how strong their desire for learning English was, and how much effort they thought they deployed in learning that language.

### ***Strength of motivation***

A scale of motivation was used to measure both students' perceived willingness or desire to learn English and the efforts they thought they were prepared to deploy in order to satisfy their desire. Strength of motivation was considered to be a stronger indicator of motivation than motivational orientations which, as was shown in Chapter four, do not tell much about motivation itself or its level of intensity.

In the previous study, an attempt was made to explore students' classroom motivation as measured by teacher ratings of their interest, attention and participation in the classroom. Results showed that students differed in their level of classroom motivation and that intrinsically motivated students appeared to show higher levels of classroom motivation than students with less intrinsic orientation.

Teacher ratings could be considered as a measure of the behavioural manifestations of students' motivation seen through the eyes of the teacher. For the present study, it was thought worthwhile measuring students' own perceptions about their motivational intensity, using an eight-item self-report scale. (see Appendix C). The items and their rank ordering according to a percentage level of response are displayed in Table 8.5.

As can be seen, the three most highly rated items were related to students' attitudes or willingness to work. For example, 86 % of the subjects considered that learning English was not a waste of time at all, 81 % expressed a strong desire or willingness to learn English, and 50 % totally agreed that they would be willing to take extra courses of English if possible.

Rank-order of items	% who rated item as 'strongly agree'
Q3 For me, English is not a waste of time	86 %
Q2 I really want to learn English	81 %
Q8 If possible, I wish to take extra classes	50 %
Q4 I like doing homework in English	48.5 %
Q5 I enjoy working hard at English	37 %
Q1 I deploy lots of efforts to learn English	34 %
Q6 I always try to work hard at English	21 %
Q7 At home, I start reviewing English first	12 %

*Table 8.5: Rank-order of strength of motivation items according to percentage level of response*

In contrast, items pertaining to active engagement in deploying efforts were comparatively given lower ratings. 34 % of subjects agreed very strongly that they actually made great efforts to learn English, and only 21 % made a strong claim that they were always trying to work hard. These lower ratings are not surprising given the generally low weight put on English in the curriculum, and the heavy workload required of students in their final year of high school.

Reliability analysis for the strength of motivation scale was computed. Results showed that the Cronbach's alpha was adequate for research purposes (.77), indicating that the scale used to measure the strength of motivation was adequately reliable.

In an attempt to further validate the items on this scale, and delineate clusters that would define the strength of motivation in this particular context, factor analysis procedures were applied. Two factors were extracted by Principal Component Analysis with eigenvalues greater than 1. The first factor explained 36.6 % of the total variance, and the second factor accounted for 17.1 %. The factor matrix produced appears in Table 8.6.

As can be seen, Factor 1 receives quite heavy loadings from five variables, all connected to effort or hard work. This factor represents the activity level of motivation as perceived by students, and can therefore be referred to as 'effort'.

Item	Factor		
	1	2	h <sup>2</sup>
Q7 At home, I start reviewing English first	<b>.82</b>	-.18	.70
Q6 I always try to work hard at English	<b>.75</b>	.08	.57
Q5 I enjoy working hard at English	<b>.63</b>	.25	.46
Q1 I deploy lots of efforts to learn English	<b>.53</b>	<b>.43</b>	.46
Q4 I like doing homework in English	<b>.51</b>	.21	.30
Q3 For me, English is not a waste of time	.07	<b>.87</b>	.76
Q2 I really want to learn English	.20	<b>.80</b>	.68
Q8 If possible, I wish to take extra classes	.29	<b>.51</b>	.34
<b>Eigenvalue</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>1.36</b>	
Factor 1 = Effort	Factor 2 = Desire		

*Table 8.6: Factor analysis of strength of motivation items: quartimax rotated factor matrix*

Factor 2 evidences substantial loadings from three variables concerned with the desire or willingness to learn English, a notion similar to what Gardner defines as 'desire' to achieve a goal. This factor can therefore be given the same label.

It appears then that the scale developed actually measures two components of students' motivation: (1) the internal motivational impetus referred to as desire to satisfy goals/needs, (2) the external behavioural manifestation of motivation, i.e., the effort deployed to achieve such goals/needs. These two measures are represented by the two factors which emerged above.

The level of endorsement by the students of each factor was computed. The mean score for 'desire' (3.51) was higher than the mean score for 'effort' (2.73). This indicates that their willingness to learn English seemed to override the actual efforts they were ready to deploy, suggesting that they were probably subject to a heavy workload for their baccalaureate examinations as the interviewees claimed.

To summarise, this part of the study explored three main aspects of students' motivation:

1. Some of the sources of the students' motivation, i.e., the social-psychological goals or needs represented by the instrumental integrative and intrinsic orientations.
2. the strength of their desire to learn measured by their willingness to engage in learning.

3. the behavioural manifestations of such desire which was measured by their perceived activity levels in the classroom or at home.

These three elements seem to encapsulate the overall picture of what it means to be motivated to learn English in the context investigated. An interesting question was to examine whether these motivational factors showed any link or relationship between them.

### *Correlations between students' motivational factors*

Table 8.7 shows the Pearson correlations among students' motivational variables. Items significant at  $p < .05$  have been starred. In these cases, the null hypothesis that there is no linear association between the variables in the population can be rejected. Results indicated that once again the intrinsic orientation exhibited the highest significant correlations with all other types of variables, including the components of strength of motivation (desire and effort).

By contrast, the cultural orientation showed either non significant or extremely weak significant values in relation to the other variables. This implies that there was little or no linear association between culture and all the other types of motivational variables involved. The other orientations, i.e., instrumental and social, showed significant but generally weaker correlations in comparison to the intrinsic orientation.

	Intrinsic	Instrumental (long-term)	Social	Cultural	Instrumental (short-term)
Intrinsic		<b>.33 *</b> p < .001	<b>.46 *</b> p < .001	<b>.25 *</b> p < .001	<b>.44 *</b> p < .001
Instrumental (long-term)	<b>.33 *</b> p < .001		<b>.19 *</b> p < .001	<b>.15 *</b> p = .006	<b>.27 *</b> p < .001
Social	<b>.46 *</b> p < .001	<b>.19 *</b> p < .001		<b>.23 *</b> p < .001	<b>.27 *</b> p < .001
Cultural	<b>.25 *</b> p < .001	<b>.15 *</b> p = .006	<b>.23 *</b> p < .001		<b>.17 *</b> p = .001
Instrumental (short-term)	<b>.44 *</b> p < .001	<b>.27 *</b> p < .001	<b>.27 *</b> p < .001	<b>.17 *</b> p = .001	
Desire	<b>.47 *</b> p < .001	<b>.30 *</b> p < .001	<b>.21 *</b> p < .001	.06 p = .283	<b>.31 *</b> p < .001
Effort	<b>.48 *</b> p < .001	<b>.22 *</b> p < .001	<b>.20 *</b> p < .001	<b>.14 *</b> p = .013	<b>.29 *</b> p < .001

df = 334, two-tailed test.

\* : significant values at p < .05

*Table 8.7: The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients among students' motivational variables*

A number of implications can be drawn from such results. First, the intrinsic motive appeared to be a powerful predictor of students' strength of motivation. This suggests that intrinsic motivation was more likely than any other orientation to boost students' desire to learn and to increase their activity levels. Another implication was that intrinsically motivated students tended to be more prone to develop social and instrumental orientations. However, their cultural interests did not seem to go hand in hand with their interest in the language.

This part of the study was essentially concerned with delineating students' motivation for learning English. The next part will seek to gain insights into how students preferred to go about learning the language. Their activity preferences will be explored and compared to what teachers thought was useful to them.



## 8.4 Results and discussion of students' learning preferences

The rationale behind investigating students' activity preferences was twofold: the first reason was to find out how students responded to what went on in the classroom. As consumers of ELT, their preferences are not to be ignored. The second reason was to compare students' preferences to what their teachers perceived as useful to them, and highlight the match or the mismatch between teachers and students. Furthermore, an attempt was made to identify possible patterns of preferences among the students using both questionnaire and interview data.

### *Students' perceived activity preferences*

As was mentioned earlier, students were asked to express their preferences with respect to 32 items, including communicative, traditional activities, active learning procedures, as well as other activities such as watching TV or reading the newspapers (see Appendix C).

Table 8.8 exhibits the profile of students' activity preferences, relative to 26 activities. For practical purposes, the remaining activities will be dealt with separately. Remarkably, traditional activities fare high in the top half of the table, and communicative activities tend to cluster in the bottom part, the only exception being 'class discussion' and 'repetition' for which the order pattern is reversed. These results suggest that students' most favoured activities were more traditional than communicative in orientation.

A closer look at Table 8.8 shows that the activities least favoured by the students are those which represent more artificial aspects of the communicative approach such as role-play, group work and games.

Another striking point about students' preferences was that, despite their orientation towards traditional activities, they seemed to favour a more active approach to learning the language, i.e., through guessing, discovering, and problem-solving. As can be seen in Table 8.8, such active learning procedures fare quite high in the list along with traditional activities. In contrast, 'repetition' which reflects a more mechanical and passive type of approach to learning appeared among the least liked activities on the list.

Songs is an activity not to be downplayed. It features very high in the table and appears, unsurprisingly, to be very popular among students. It is to be pointed out that the data in Chapter six did not reveal a particular preference for songs by the students investigated, probably because the sample was not representative of the population. Only 54 students participated in the study half of whom were beginners, came from a lower status school and were as a result less familiar with song activities.

The general picture that emerged from Table 8.8 was that students' preferences were not characterised by a wholesale adoption of any one approach whether it be traditional or communicative. They seemed to select from each approach the aspects which fitted their needs, purposes, and styles.

The crucial feature which generally seemed to override the students' learning preferences was their commitment to applying their cognitive powers to a conscious grammar-focused type of learning, by using their minds through guessing, discovering meaning and solving problems. As a result, the students seemed to reject, or attach little value to, the type of learning in which the focus was on classroom interaction, exchange of messages, or mindless, mechanical repetition.

Activity	Mean	SD
Grammar explanation	3.38	.81
Practise pronunciation	3.34	.95
Songs	3.28	.98
Guess word meaning	3.23	.89
Note grammar rules	3.23	.91
Solve problems	3.21	.90
General class discussion	3.18	.97
Use dictionary	3.15	.92
Read aloud	3.14	1.00
Grammar exercises	3.13	.91
Discover meaning	3.11	.96
Review grammar rules	3.10	.92
Listen to cassettes	3.09	1.01
Discuss ideas in a text	3.04	.97
Discuss/interpret pictures	3.03	.99
Radio/ TV	3.03	1.04
Share experience/preferences	3.02	1.00
Read newspapers/magazines	2.99	1.00
Debates (for and against)	2.97	.97
Repetition of structures	2.96	.96
Games	2.94	.98
Read stories	2.90	1.07
Discuss a series of pictures	2.86	1.00
Group work	2.81	1.12
Class work	2.65	1.12
Role-play	2.46	1.07

*Table 8.8: Rank-order of learning activities according to students' preferences*

Whether this pattern of preferences was determined by an internalized view on how languages are learnt, or by a psychologically rooted approach to learning which matches students' personality, and proficiency levels, remains to be seen. The follow-up interviews will perhaps throw some light on this issue. But, first, it is worth contrasting students' preferences to their teachers' perceived usefulness about the same activities.

***Teachers' perceived usefulness***

This section examines teachers' perceptions relative to the usefulness to their students of the same set of classroom activities considered above. The aim was to find out whether there was a match or a mismatch between what students preferred and what their teachers thought was useful to them.

The rank-ordering of such activities according to teachers' perceived usefulness appears in Table 8.9. A neat pattern emerges from this table, with communicative activities in the top half, and traditional activities in the bottom half, the only exception being role-play which was considered the least useful communicative activity by teachers.

If we contrast the pattern of usefulness with the pattern of preferences, it can be seen that there is an asymmetry between what students prefer and what their teachers think is useful to them. This contrast between students' preferences and teachers' perceived usefulness of activities is highlighted in Table 8.10.

Results show that while the students preferred to learn English through traditional activities, the teachers considered such activities as the least useful. They suggested instead that it was the communicative activities, which generally failed to match students' preferences, which were the more useful. Even 'songs' seemed to fit the pattern of asymmetrical preferences. The item appeared to be among the three top activities in students' preferences, but it figured among the least preferred activities by teachers.

Activities pertaining to the active approach to learning, guessing, problem-solving, and discovering, were rated relatively higher by the students than by their teachers. Repetition was an activity that seemed to be rejected by both teachers and students, probably because it was viewed as a mechanical unproductive way of learning the language. Listening to cassettes, reading stories and newspapers held the same moderate position in both scales. However, TV seemed to be more highly rated by students than by teachers, probably because it gives the opportunity to listen to native speakers.

The question to be asked is how the discrepancy between what the students like and what their teachers consider as useful, can be accounted for. First of all, it could be argued that what students prefer and what is perceived to be useful to them by their teachers, do not have to be the same. However, it is not always easy to draw the line between what one prefers and what one finds useful in learning a language. Evidence

from the interviews lent support to this argument. When accounting for their preferences, the students consistently invoked the usefulness of the activities they preferred. Likewise, when teachers were called upon to explain their views about an activity they perceived as useful for their students, they tended to use useful, enjoyable and motivating interchangeably.

Activity	Mean	SD
Share experience/preferences	3.80	.41
Debates (for and against)	3.72	.54
Discuss ideas in a text	3.72	.54
General class discussion	3.68	.56
Discuss/interpret pictures	3.64	.70
Games	3.64	.57
Discuss a series of pictures	3.56	.58
Solve problems	3.56	.65
Class work	3.48	.87
Group work	3.48	.77
Discover meaning	3.48	1.05
Practise pronunciation	3.48	.51
Grammar explanation	3.48	.71
Grammar exercises	3.44	.92
Listen to cassettes	3.40	.58
Read stories	3.36	.95
Role-play	3.36	1.04
Radio/TV	3.36	.70
Guess word meaning	3.36	.76
Note grammar rules	3.36	.70
Read newspapers/magazines	3.24	.83
Songs	2.88	.67
Use dictionary	2.84	.94
Drilling	2.76	1.05
Review grammar rules	2.60	.87
Read aloud	2.20	1.00

*Table 8.9: Rank-order of learning activities according to teacher usefulness*

As Ms S. from school B put it: "everything that students like, that motivates them can be considered as useful". In any case, the reason for the discrepancy between what students prefer and what teachers find useful has to be accounted for.

As shown on Table 8.9, teachers perceived communicative activities to be generally more useful than traditional ones. This may indicate that when teachers think of classroom activity usefulness, they probably think in terms of the amount of communicative interaction that takes place in the classroom. Engaging students in communicative activities is for most language teachers in my experience the hallmark of success. On the other hand, since the advent of the communicative approach, FL teachers, by and large, have adhered to the view that students learn best by engaging in communicative activities.

By contrast, the students investigated seemed to apply different perspectives to what goes on in the FL classroom. They appeared to be more sensitive to the amount of knowledge they could capture and make their own. For them, a successful lesson was not one saturated with communicative exchanges, but rather one which allowed them to make sense of input, store items in memory and develop pronunciation skills. This may suggest that they preferred the skill-getting activities over the skill-using tasks because they found them more beneficial and less challenging. Another reason could be that they did not seem to get much out of communicative activities as was suggested during the interviews.

Students' preferences		Teachers' rated usefulness	
Activity	Mean	Activity	Mean
Grammar explanation	3.38	Share experience/preferences	3.80
Practise pronunciation	3.34	Debates (for and against)	3.72
Songs	3.28	Discuss ideas in a text	3.72
Guess word meaning	3.23	General class discussion	3.68
Note grammar rules	3.23	Discuss/interpret pictures	3.64
Solve problems	3.21	Games	3.64
General class discussion	3.18	Discuss a series of pictures	3.56
Use dictionary	3.15	Solve problems	3.56
Read aloud	3.14	Class work	3.48
Grammar exercises	3.13	Group work	3.48
Discover meaning	3.11	Discover meaning	3.48
Review grammar rules	3.10	Practise pronunciation	3.48
Listen to cassettes	3.09	Grammar explanation	3.48
Discuss ideas in a text	3.04	Grammar exercises	3.44
Discuss/interpret pictures	3.03	Listen to cassettes	3.40
Radio/TV	3.03	Read stories	3.36
Share experience/preferences	3.02	Role-play	3.36
Read newspapers/magazines	2.99	Radio/TV	3.36
Debates (for and against)	2.97	Guess word meaning	3.36
Repetition	2.96	Note grammar rules	3.36
Games	2.94	Read newspapers/magazines	3.24
Read stories	2.90	Songs	2.88
Discuss a series of pictures	2.86	Use dictionary	2.84
Group work	2.81	Repetition	2.76
Class work	2.65	Review grammar rules	2.60
Role-play	2.46	Read aloud	2.20

*Table 8.10: Rank-order of learning activities according to (1) student preference and (2) teacher-rated usefulness*

Teachers' and students' responses to items having to do with accuracy, fluency, and error correction deserve to be highlighted and examined separately from the other activities treated above. Table 8.11 displays and contrasts the differences between students' preferences and teachers' perceived usefulness relative to four activities. Two had to do with 'attending to/not attending to mistakes when speaking' and the other two were related to 'teacher correction/self-correction of mistakes'. Results showed that the

students seemed to focus more on accuracy than on fluency. The teachers, by contrast, appeared to consider fluency to be much more useful to the students. Similarly, the students showed approximately equal preferences for self-correction and teacher correction. This comes as no surprise given their high concern with accuracy. The teachers, however, assumed that self-correction was more useful to students.

	Students' preferences		Teachers' preferences	
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
To pay attention to mistakes before speaking	2.99	1.10	1.80	.91
To speak without paying attention to mistakes	2.37	1.17	3.24	.93
I prefer the teacher to correct my mistakes	3.10	1.00	2.36	1.04
I prefer to correct my own mistakes	3.08	.96	3.44	.71

*Table 8.11: Mean scores of students' and teachers' ratings of error correction and focus on fluency/accuracy*

Such results were consistent with the results obtained in the previous section. Students' greater emphasis on accuracy and error correction matched their preferences for traditional, form-focused activities. In the same way, teachers' greater stress on fluency and self-correction were in tune with their bias towards communicative activities.

#### ***Evidence from student interviews***

Interviewing students about their preferred activities was meant essentially to provide evidence for the questionnaire results, and also to account for the reasons behind students' preferences, which could not be obtained through questionnaire data.

Interviewees varied with regard to their most preferred classroom activities, but after analysis of the interview protocols, six main categories could be identified: (1) songs, (2) grammar activities, (3) audio-visual techniques, (4) active learning strategies, (5) reading, and (6) oral work.

Songs was the most frequently mentioned activity. Thirteen interviewees argued that listening to songs in class was a very pleasant, and relaxing way of learning English. It gave them the opportunity to enlarge their vocabulary repertoires, because, as they



claimed, words learnt in this way were easily stored, and easily retrieved when they were most needed, e.g., in writing essays. It was also thought that songs reduced class anxiety, and made students like English and become closer to the teacher.

Grammar explanation and exercises were the second most frequently mentioned activities. Twelve interviewees mentioned that grammar was the first step for learning any language and, consequently, it must be learnt first. Other reasons for learning grammar were invoked, such as 'to express oneself correctly', 'to get good grades', 'to increase one's self-confidence', or 'simply out of interest in English'. Conscious awareness of grammar rules was perceived as a psychological need, as was reported by a male student:

*I want to know why for example you use this tense and not the other, so as to have more confidence in myself.* (Omar)

Cassettes, films, video and TV were considered by eight interviewees as the best activities for learning English in the classroom. They thought that such teaching devices were more likely to capture their attention than traditional classroom routine. They also expected to improve their pronunciation and listening skills, and have more access to Anglophone culture through such devices.

As regards active learning, seven students expressed the need for making personal efforts, and getting actively involved in the learning process. They perceived the teacher's role as that of a facilitator who guides students towards effective learning, through guessing, discovering, and problem-solving. Three students commented on their preferences for active learning by saying:

*I like guessing and discovering. It is like a game or an adventure. The teacher should not teach us word meanings directly, but should capture our attention and our curiosity first, so that things will stick to our minds.* (Malika)

*The teacher does not give you the opportunity to discover things for yourself even if you can. I want to discover things myself in order to prove myself to others and to myself.* (Leila)

*I need to be active, to use my reasoning powers, and to discover things myself, because the teacher has failed me and the textbook too.*

*(Salwa)*

Oral work activities, including home-prepared presentations, were mentioned among the preferred activities of seven students. The reasons behind such preferences was the need to develop oral communicative skills, to be able to discuss issues they could not usually discuss with their parents, and also to express their own ideas and impose their personalities.

Seven students suggested reading as their most preferred learning activity, because it enabled them to learn a wide range of words. In particular, reading aloud seemed to be appreciated by a large number of students, even though it is generally considered as an old-fashioned useless activity by inspectors. They seemed to relish such an activity for a number of reasons quoted below:

*I enjoy reading aloud because it gives me the possibility to mimic English people. I say to myself: "I am English" and I listen to myself.*

*(Dris)*

*Reading aloud is a pleasure for me. I like English and its pronunciation, so I just play practising a good accent.*

*(Nadyne)*

*Reading aloud helps me to concentrate on what I am reading. I pay attention to pronunciation, meaning, and spelling. If I miss the meaning or make a mistake, I start again. If I read silently, I am lulled into sleep or become absent-minded. I switch to silent reading only when I become tired.*

*(Amyne)*

Clearly, interview protocols seemed to lend support to questionnaire results. Students were shown to attach more value to traditional activities, which allow them to access input, than to communicative activities which they perceived as not productive.

### ***Evidence from teacher interviews***

As mentioned earlier, the purpose of teachers' interviews was twofold: (1) to gain more evidence about the activities teachers considered as useful to their students, (2) to

determine some of the factors that guided teachers in their decisions about the activities they used.

Teachers had to answer five questions regarding: (1) the most useful activities in the questionnaire, (2) the activities they wanted more of, (3) the activities they had difficulty with, (4) the activities they just had to do, (5) the constraints they encountered, and (6) other useful activities that did not appear in the questionnaire. Results for each of these questions will be treated below.

Eight out of eleven teachers mentioned communicative activities as the most useful for their students. They argued that through the use of such activities as discussion, debates and role-play, students felt that they were doing something authentic and practical, and enjoyed the freedom of expressing themselves. In addition, all teachers argued that communicative activities were the only opportunity for students to practise oral skills. With respect to the four remaining teachers, each had his/her own views about the most useful activities. One mentioned cassettes as most valuable for introducing students to authentic English. Another teacher claimed that reading-based activities were the most useful, because that was the skill students were tested in. A male teacher from a low status school argued that grammar explanation and exercises were the most useful activities for his own students, because grammar was what they were most interested in. Surprisingly, this was the only teacher who held similar views with students as regards grammar learning.

It appeared then that teachers differed in what they viewed as most useful for their students, depending on the considerations they took into account. It needs to be noted that these results appeared to be consistent with results from the teacher questionnaire data in which more value was attached to communicative activities.

Another way of looking at teachers' views about useful activities was to ask them directly which activities they wanted more of. Seven out of eleven teachers felt that they needed more of what might be called audio-visual activities like films, cassettes, video and TV. As a female teacher from school A reported:

*An English class should be an entertaining and pleasurable experience for students. It should be special and unique to make it look different*

*from any other content-based class like a maths or history class.*

*(Ms B.)*

This urgent need for audio-visual equipment reflected the wide gap that existed in providing schools with such facilities. In contrast, a male teacher from a lower status school reported that he rather needed more writing skills activities dealing with cohesion which he assumed to be most useful for students who intended to pursue their university studies in English. Another male teacher from a lower status school, felt very nostalgic about the traditional activities used in the past like teaching grammar and reading aloud. He claimed:

*In the past, we used to have good students who did not make mistakes. In addition, my students come from a special social background, they have a deficient pronunciation. I cannot make out what they say. I wish I could use some reading aloud with them to correct their pronunciation, but it is forbidden by the inspector.* *(Mr K)*

The kind of consideration raised above led naturally to asking teachers about the constraints they might be subject to. To start with, two teachers, from a higher status school recognized that they had no constraints whatsoever. They expressed the satisfaction that they were completely free to do what they wanted in class as long as they complied with the syllabus.

Time constraints appeared to be the most problematic for teachers in general. Eight teachers agreed that they had a wide number of units to cover and that there was a host of activities which they simply could not afford to do. In this respect, six interviewees mentioned songs, one debates, and another process writing. Process writing was considered to be a very time-consuming activity, which if done properly, would require three to four hours. Similarly, the use of songs in the classroom, required time and equipment, which were not always available. Programme constraints were raised by one teacher who observed that he liked using grammar drills with his own students, but that such an activity was usually frowned on by inspectors.

The next question asked teachers about the activities they found difficult to use or apply in the classroom. Interestingly, communicative activities which were prized as being the most useful, were considered to be the most difficult as well. They were thought to be

too demanding on the teacher in terms of preparation and implementation. Teachers observed that "class discussion is not easy to conduct, and students do not take it seriously". Group work was not an easy task and role-play could not be carried out properly as students thought that they were 'doing it just for fun'. One teacher also found it difficult to capture students' attention when using listening comprehension activities.

Apart from the activities mentioned in the questionnaire, most of the teachers interviewed seemed to have their own favoured activities. Four of these activities were communicative and conducted in groups: (1) developing and acting out scenarios, (2) describing pictures in groups and checking with other groups, (3) fantasy story writing in which groups are given the same set of words and are required to come up with different stories, (4) academically oriented activities such as summary writing, short presentations, skimming and scanning. Finally, one female teacher suggested writing summaries as very popular with students specializing in English.

### *Factor analysis of learning activity preferences*

The rank-ordering of students' learning activity preferences in Table 8.8 helped determine students' preferences with regard to individual activities, but no clear-cut pattern of these preferences was established. The aim of this section is to identify the clusters underlying students' preferences.

Factor analysis procedures were applied to the learning activity items, using principal components analysis, followed with a quartimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was *meritorious* (.84) (see SPSS for Professionals, p. 53). Seven factors were extracted, accounting for 57% of the total variance. The first factor explains 23 % of the total variance and the remaining six factors each account for 7.6 % to 4.3 %. The factor matrix, sorted by factor appears in Table 8.12.

Factor 1 receives appreciable loadings from five variables, all related to the formal learning and practising of grammar rules and patterns. Following Ellis' (1993) terminology, this factor is best labelled 'studial' learning.

Factor 2 is defined by six variables primarily concerned with reading stories, newspapers, magazines, reading aloud, using TV, radio and cassettes. All such activities

can be used to learn English, outside the classroom, in naturalistic settings. Therefore, this factor can be referred to as 'naturalistic' learning.

Factor 3 receives substantial loadings from four variables which involve thinking skills like problem-solving, evaluating ideas, or debating issues. This factor can therefore be labelled 'reflective' learning.

Factor 4 evidences appreciable loadings from four variables concerned with the use of pictures and games as a stimulus for learning. In contrast to the first factor characterised by a focus on abstract rules and forms, this factor relates to a more concrete and visual approach to learning. Following Willing's (1988) terminology, it can best be labelled 'concrete learning style'.

Factor 5 evidences sizeable loadings from two variables having to do with typically communicative activities, role-play and class discussion. This factor can therefore be called 'communicative learning'.

Factor 6 evidences substantial loadings from three variables, having to do with self-discovery of meaning, self-correction and guessing. Interestingly this factor contains the constituent elements proposed by Kyriacou (1992) as primary components of *active learning*, namely "ownership and control over the learning activities used,...involvement, negotiation, choice, discovery, responsibility..." (pp. 310-11). This factor can therefore best be referred to as 'active learning style'.

Factor 7 is defined by one variable, songs . It can simply keep the same label.

Activities	Factor							h <sup>2</sup>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Q7 Grammar exercises	<b>.78</b>	.00	.02	.10	.18	.12	-.05	.66
Q6 Grammar explanation	<b>.73</b>	.14	.06	.05	.07	.05	.11	.58
Q9 Note grammar rules	<b>.72</b>	.02	.03	.08	.02	-.03	-.06	.54
Q8 Repeat structures	<b>.66</b>	.17	.11	.14	.09	.14	.18	.56
Q24 Review grammar rules	<b>.53</b>	.21	.10	.10	-.30	.08	<b>-.39</b>	.59
Q25 Read books/stories	.13	<b>.74</b>	.01	-.05	.12	.07	-.10	.60
Q23 Read newspapers	.11	<b>.64</b>	.08	.09	.01	.20	-.18	.52
Q26 Listen to cassettes	-.03	<b>.58</b>	.15	.15	-.14	.09	<b>.39</b>	.56
Q4 TV/radio	.12	<b>.52</b>	.03	-.01	<b>.38</b>	.20	<b>.33</b>	.59
Q10 Read aloud	.40	<b>.51</b>	.09	.08	.09	-.07	.21	.49
Q11 Practise pronunciation	.29	<b>.42</b>	.12	.05	.29	.13	<b>.40</b>	.53
Q19 For and against	.10	.07	<b>.75</b>	-.03	.07	.07	.15	.62
Q18 Share ideas/experience	.05	.17	<b>.70</b>	.05	-.17	.06	.17	.59
Q17 Evaluate/interpret ideas	.12	.12	<b>.68</b>	.16	.28	.07	-.10	.61
Q16 Problem-solving	.16	-.11	<b>.47</b>	.29	<b>.38</b>	.17	.06	.52
Q22 Teacher uses flashcards	.07	-.11	-.01	<b>.69</b>	-.24	.04	<b>.33</b>	.65
Q21 Write about pictures	.23	.15	.17	<b>.68</b>	.10	.10	.04	.58
Q20 Describe pictures	.25	.22	.09	<b>.67</b>	.12	-.04	-.23	.64
Q2 Games	.13	.06	.04	<b>.41</b>	<b>.33</b>	.16	<b>.35</b>	.44
Q3 Class discussion	<b>.35</b>	.15	.13	-.06	<b>.64</b>	.18	.08	.61
Q5 Role-play	.13	<b>.39</b>	.11	.13	<b>.58</b>	-.08	.00	.54
Q15 Discover meaning	.13	.10	.12	-.05	.20	<b>.71</b>	-.03	.59
Q27 Guess word meanings	.24	.19	-.04	.02	-.14	<b>.71</b>	.17	.65
Q29 Self-correct	-.02	.15	.21	.24	.08	<b>.59</b>	-.11	.49
Q1 Songs	.06	.05	.21	.07	.04	-.05	<b>.66</b>	.49
<b>Eigenvalue</b>	<b>5.74</b>	<b>1.90</b>	<b>1.71</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>1.31</b>	<b>1.16</b>	<b>1.07</b>	
Factor 1 = Studial learning					Factor 5 = Communicative learning			
Factor 2 = Naturalistic learning					Factor 6 = Active learning			
Factor 3 = Reflective learning					Factor 7 = Songs			
Factor 4 = Concrete learning								

Table 8.12: Factor analysis summary of activity preference items: quartimax rotated factor matrix, communalities (h<sup>2</sup>) and eigenvalues

The results in Table 8.12 indicate that the factors related to 'concrete' and 'naturalistic' learning appear to be relatively pure because they hardly receive any cross-factor loadings. By contrast, the factor related to 'communicative' learning seem to be less pure, because it receives cross-loadings from three items: TV/radio, problem-solving and games. This comes as no surprise since such activities share some features with communicative activities. Similarly, the factor related to 'songs' receives a number of cross-loadings from items linked with cassettes, pronunciation, games, and pictures.

### ***Reliability analysis of learning activity preferences***

Cronbach's alphas for each of the seven scales extracted by factor analysis are displayed in Table 8.13. Results show that the alpha values are generally moderate to high, except for the one-item factor, songs, for which Cronbach's alpha could not apply. On the whole, the preference styles generated by factor analysis appeared to be adequately reliable for research purposes.



Types of preferences	Items	Alpha
Studial learning	Grammar exercises Grammar explanation Note grammar rules Repeat structures Review grammar rules	.76
Naturalistic learning	Read books/stories Read newspapers Listen to cassettes TV/radio Read aloud Practise pronunciation	.74
Reflective learning	For and against Sharing ideas/experience Evaluate/interpret ideas Problem-solving	.67
Concrete learning	Teacher uses flashcards Write about pictures Describe pictures Games	.61
Communicative learning	Class discussion Role-play	.52
Active learning	Discover meaning Guess word meanings Self-correct	.55
Songs	Songs	-

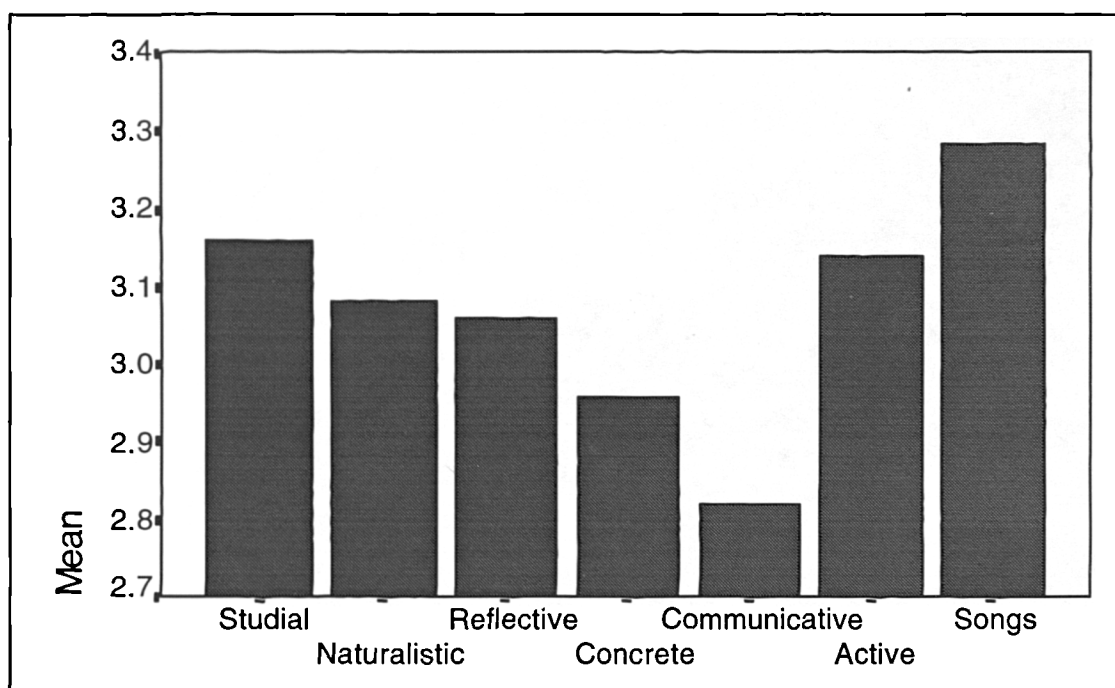
Table 8.13: Cronbach' s alpha for learning activity preferences

### *Endorsement of types of learning preferences*

The level of endorsement of each type of preference, for the whole group was also computed. Results expressed in mean scores are displayed in Table 8.14 and Figure 8.2.

Learning style preference	Mean	Standard Deviation
Songs	3.28	.98
Studial learning	3.16	.65
Active learning	3.14	.68
Naturalistic learning	3.08	.67
Reflective learning	3.06	.68
Concrete learning	2.96	.68
Communicative learning	2.82	.84

*Table 8.14: Mean scores for learning preference endorsement by students*



*Figure 8.2: Levels of endorsement of students' learning style preferences*

The most striking feature that emerges from the results shown in Figure 8.2 is that 'songs' was students' most highly preferred classroom activity whereas communicative activities appeared to be the least favoured ones. An-other interesting finding was that

'active', 'studial', 'naturalistic' and 'reflective' learning seemed to be popular among the students indicating that they were interested in learning the language through active involvement, conscious practice of the forms of the language, through reflective thinking and also through reading and watching TV. However, they did not seem to attach much value to the use of games and pictures.

By and large, three types of preferences, studial, active, and songs represented students' most preferred styles. These were followed by two moderately favoured styles, reflective, and naturalistic learning. The least popular preferences among students were the communicative and concrete styles of learning. These results lent support to the findings obtained in the ranking of students' preferred activities, in which the traditional activities together with songs and active learning procedures came at the top of the list, and the communicative activities were relegated to a secondary position.

On the whole, these results suggest that the students preferred songs, studial and active learning procedures much more than communicative activities. Interview protocols revealed that students were keen on developing their communicative skills, but they felt that they were learning more when they were discovering, guessing, or acquiring language items than when they were interacting with their peers. Some interviewees confessed that during pair/group work, they automatically reverted to chatting in French or Arabic. Others claimed that communicative activities gave them the opportunity to put into practice what they had already learnt, but they failed to teach them anything new other than their peers' mistakes. They also believed that communicative activities encouraged them to reinforce their own mistakes.

From this perspective, the role of communicative activities appears to be rather limited. While such activities may perhaps facilitate the transfer of learnt competence into performance, they cannot replace activities which engage the learners, and give them access to correct and finely-tuned input.

### *Learning style evidence from interviews*

Results from the previous section revealed that students' preferences could be categorised into seven types of preferences and that the group of students as a whole exhibited a marked preference for certain styles over others. On the other hand, students'

interviews seemed to lend support to the existence among students of the preference styles evidenced by factor analysis. The students' accounts for their favoured activities revealed that the pattern of preferences differed from one individual to the other. Each student showed a particular blend of styles or appeared to be dominant in one or more styles. Clearly, it is illusory to make the claim of categorizing students into neat groups or packages, each having their own styles or preferences. However, the differences between individual students seemed to be well-established.

During the interviews, it became clear that students' likes and dislikes were determined by a number of factors like personality, views about language learning, and classroom conditions. The objective of this section is to report on some of the mechanisms that seemed to be at work in shaping students' preferences.

Personality characteristics appeared to play an important role in determining students' preferences. For example, some students recognized that the nature of their personality was the major determinant of their preferences for a number of classroom activities. Those who perceived themselves as being shy or introvert tended to dislike any kind of communicative interaction. In class, they felt more at ease listening and understanding without speaking. Sharing experience or opinion with their peers was thought to be threatening to them, as was expressed by Rachid, a shy, yet bright male student: "It is not good to unveil my personality or ideas to others". Similarly, some students seemed to have a weak ego or a low self-concept. They claimed that exposing their weaknesses, at the risk of being covered with ridicule, was unbearable to them. Hamid, a male student observed: "I feel very bad and humiliated when the teacher corrects my mistakes, so I never open my mouth".

Very often, such students seemed to be overly concerned about accuracy, and afraid of committing mistakes. They felt that when the teacher overcorrected them, they became confused and developed what could be called 'lathophobic aphasia'. Later, when the teacher called on them to speak, they felt inhibited and paralysed even if they knew the correct answer. Other students claimed that they were reluctant to speak just because they were afraid of irritating a teacher who was very intolerant of mistakes.

In contrast, there were four interviewees who appeared to be more open or extrovert. They contended that the point of coming to class was to engage in discussion

and communicative activities. They claimed that grammar was not essential to them, and that what they needed was the challenge of practising oral communication in class. They seemed to enjoy sharing ideas and experience, and getting to know one another. Debating issues was one of their most prized activities because it allowed them to impose their personality and prove themselves. To this effect, Lamia, a female student from a high status school observed: "Debating is my own way of being, I do not like to conform and this is how I want to learn English.". These students did not seem to be particularly concerned about mistakes.

Other interviewees gave the impression of being perfectionists or analytic in their learning style. They appeared to be interested in learning the intricacies and complexities of grammar rules. They needed clear and structured instruction about rules, and seemed to have no tolerance for ambiguity. They became anxious or insecure if presented with unclear or ambiguous input.

Students were also divided in their preferences towards grammar learning. About a third felt that the best way to approach a language was by learning its grammar first, so they seemed to be very keen on learning about the intricacies of grammar rules. Others, by contrast, found grammar very boring, complicated, and referred to it as their *bête noire*. They argued that vocabulary was everything, and that they could do without grammar in communicating in English.

By and large, the students interviewed seemed to put active learning among their top priorities. They wanted to play an active role in learning the language by using their mental powers because, arguably, it guided them towards effective learning. Thus, guessing and discovering were thought to be enjoyable and game-like activities. Even weaker students felt they needed to be more actively engaged in learning and prove themselves, because they thought that everything else had failed them. In contrast, a few students did not feel enthusiastic about active learning. They argued that they preferred the help and presence of the teacher.

As concerns concrete learning, or the use of pictures in learning, students were generally divided in their preferences. Two female students, for example, thought that pictures helped them grasp the meaning of input, and stimulated their imagination. conversely, a male interviewee found the use of pictures in the classroom rather childish.

Classroom conditions was another factor which played a key role in shaping students' preferences. This can be demonstrated through a number of cases. Sharif was a bright student from a higher-status, boys' school who had come to dislike communicative activities in the classroom. He observed:

*I like discussion just moderately, even though I like speaking English. In class, I do not like to show off or monopolise the conversation, because it makes me feel guilty. The whole class do not understand, and they do not tell the teacher directly. So, I prefer to let the others understand and participate, but at the same time, I feel ill at ease and bored.*  
(Sharif)

Other students from various schools did not seem to appreciate the communicatively oriented classroom probably because they felt that they were not getting much out of it. They expressed their dissatisfaction in the following way:

*I do not like class discussion because if the teacher speaks for thirty minutes, and we are thirty students in the classroom, you have to wait long for your turn to come.*  
(Dris)

*I do not like oral work in the classroom, because it creates many discipline problems. For example, if I laugh at someone else's mistakes, the teacher gets irritated and sends me out.*  
(Hamid)

*I do not like group work, because I feel neglected by the bright students. They simply would not give you the time to justify your answer.*  
(Salwa)

*I do not like classwork, because if you say that you have not understood, the others will laugh at you or tell you that you are wasting their time.*  
(Larby)

Very often, noise was mentioned as an unfavourable classroom condition for practising communicative activities. So it seemed, under certain conditions, communicative activities were perceived as unpalatable by a number of bright or weak students alike.

The last factor that determined students' preferences was their views and beliefs about language learning. Some of the students' interviewed claimed that the best way to

learn English was to read books, prepare lessons in advance, watch TV and read texts aloud. Others viewed the learning of rules as the best way to approach a language. Still other interviewees thought that grammar could take care of itself, and that vocabulary was much more important. A number of interviewees appeared to put more emphasis on the learning strategies that allowed them to store input in memory.

This part of the chapter showed that teachers' assumptions about what was useful, and students' perceptions of what they preferred, appeared to diverge from one another. This is probably because teachers and students applied different perspectives to what was going on in the classroom. Teachers seemed to look at classrooms from a teaching-centred point of view, and students perceived such activities from a learning-centred viewpoint. The following section examines the correlations among motivational variables and learning preferences.

### **Correlations among motivational variables and learning preferences**

Table 8.15 displays the correlational results among students' motivational orientations and strength of motivation dimensions on the one hand, and the various learning preferences on the other. The Pearson correlation coefficient values which are significant at the .05 level are starred. In these cases, the null hypothesis that there was no linear association between variables involved in the population was rejected. Results indicated that the components of strength of motivation (desire and effort) showed higher correlations with four types of learning (studial, naturalistic, communicative, and active) than they did with the remaining three (reflective, concrete, and songs). This suggests that strength of motivation could be considered as a more powerful predictor of certain types of learning than of others.

As concerns the relationship between motivational orientation and type of learning, the intrinsic motive was the only orientation which showed moderate correlations with a wide range of learning preferences, namely studial, naturalistic, reflective, communicative and active learning.

By contrast, the cultural orientation showed very weak or non significant correlations with the seven types of learning preferences, suggesting that culture, as a source of motivation, appeared to play a minor role in students' learning preferences.

The two dimensions of instrumental orientation had approximately similar correlational patterns. The main difference between them was that the instrumental short-term showed a significant and moderate correlation with studial learning. This perhaps indicates that there was a link between learning the language for short-term purposes, namely grades, and preferences for a kind of examination-oriented studial learning.

	Studial learning	Naturalistic learning	Reflective learning	Concrete learning	Communic. learning	Active learning	Songs
Intrinsic	.32 * p < .001	.62 * p < .001	.21 * p < .001	.15 * p = .006	.46 * p < .001	.34 * p < .001	.22 * p < .001
Instrumental long-term	.10 p = .057	.34 * p < .001	.22 * p < .001	.13 * p = .022	.25 * p < .001	.20 * p < .001	.13 * p = .015
Social	.07 p = .181	.34 * p < .001	.14 * p = .008	.11 * p = .044	.20 * p < .001	.18 * p = .001	.30 * p < .001
Cultural	.15 * p = .006	.23 * p < .001	.09 p = .103	.09 p = .101	.17 * p = .002	.09 p = .093	.18 * p = .001
Instrumental short-term	.39 * p < .001	.34 * p < .001	.18 * p = .001	.27 * p < .001	.26 * p < .001	.23 * p < .001	.16 * p = .003
Desire	.30 * p < .001	.41 * p < .001	.26 * p < .001	.20 * p < .001	.29 * p < .001	.32 * p = .001	.18 * p = .001
Effort	.42 * p < .001	.42 * p < .001	.23 * p < .001	.16 * p = .003	.47 * p < .001	.35 * p < .001	.05 p = .356

df = 334, two-tailed test

\* : significant values at p < .05

*Table 8.15: The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients between students' motivational orientations and activity preferences*

Interestingly, the social orientation showed significant and relatively important correlations with naturalistic learning and songs, which suggests that there was a linear



association between social orientation and preference for activities like songs, TV and newspapers.

In a nutshell, there seemed to be a link between certain learning styles and certain motivational orientations, suggesting perhaps that students' preferences may to some extent be predicted by their motivational orientations.

Having established how motivational and preference factors related to one another with reference to the learners, as a whole, it was thought interesting to examine how groups of students differed in terms of their motivations and preferences, across subject of specialisation, gender, school status, and level of motivation.

## **8.5 Variation in students' motivational factors and learning preferences**

In this section, the aim was to compare the mean scores for the motivational and preference factors among various groups of students, as determined by their sex, their subject of specialisation, their level of motivation, and the status of the school they came from.

### *Variation in students' motivation and preferences across sections*

As was mentioned earlier, the sample used in the present study contained subjects from four different sections, the English section (N = 20) who specialised in English, the literary section (N = 130) who specialised in languages in general, the science section (N = 146), and the maths section (N = 40). All the sections used generally the same course material, but the literary and English sections had more hours of English on the time-table, i.e., five to six hours a week against three hours for the science and maths students.

Since English was given different weight across the sections, it was thought interesting to find out how this difference would affect students' orientations, motivational intensity, and activity preferences. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the mean scores of motivational variables and preferences of the different sections. Results are displayed in Table 8.16. The null

hypothesis of equality of means between sections was rejected for a number of cases. The significant differences between means as determined by Scheffe's test are displayed in Table 8.17.

As can be seen, the English and the literary sections both scored higher than science students with respect to effort, which implies that they perceived themselves as deploying more effort. This comes as no surprise given that English is given more weight in the curriculum they follow. Interestingly, no significant differences were shown among the four groups in terms of desire to learn.

As regards the intrinsic motive, the English section scored higher than the literary and science sections probably because they were more committed to the study of English. Concerning the cultural orientation, the English section, again, scored significantly higher than the literary section.

Results so far suggest that the English section kept a high profile. It seemed to be more strongly motivated, and showed more positive intrinsic, and cultural orientations than either the literary or the science students.

It is worth noting that there seemed to be no evidence to show that maths students were less motivated, or displayed less positive intrinsic or cultural orientations than the other sections. This is quite interesting, given the minor role played by English in the maths section curriculum.

Tables 8.16 and 8.17 show that mathematics students scored significantly higher than literary students on the cultural dimension. The reason for this is not clear. The long-term instrumental orientation seemed to be in favour of science and maths students who scored higher than the literary students. Unsurprisingly, mathematics and science students' higher orientation towards long-term instrumental goals is an indication of their career and university prospects, and their awareness of the link that exists between English and scientific or technological development.

	Mean scores for the four sections				F ratio	F Prob.
	English	Literary	Science	Maths		
Desire	3.62	3.59	3.41	3.55	2.16	.0922
Effort	3.15	2.87	2.57	2.67	7.65	.0001 *
Intrinsic	3.70	3.06	3.04	3.17	4.99	.0021 *
Social	2.85	2.52	2.46	2.61	1.91	.1280
Cultural	2.70	2.08	2.32	2.45	6.67	.0002 *
Instrumental long-term	2.72	2.46	3.04	3.31	15.74	.0000 *
Instrumental short-term	3.18	3.22	3.07	3.17	1.57	.1966
Studial learning	3.24	3.27	3.07	3.08	2.57	.0542
Naturalistic learning	3.72	3.01	3.05	3.09	6.98	.0001 *
Reflective learning	3.13	3.11	3.00	3.09	.61	.6089
Concrete learning	2.95	2.97	2.96	2.91	.09	.9675
Communicative learning	3.38	2.81	2.76	2.81	3.29	.0209 *
Active learning	3.25	3.09	3.11	3.37	1.99	.1156
Songs	3.20	3.33	3.26	3.25	.1916	.9021

\* : significant differences at  $p < .05$

Table 8.16: Results of one-way ANOVA for motivational factors and activity preferences

		English section	Literary section	Science section	Maths section
Desire					
Effort	Science section	*	*		
Intrinsic	English section		*	*	
Social					
Cultural	Literary section	*			*
Instrumental long-term	Literary section			*	*
Instrumental short-term					
Studial learning					
Naturalistic learning	English section		*	*	*
Reflective learning					
Concrete learning					
Communicative learning	English section		*	*	
Active learning					
Songs					

Table 8.17: Results of Scheffe' s test for motivational factors and activity preferences at significance level  $p < .05$

It is to be noticed that there appeared to be no significant differences between groups as regards social and short-term instrumental orientations. This suggests that all sections had similar orientations towards having contacts with native speakers or getting good grades.

The general pattern that emerged from these comparisons was that each section exhibited a profile of its own. The English section was characterized by a higher level of motivation and a stronger orientation towards intrinsic, and cultural goals. Their commitment to English and its culture may be accounted for by the fact that English was the subject they specialised in.

The mathematics and science groups appeared to have a more marked orientation towards long-term instrumental goals which presumably matched their career and study prospects. Many of them perceived English to be useful for their future careers or university studies. What distinguished maths from science students was that the former were not as disadvantaged as the latter with respect to the English and literary sections.

The literary section students exhibited a rather peculiar profile. Their strength of motivation seemed to be just moderate in the sense that it was significantly higher than that of science students only. In addition, despite their presumed interest in languages, their intrinsic motive was lower than that of the English section, and their cultural and long-term instrumental orientations were the weakest of all the sections. This lack of strong orientations probably indicates that they were specializing in languages by necessity rather than by choice. This is perhaps the reason why their motivational profile for learning English did not come up to their academic orientations for languages.

As regards variations in student preferences across sections, Tables 8.16 and 8.17 show that the English section students scored significantly higher than all other students with regard to two types of learning: naturalistic and communicative learning. This again comes as no surprise, given their higher interest in, and commitment to, learning English. Once again, intrinsic interest in the language and deployment of effort appeared to be strong predictors of the communicative and naturalistic learning styles.

### *Variation in student motivation and preferences across gender*

The gender divide has always played a role in educational issues, so it was thought interesting to assess its effect on students' motivation and preferences. The mean scores for the different variables were computed and a series of *t*-tests were applied to highlight significant differences.

Results in Table 8.18 show that scores for desire to learn were significantly higher for females, but there seemed to be no significant differences between sexes on the effort factor. Female students appeared to be more passionate about learning English than male students, without showing more commitment to effort. This may be due to the challenge placed upon students as a whole by the preparations for the Baccalaureate exams, as was mentioned in their responses to the open-ended question.

	Means Females	Means Males	t-value	df	2-Tail Sig.
Desire	3.60	3.44	2.34	325.35	.020 *
Effort	2.78	2.71	.94	326	.348
Intrinsic	3.29	2.97	4.03	326	.000 *
Social	2.56	2.50	.74	322.19	.459
Cultural	2.29	2.25	.50	326	.617
Instrumental long-term	2.86	2.87	-.08	320.77	.937
Instrumental short-term	3.29	3.04	3.79	326	.000 *
Studial learning	3.24	3.08	2.30	326	.022 *
Naturalistic	3.16	3.01	1.98	324.04	.048 *
Reflective learning	3.10	3.03	.92	326	.356
Concrete learning	3.04	2.88	2.04	326	.042 *
Communicative learning	2.89	2.76	1.37	326	.173
Active learning	3.14	3.13	.17	326	.863
Songs	3.31	3.25	.65	326	.515

\* : significant differences at  $p < .05$

*Table 8.18: Results of t-test for motivation and preferences between males and females*

Concerning motivational orientations, results indicate that girls scored higher than boys for two orientations, intrinsic and short-term instrumental. Girls appeared to be more oriented towards learning English for its own sake, but also more committed to the short-term use of English, for example, to getting good grades. Their particular interest in

English matched the commonly held view that girls are more motivated towards the learning of foreign languages.

As regards learning preferences, girls scored higher than boys on the studial, concrete and naturalistic types of learning preferences. For example, girls seemed to prefer 'learning grammar rules' and 'doing grammar exercises' more than boys did. They also appeared to favour learning through the use of pictures and games.

As has been demonstrated in this section, there seemed to be a difference between males and females in terms of motivation and preferences. However, all these differences appeared to be in favour of the girls. They showed a significantly higher desire to learn English, and exhibited significantly higher intrinsic and short-term instrumental orientations. Their preferences for studial, naturalistic and concrete learning were stronger than the boys'.

#### *Variation in student motivation and preferences across school status*

Another area thought to be worth investigating was the effect of school status on the students' motivations and preferences. Two types of school were identified: higher status and lower status schools. The criterion used for determining school status was based on the location of the school and the type of students who attended it. In all other respects, the schools presented a similar profile, namely in terms of gender (see Table 8.1). There were, in all, three lower status schools (101 students) and four higher status schools (215 students). It is to be noted that the English section group had been discarded from the sample before selecting the groups. The reason was that the English section generally behaved differently from the other students. In order to find out how higher status students differed from lower status students, the mean scores for the motivational and preference variables were compared, using a series of *t*-tests. Results are displayed in Table 8.19.

This table indicates that all the significant differences between the two groups were in favour of students from the higher status schools. Concerning the strength of motivation, these students scored higher than the lower status students on the desire dimension, but no significant difference was shown with regard to the effort dimension. The implication was that in spite of their stronger desire to learn English, higher status

students found no more time than lower status students to expend great efforts, as was frequently mentioned in the interviews. The effort component of strength of motivation appeared to be subject to time constraints.

	Means Higher status schools	Means Lower status schools	t-value	df	2-Tail Sig.
Desire	3.63	3.22	4.67	133.34	.000 *
Effort	2.70	2.73	-.45	314	.652
Intrinsic	3.14	2.91	2.54	314	.011 *
Social	2.57	2.35	2.59	314	.010 *
Cultural	2.21	2.29	-.83	314	.408
Instrumental long-term	2.98	2.53	4.19	314	.000 *
Instrumental short-term	3.13	3.17	-.55	180.83	.582
Studial learning	3.15	3.16	-.09	314	.931
Naturalistic	3.14	2.83	3.66	160.22	.000 *
Reflective learning	3.10	2.96	1.81	314	.071
Concrete learning	2.96	2.96	-.01	314	.991
Communicative learning	2.81	2.74	.64	161.74	.525
Active learning	3.21	2.96	3.08	314	.002 *
Songs	3.35	3.15	1.75	314	.081

\* : significant at  $p < .05$

*Table 8.19: Results of t-test for higher and lower status schools*

Furthermore, Table 8.19 indicates that students from higher status schools scored higher on three motivational orientations: intrinsic, social and long-term instrumental, suggesting that these students showed more interest in English as an end in itself, and as a means towards career and university prospects. They also seemed to be more positively oriented towards having contacts with, and identifying with native speakers.

Curiously enough, there seems to be no significant difference between the two groups in terms of the cultural orientation. This implies that status did not affect students' cultural orientations.

Similarly, no difference between groups was shown with regard to short-term instrumental orientation. This suggests that students were equally concerned about grades or getting informed about the world, irrespective of the schools they came from.

As concerns students' preferences, Table 8.19 indicates that higher status students scored higher than lower status students with respect to two learning preferences: naturalistic and active learning. The implication is that higher status students' preferences were stronger than lower status students' preferences and are characterised by an element of independent learning and active involvement in the classroom.

### *Differences between motivated and unmotivated students*

The previous sections showed that specialisations, gender, and status had some effect on students' motivation, orientations, and preferences. Students differed from each other, according to their gender, their specialisations, and the status of the school they came from.

How highly motivated students differed from poorly motivated students was another issue worth investigating. Using students' scores on the eight-item strength of motivation scale (minimum = 8, maximum = 32), two groups of students differing only in their motivational levels were isolated and contrasted. The first group consisted of 34 highly motivated students who scored between 29 and 32 on the strength of motivation scale. This group represented 10.8 % of the whole sample. The second group comprised 39 poorly motivated students scoring between 8 and 16 on the motivation intensity scale, and representing 12.3 % of the sample. These two groups were thought to represent two samples of typically motivated, and unmotivated students. The objective was to explore the role played by level of motivation in shaping students' preferences and motivational factors. It is to be noted that the English section group had been discarded from the sample before selecting the two groups, the reason being that the English section generally behaved differently from the other students.

For each of the two groups of motivated and unmotivated students, mean scores related to motivation and preferences were computed. Table 8.20 represents the differences between the two groups. A glance at this table shows that highly motivated students scored higher than unmotivated students on both dimensions of motivational strength, i.e., desire, and effort, which means that they were more willing to learn and to exert more effort. Similarly, concerning the motivational orientations, motivated students scored higher in all orientations except the cultural one. They appeared to be more



intrinsically and instrumentally motivated and to have a higher social orientation than the poorly motivated students. Interestingly, no significant differences were shown between motivated and unmotivated students with respect to the cultural dimension. In this particular context, it seemed that when intensity of motivation increased, motivational orientations increased except for the cultural dimension, which remained more or less constant. Therefore, it seems that students' level of motivation affected all motivational orientations except the cultural one.

	Mean Highly motivated students	Mean Poorly motivated students	t-value	df	2-Tail Sig.
Desire	3.95	2.36	13.47	40.36	.000 *
Effort	3.84	1.75	28.67	45.44	.000 *
Intrinsic	3.75	2.11	12.67	56.82	.000 *
Social	2.79	2.01	4.99	71	.000 *
Cultural	2.25	2.08	.91	71	.368
Instrumental long-term	3.18	2.13	5.45	69.07	.000 *
Instrumental short-term	3.58	2.70	6.43	71	.000 *
Studial learning	3.56	2.52	8.04	71	.000 *
Naturalistic	3.52	2.32	9.06	59.72	.000 *
Reflective learning	3.27	2.64	3.76	71	.000 *
Concrete learning	3.16	2.67	3.09	71	.003 *
Communicative learning	3.38	2.05	7.98	71	.000 *
Active learning	3.61	2.67	6.77	64.16	.000 *
Songs	3.62	2.90	2.88	65.05	.005 *

\* : significant differences at  $p < .05$

Table 8.20: *t*-tests for highly motivated and poorly motivated students

As concerns the preference styles, motivated students again took the lead. They scored higher than unmotivated students in all types of preferences, which suggests that

the higher the students' motivation, the more they found learning activities enjoyable. Interviews lent support to this evidence, as students and teachers frequently maintained that "a motivated student likes everything".

The above section demonstrated that unmotivated students appeared to be at a disadvantage in all aspects relating to the learning of English, namely the goals for learning, the desire to learn, the efforts deployed, as well as the learning preferences. Such disadvantage was frequently picked up by the teachers and the students. This issue will be tackled below, through the eyes of both the students and their teachers.

Unmotivated students reported that they had had a negative, unsuccessful experience with learning English, which had a detrimental effect upon their attitudes to English and English classes. They seemed to have been disaffected by their previous teachers, and felt neglected, anxious, and bored in class. As they did not understand much of what the teacher was saying, they thought that coming to class was a waste of time. They thought of the ideal teacher as one who was patient, tolerant, understanding, and who made students like English. They also believed that if students liked English, they would automatically enjoy everything related to that language.

The teacher thus seemed to play a key role in determining students' motivation. As Lennon (1994) pointed out:

*In motivational terms the teacher cannot assume a neutral role: motivation will either be enhanced or depressed via the teacher. Indeed, language learners consistently cite teacher personality as a most important variable in explaining their continuous progress, and will report that change of teacher can be a decisive influence for better or worse on their acquisition (p. 42).*

Two teachers interviewed reported quite extensively on unmotivated students. They thought that such students were generally very weak and had wide gaps in their knowledge of the language. They were not interested in learning anything, and were there just for administrative purposes. They were grade-minded and as a result, tended to use the strategic approach to learning English, which consisted of learning only the material that allowed them to pass tests. In addition, they were prone to absenteeism and, sometimes, to cheating. In class, they were reluctant to speak and needed to be spoonfed.

The teachers thought that their case was desperate. Catching up with bright students was beyond their capacities, yet they had to sit for the same exams. Extra classes were sometimes arranged for them but teachers thought that such students ought to be treated separately.

## 8.6 Results and discussion of the open-ended question

A total of 160 subjects responded quite substantially to the open-ended question. Generally, they seemed pleased to be given the opportunity to voice their preferences and views about the teaching/learning of English in schools, as it is shown by the extracts below:

*Thank you very much, on behalf of all the class, for your good intention. I think that if you did this [research] before, English class would not be what it is today.*  
(Dris)

*This is the first time someone gets interested in us, in this beloved country, Morocco. All the activities you have mentioned in the questionnaire are very interesting and well adapted to the students' needs.*  
(Brahim)

Subjects' observations were varied in focus, but analysis of the data revealed four main categories: (1) attitudes towards English, (2) views on the course and materials, (3) activity preferences, (4) views on the role played by the teacher. Each of these points will be treated below.

Out of the 160 respondents, 47 were concerned about expressing their positive attitudes towards English, as is illustrated by the following quotes:

*Personally, I adore English, and everything related to that language.*  
(Huda)

*English is a beautiful language, it is my preferred language.*  
(Zyne)

Quite often, the respondents' emotional involvement with English seemed to be guided by a purely intrinsic orientation as is demonstrated by the quotation below:

*Concerning myself, I like to learn English because it satisfies my curiosity for knowing everything about English. When I manage to decipher a word in English, I become very happy, and feel proud of myself. I prefer to learn English not for the exam, but for myself.*  
(Halim)

Interestingly, among the respondents to the open-ended question, even apparently weak students showed a positive attitude towards English, as expressed by the following examples:

*I like English, but I can not make out a word of what the teacher says, and I find English classes boring.*  
(Adel)

*I do not know what to say, but something I am sure about is that I like English very strongly, but I do not have a good grounding, and in addition I do not try to participate because I am very shy and feel embarrassed if I ever make mistakes.*  
(Hynd)

Very often, the expression of their emotional involvement with English was accompanied with various types of frustrations, as in the following two examples:

*I adore English but I find English classes boring and superficial, and no matter how much reading I do in my textbook, I do not understand the grammar rules at all.*  
(Hamid)

*English is a subject I adore, but I cannot follow in class. I would like to speak and write it like French, but I do not know how to.* (Lamia)

It was generally felt that the course left much to be desired as was summarized by one of the respondents:

*Learning English in schools does not give us much chance to assimilate the language. We have poor programmes and manuals. The course is insufficient and not elaborated, this is why we need to follow extra courses if we want to learn English adequately.* (Rizlan)

In fact, the English course was often described as being superficial and insufficient. Thirty-two respondents claimed that the training provided in schools did not come up to their expectations. They repeatedly complained that it was not possible to learn a language in three years, except for those who could afford to enrol in other courses. Eight respondents suggested starting English from the primary school, along with Arabic or French. Sixteen suggested starting in the first year of secondary schools, at age 11. Nine respondents observed that three to five hours a week was not enough, in that more hours of English needed to be added on the school timetable, in order to promote a better command of the language.

On the whole, the respondents' protocols revealed that there was a striking contrast between students' high interest in English and their disillusion with the methods used and the program as a whole, as expressed below:

*I adore English, but I hope that the whole system of learning will be changed.* (Maria)

*English is at the same time a living and beautiful language, but the way of learning it is a problem. We are practically bound to pre-programmed lessons. I wish we could use the activities mentioned in the questionnaire.* (Larby)

*It is no good to stick to the program, we should engage in activities which make students like English.* (Said)

Students seemed to be weary with the routine of teacher directed lessons. As one of them pointed out:

*Concerning the teaching of English, I notice it is always the teacher who teaches. One should use instead another style of teaching such as listening to cassettes or watching films.* (Omar)

On the other hand, eight respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the materials used. The manuals were not considered to be helpful or teacher proof. Respondents suggested including glossaries and adequate grammar explanations into the textbook. In particular, the students whose specialisation was English, suggested that:

*In order to learn this beautiful language, the textbook should be completely modified. It should contain Anglo-Saxon culture together with writers and poets, and also gamelike activities like crosswords. Manuals should be written by Anglo-Saxon teachers. (Karim)*

In addition, the themes and topics treated in the textbooks were not perceived as relevant to students' tastes or interests. Another respondent went as far as suggesting "a new learning program based exclusively on songs and cassettes, and having at least a song in every lesson."

Out of the 70 respondents who focused on methods in their responses, 50 stressed the need to have modern methods and equipment. The others' responses varied from developing pronunciation skills to playing sketches.

The fourth category that captured respondents' attention was the teacher. They generally stressed the importance of the role played by the teacher in motivating students. Seven respondents reported being disaffected by teachers who paid more attention to those who followed extra classes outside schools, and neglected the others. Four thought that it was the teacher's responsibility to deploy every effort to make English lessons interesting for students, so as to discourage absenteeism and to help those who could not afford extra classes at the American/ British centres. Undeniably, in foreign language teaching, the importance of the teacher plays a significant role, as was highlighted by Lennon (1994):

*In learning situations where there is no readily identifiable community which speaks a foreign language, then the teacher seems to act as a surrogate for the speech community, so that the extent to which the learner likes and is able to identify, with the teacher becomes an important indicator of likely attainment, particularly in oral - aural skills (p. 42).*

The interesting implication that arises from the quotation above is that in FL learning contexts, the teacher's role is not restricted to capturing students' motivation in the conventional way, namely by promoting their interest and enthusiasm. In students' eyes, the teacher incarnates the community and the culture of the language they are learning. Students' level of motivation, and achievement depend largely on the extent to which they like, or identify with, their teacher. His/her key role is to provide the nourishing support that a new-born to a new language and a new culture may require, and also to alleviate the anxieties associated with learning a new language from scratch.

## 8.7 Summary and conclusion

Chapter eight sought to explore the following three areas and their interrelationship:

1. students' sources of motivation (in relation to three dimensions: intrinsic, instrumental, and integrative) and self-reported strength of motivation,
2. students' preferred ways of learning in relation to a number of leaning activities,
3. teachers' views about the usefulness of different learning activities.

*Several conclusions may be drawn from the results. The most remarkable was the emergence of a motivational orientation - the intrinsic motive - characterised by a profound involvement with the language, and interest in learning it for its own sake. This orientation as a goal for learning a new language is much less highlighted, as a factor in itself, in the current research on FL learning motivation.*

The results indicated that the intrinsic motive proved to be a major goal for learning English in the context investigated. It was highly endorsed by students, and it was the only orientation that correlated with most of the other motivational factors, in particular with strength of motivation. This suggests that the intrinsic motive, unlike the other orientations, was a strong predictor of desire to learn and deployment of effort, for the Moroccan students surveyed.

On the other hand, the intrinsic motive seemed to have a pervasive influence on the pattern of variation between students. Females were shown to display more intrinsic motivation than males. Similarly, highly motivated and students from higher status

schools appeared to be more intrinsically motivated than poorly motivated, and lower status students respectively.

In addition, the intrinsic motive correlated with a wider range of learning preferences, namely studial, naturalistic, communicative, and active learning. This implies that intrinsically motivated students were more likely to have a wider repertoire of preferences.

Apart from the intrinsic motive, the instrumental and integrative orientations championed by Gardner and his colleagues did emerge, but exhibited a pattern specific to the context investigated. The instrumental orientation, or learning a language for pragmatic reasons showed a prominent profile as a reason for learning English by students, but it was split into two dimensions, long-term and short-term dimensions. The short-term instrumental dimension reflected students' short term goals, which were rather limited in scope like 'getting good grades' or 'getting informed about the world'. This orientation was as powerful as the intrinsic motive with regard to the endorsement level by students, but seemed to be less pervasive in all other respects. Like the intrinsic motive, it appeared to be more highly endorsed by female students and by highly motivated students, but unlike the intrinsic orientation, it showed a stronger link with studial learning and a weaker link with communicative learning. What distinguished the short-term instrumental orientation from all other orientations was its strong link with female students, and at the same time with studial learning. This may suggest that female students were perhaps more oriented than male students towards grammar learning and getting good grades.

*The other side of the instrumental orientation, the long-term dimension, reflected students' long term, wider perspectives for learning English, such as university or career prospects, as well as a concern with science and technology. Compared to the short-term side, the long-term instrumental dimension showed a relatively lower endorsement by students as a whole, but appeared to be more strongly related to science/maths students, as well as to students from higher status schools. This perhaps suggests that the science and maths students in higher status schools had more positive expectations about using English in their future studies or careers.*



Similarly, the integrative orientation, or desire to become like native speakers of the TL, was composed of two dimensions: the social and the cultural orientations. The social dimension showed a moderate endorsement by students, and appeared to be markedly perceived very much as a goal for learning English by higher status students and highly motivated students. This probably suggests that social integration with the TL group is a function of students' school status and level of motivation.

On the other hand, the cultural dimension showed a moderate level of endorsement by students, and as such, it represented the weakest goal for learning English by the students investigated. Curiously enough, the cultural factor showed only weak or non-significant correlations with the other motivational or preference variables. In addition, it did not seem to differentiate between groups of students, except for English and maths students, who appeared to have a stronger cultural orientation than literary students. This appeared to be the only orientation which remained constant across groups, and was not affected by factors like gender, school status or motivational level. This implies that students uniformly perceived cultural goals as the least important sources of motivation for learning English.

Another interesting finding was that strength of motivation was substantiated by two factors which reflected what Gardner (1985) referred to as the desire to achieve goals and the efforts expended to reach such goals. The results in the present study suggested that students' desire to learn English seemed to override the efforts that they perceived themselves as actually deploying. Comparison between groups revealed that females and higher status students showed more desire to learn English, whereas highly motivated students *appeared to deploy more effort*.

As regards student preferences, the main finding was the divergence between what students preferred and what their teachers thought was useful to them. Results showed that overall the students tended to favour traditional activities and songs over communicative activities, and active learning procedures over mechanical repetitive learning. Activities reflecting the artificial side of the communicative approach like role-play and group work appeared to be the least liked by students.

The pattern of teachers' perceived usefulness of activities seemed to be diametrically opposed to the students' pattern of preferences. Teachers seemed to be

more biased towards communicative activities, and relegated traditional activities, songs, and active learning procedures to a secondary position. One reason for this discrepancy between students and teachers could be that they applied different perspectives to what went on in the classroom. Teachers looked at classroom activities from a teaching point of view, by attaching more value to students' production of output and performance, considered to be the hallmark of successful teaching. Learners, on the other hand, preferred to capitalize on activities which allowed them to assimilate input and build competence. As a result, they seemed to be more learning-oriented.

Another reason for the mismatch between students and teachers would be that they differed in what they perceived as the ultimate goal for learning the language, and also the best route to reach such goals. Teachers seemed to give more prominence to communicative skills and believed that students learnt to communicate by engaging in communicative activities in class. Students, on the other hand, tended to think that, as such, communication between class mates in foreign language classrooms, did not prove to be the optimal way of gaining competence in the language, communicative or otherwise. For such students, the building of communicative competence started first with exposure to authentic input from a variety of sources. At this stage, they expected to absorb input and store it in the most active and effective way. Communicating with peers in class was a good check on their acquired communicative abilities, but was not to be considered to be by itself the main route to building communicative competence, especially that there were no native speakers to interact with in class.

Factor analysis of learning activity items, backed with evidence from students' interviews revealed the existence among students of seven types of learning preferences, with different levels of endorsement by the students. Songs was the most highly endorsed activity, closely followed by active, studial, naturalistic and reflective learning. By contrast, concrete learning was moderately endorsed, and communicative learning received the lowest endorsement.

Finally, correlational analyses revealed that there was a more pronounced linear association between certain motivational variables and certain learning styles. For example, learning preferences like studial, naturalistic and active learning tended to increase as a function of the intrinsic motive and strength of motivation.

***Pedagogical implications***

A number of pedagogical implications suggest themselves to both teachers and textbook writers. Students' high intrinsic orientation towards learning English needs to be explored by diversifying the sources of input through the use of various reading materials, cassettes, songs, and TV programs. Given the students' marked concern with active learning, more guessing and discovery learning need to be incorporated in the programme, emphasising a learning-centred approach to teaching. Whenever communicative activities are used in the classroom, care should be taken to minimise their shortcomings, and to make sure that students are enjoying them and deriving some benefit from them. The most important implication for teachers is the crucial role they play in: (1) sustaining the interest of motivated students, (2) providing weak, or disaffected students with a sense of success and self-confidence. Evidence from interviews showed that teachers' personality was considered by students to be more important than the method used, and that if students liked English, they would like everything related to that language.

Textbooks, as was mentioned in students' responses to the open-ended question, played a key-role in enhancing students' motivation to learn the TL. First of all, they need to match students' most prominent goals for learning English, namely intrinsic and short-term instrumental orientations, by providing them with a variety of input materials that stimulate rather than frustrate or dampen their motivation. Care should be taken to incorporate materials that facilitate and encourage learning independently from the teacher through the use of grammar explanations, glossaries, and pronunciation practice exercises accompanied with cassettes. The themes and activities should be varied enough to cater for different interest, preferences and specialisations.

## Chapter Nine

### *Conclusions*

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#### 9.1 Preamble

The main aim of this study was to explore the motivation and learning preferences of Moroccan high school learners of English as a foreign language. More specifically, the study sought to investigate the following three areas, and their interrelationship:

1. students' preferred ways of learning in relation to a number of instructional practices,
2. students' sources of motivation (in relation to three dimensions: intrinsic, instrumental and integrative) and strength of motivation (both self-reported and teacher-rated),
3. teachers' views about the usefulness of different instructional practices.

The purpose of this Chapter is to provide a summary of the main results of the study, to draw pedagogical implications for the teaching of English in Moroccan high schools, to highlight the main contributions the study has made to our understanding of foreign language learning, and finally to make some observations concerning the research method used and a number of suggestions for future research.

#### 9.2 Summary of the main results

One of the most interesting findings that emerged from this study was that students' most powerful source of motivation for learning English was intrinsic in nature. The intrinsic motive, or learning English for its own sake, was shown to be highly endorsed by students. It was also significantly correlated with students' strength of motivation, students' levels of motivation, and with a wide range of learning preferences. This would suggest that intrinsically motivated students tended to display a stronger desire to learn English, seemed predisposed to deploy more effort to do so, manifested higher interest in class and also appeared to favour a greater variety of activities. In addition, the intrinsic motive was the source of motivation which accounted most for variation between groups. For example,

females, strongly-motivated students, students coming from higher status schools, and English section students showed a higher endorsement of the *intrinsic orientation* than males, poorly motivated students, those coming from lower status schools and non-English sections, respectively. Such results suggest that, as a source of motivation for learning English, the intrinsic motive seemed to compete with the integrative and instrumental orientations championed by researchers in other parts of the world. It is perhaps interesting to note that the stronger endorsement of the intrinsic motive by highly motivated students and by the highly successful English section students would suggest that there is a link between intrinsic orientation and success, at least in Morocco. More research needs to be done in order to assess the applicability of the intrinsic orientation to other similar contexts, and to evaluate its relationship with success.

The instrumental orientation did emerge in the context investigated, but it was split into two dimensions in the phase 2 research: Long-term instrumental goals, such as using English for science and technology at university, and short-term goals, like getting good baccalaureate grades. With respect to instrumental goals, students seemed to make a distinction between specific long-term goals and general short-term goals for learning English. Evidence in support of this view was that science and mathematics students, who were more likely than the other groups to use English for technological purposes at university or at work, showed higher endorsements of the long-term instrumental orientation.

The integrative orientation was moderately endorsed by students in both phases of the research, and was also split into what I called (see Chapter 8) *social integration*, concerned with interest in native speakers including their character and manners, and *cultural integration*, concerned with knowing about and adopting their culture. Interestingly, social integration was more highly endorsed than cultural integration. This finding contrasts with Gardner's (1985) integrative orientation which encompasses the social and cultural dimensions. One reason for this difference may be that in an EFL learning setting such as Morocco, enjoying contacts with native speakers and having positive attitudes towards them does not necessarily imply that one needs to adopt their culture.

A related point is that, whereas the language in itself was seen as a powerful source of motivation for learning, culture was perceived as the least important source of motivation. Contrary to the general assumption that language cannot be dissociated from its culture, the results of this study suggested that the two were viewed by learners as

distinct potential sources of motivation.

Another interesting finding was related to students' motivation for learning the language. Eighty-one per cent of students strongly agreed that they "really wanted to learn English", and 50% strongly agreed that they "wished to take extra classes." In addition evidence from an open-ended question suggested that interest in learning English was high on the respondents' agenda. They repeatedly expressed the need to put English on the same footing as French and to give it more weight on the timetable.

On the question of students' preferences, results across the two phases of the research indicated that students had indeed articulated preferences towards the various learning styles and learning preferences investigated. Certain learning styles were consistently shown to be more popular than others.

Results concerning students' perceptual modality preferences revealed that the students in this study were strongly visual and kinesthetic, but weakly auditory. This suggested that they preferred to learn the language through exposure to the written form of the language, or through body involvement like performing actions, miming, taking notes and drawing. One implication would be that knowing about students' modality preferences could help teachers optimise students' practice and facilitate learning.

As concerns students' instructional preferences, results consistently showed that traditional activities such as grammar explanations/exercises, pronunciation practice, error correction, dictionary use, reading aloud and noting down rules figured among the students' *top priorities*. By contrast, communicatively-oriented activities such as role-play, group work, games and speaking without paying attention to mistakes seemed to be rejected. To use Ellis' (1993) learning style labels, these students tended to be strongly studious but weakly experiential in their approach to learning. From the interviews, it became clear that students perceived grammatical awareness and practice as fundamental to learning any language, and believed that they did not get much out of communicative activities involving pair/group work and role-play.

Interestingly, the teachers' views about the usefulness of these activities were at odds with the students' preferences. Questionnaire and interview data revealed (see Chapter 8) that most teachers seemed to be convinced about the primacy of communicative activities over traditional ones, on the grounds that students learn to communicate through communicative activities.

The pattern of students' preferences was much more complex than it appeared to be

at first sight. Results throughout the two phases consistently showed that students put a high premium on class discussion, but seemed to dislike mechanical activities such as repetition or rote learning. In a sense, they seemed to capitalise more on natural communication with the whole class, under the guidance of the teacher than on artificially contrived activities without teacher guidance. Similarly, they seemed to attach more value to cognitively-oriented activities than to behavioural, audio-lingual practice involving mindless repetition.

Another striking feature of the students' preferences was that they favoured the security of being dependent on teacher correction, control and guidance, but at the same time they seemed to enjoy being actually involved in the learning process though guessing and discovering. Evidence from interview protocols revealed that they did not appreciate teachers who lectured them and imposed everything on them, but did not give them the chance to actively participate and shape the learning experience. They also argued that they enjoyed the challenge of guessing and discovering things for themselves, because this gave them a feeling of achievement and helped them remember better.

Working with songs was another activity that seemed extremely popular among students, because of its powerful effect on learning. Interviewees claimed that the language items they acquired through songs were easily stored and easily retrieved, whenever needed. Yet the questionnaire results suggested that teachers relegated songs to a secondary position, and seemed to attach a higher value to games, group work and discussing pictures which appeared to be among students' least favoured activities.

The students and teachers did not disagree on all topics. They both gave a moderate rating to naturalistic activities involving reading newspapers and books, TV, and cassettes. Less importance seemed to be attached to such activities probably because they could be generally conducted outside the classroom.

The results also revealed various relationships between students' preferences and motivation across different groups of students. The most interesting finding was that strongly motivated students exhibited greater endorsement of all types of learning than did poorly motivated learners. This implies that strength of motivation could be seen as a predictor of greater receptiveness to all types of learning. This claim was supported by teachers and students alike, who argued in the interviews that if students are motivated they prefer everything.

The findings outlined above, particularly in the cases where there was disagreement between teachers and students, suggest the need for a learner-centred approach to teaching

that is likely to meet students' motivational profile and pattern of learning preferences. Likewise, the insights gained from research on individual differences and their impact on learning, presented in Chapter 2 and 3, seem to be particularly relevant to a learner-centred approach to FL education. On the basis of the results that emerged from this study, and the insights gained from the literature review, the purpose of the next section is accordingly to draw a number of implications for language planners, textbook writers and teachers.

### 9.3 Implications for ELT

As was suggested by the data from the open-ended question and the students' interviews, there appears to be a need to give more weight to the teaching of English in *schools, in order to meet students' interest in acquiring a good command of the language and to accommodate students' needs to pursue their higher education through the medium of English.* The subjects themselves suggested that English needs to be started at primary school level or at least in the first year of the secondary school, and more hours need to be allocated to English in high schools.

Another important implication concerns the production of rich and relevant teaching materials that respond to students' needs and goals. The students seemed to be asking for teacher-proof manuals that could be used independently of the teacher, in order to catch up with things they had missed in class, and/or to make more progress. More specifically, they expected the textbook to contain glossaries and guidelines about grammar and pronunciation, as well as aspects of the target language culture. There clearly seems to be a need for the production of more support materials that fosters self-access learning. Another important challenge for materials developers is to produce textbooks geared towards the interests of different groups of students according to the subject area they specialise in. Science students, for example, would perhaps be better motivated by scientific themes that meet their specific purposes for learning the language. Similarly, as was revealed by the interviews, students specialising in English would need higher doses of cultural and literary texts. As was mentioned in Chapter 1, the textbooks used were deculturised by members of the textbook committee, and this does not seem to match students' curiosity about discovering English and American culture.

Whilst textbooks are undoubtedly essential tools for implementing learner-centred programmes, teachers remain the principal actors in catering for students' affective and



psychological needs, and matching their individual preferences and sources of motivation. The focus of the next section is to draw implications for the teacher in a learner-centred classroom, based on the results of this study.

Students' intrinsic interest in the language itself may be regarded as an asset to be fully explored by the teacher. There seems to be no limit to the amount of input that intrinsically motivated students would be prepared to consume, as long , of course, as their learning is not hindered. One of the easiest and probably the least demanding way to help such students is to facilitate their access to a diversity of reading or listening materials, and to encourage them, for example, to write summaries, to exchange letters/messages with peers and to give short talks regularly on topics of their interest. Establishing contacts, correspondence and exchanges with English-speaking students would probably meet students' social and cultural orientations.

The plight of the disaffected and demotivated students highlighted in Chapter 8 suggests that Moroccan teachers need to be aware of the impact they might have on their *students' motivational levels*. *One of teachers' key roles is to develop students' self-efficacy and self-confidence, which are at the heart of students' motivation*. This can be done, for example, by assigning students relevant and achievable goals and tasks, which are more likely to lead them to experience success, self-satisfaction, and as a result to seek more rewarding learning opportunities. Another way of stimulating learners' motivation is by showing them that effort generally leads to success and achievement, and bringing home to them that success is within their control. There is also a need for the teacher to go beyond the traditional way of reinforcing students' performance through extrinsic rewards such as praise, and to guide them towards seeking more durable inner rewards.

In a learner-centred approach to FL education, it is essential for the teacher not only to enhance students' motivation, but also to cater for their affective and psychological needs that appear to be closely related to motivation, such as need for security, self-confidence, self-esteem, acceptance, belonging and achievement. The interviews revealed, for example, that the students who felt neglected by the teacher, or threatened by the fear of making mistakes, tended to withdraw into silence and isolation.

In order to alleviate the plight of the disaffected students, the teachers could perhaps adopt a more humanistic approach to teaching by being tolerant of students' mistakes, praising their efforts, establishing a positive relationship with them and showing concern for them as human beings. Learning cannot, in my view, take place when students are busy

defending themselves or when they feel anxiety or rejection; it is only when students are motivated and when their affective and psychological needs are met that teacher instruction can work properly.

Having suggested implications for enhancing students' receptiveness to learning, more implications may be drawn in relation to students' learning preferences. The analysis in Chapter 8 indicated that one of students' most highly preferred ways of learning that needs to be emphasised by teachers is what was referred to as active learning. This would involve, in particular, the use of guessing and discovery for two main purposes in the classroom: (1) as a device for stimulating students' interest in reading or listening to a passage, by raising their expectations and predictions about a particular topic or issue; or (2) as a means for speeding up the learning process by activating students' background knowledge about a particular point, in order to facilitate, for example, the link between old and new information. In this respect, extrapolating from schema theory (Hudson, 1982 and Carrell 1987) a guessing task is likely to instantiate (activate) schemata or open slots in learners' cognitive structure, which could help them capture incoming information more efficiently.

Students' high preferences for studial learning, characterised essentially by an interest in grammar, reflects their concern about understanding the mechanisms and intricacies of the language which they thought gave them more self-confidence in using the language. As was seen in Chapter 2, in a FL instructional context, where exposure to the language is normally limited to the classroom, conscious awareness of grammar can serve as a short cut towards the establishment of automatic routines in processing the language. Under such conditions, it would seem quite legitimate to provide students with the grammatical awareness they need. However, grammar needs to be taught not as an end in itself, but more as a means of clarifying meaning, especially for learners who are intolerant of ambiguity. In addition, grammar teaching need not be divorced from the sort of active learning discussed in the previous paragraph or the teaching of communicative functions. The link between grammatical exponents and their corresponding communicative functions can easily be highlighted through examples of meaningful and authentic stretches of language.

It was noted in Section 2 that using songs was highly popular with the students, and this needs to be fully explored by teachers, because it is likely to reduce tension in the classroom, lower students' affective filter and facilitate intake by the learner. The use of songs also allows the integration of all the language skills.

Students' perceptual learning modality preferences were shown to be predominantly

visual and kinesthetic, but weakly auditory. An important implication of this is that students should not be deprived of the benefit of their dominant modes of accessing input. For example, they should not be expected to rely on the ear alone at the presentation stage of language items, as this may frustrate them and perhaps interfere with their learning. In other words, for optimal learning to take place, these students need to make use of their visual and kinesthetic strengths, for example, by being exposed to the printed form, by acting, taking notes, or drawing. This does not mean, of course, that students' less dominant modes should be neglected. Students who are weak at the auditory mode need to work harder at this modality by practising listening in a non-threatening situation.

The challenge for the teacher is not only to fully explore students' most favoured activities, but also to develop strategies on how to use students' least favoured activities in a most effective way. For example, naturalistic activities like reading were just moderately appreciated by the students, probably because they were perceived to be daunting. In this case, the teacher's role is to demystify reading by assigning students reading tasks tailored to their levels and interests, and providing them with a stimulating purpose for reading. Similarly, in conducting communicative activities, the teacher has to ensure that students are actually stimulated and actively engaged, and that they have the language support needed to perform successfully.

## **9.4 Contribution to knowledge and understanding**

This study was the first of its kind, conducted in a Moroccan setting, that sought to explore what motivates students to learn English and how they prefer to learn it. The results that emerged contribute to our understanding of FL learners and FL learning in a number of ways. In the first place, it shows that FL learners may exhibit a well articulated, and coherent pattern of learning preferences: a pattern that they perceive as both enjoyable and useful. This reinforces the view that students differ in the way they prefer to learn a FL. Their preferences do not stem from any informed knowledge about any theoretical or methodological trend; rather, they are determined by factors such as personality type, perceived goals and needs for learning the language, and personal beliefs about how languages are learnt based on every day experience with learning. This is perhaps the reason why the pattern of students' learning preferences is at odds with what their teachers think is most useful for them. Teachers are inevitably guided in their views and options by

textbook instructions, exam requirements, inspectors' recommendations, and workshop directions, sometimes more than they are influenced by students' preferences. In the classroom, for example, teachers might be busy conducting a particular activity in a particular way, at a time when students might be expecting something different. This discrepancy in perspectives between teachers and students suggests that the gap between learning and instruction is perhaps bigger than one might imagine, and that a learner-centred approach can bring teachers and learners closer together and even facilitate learners' intake.

Another important contribution concerns our understanding of FL motivation. Students' motivational orientations are clearly context-specific, in the sense that models developed in one country may not fully apply to other educational contexts. More specifically, in the context investigated, neither the integrative motive championed by Gardner in Canada, nor the instrumental orientation as highlighted by Lukmani in India, appear to be the most important goal for learning English. In the Moroccan context, the *intrinsic motive seems to be the most powerful source of motivation* for learning the language, and also a significant predictor of strength of motivation and higher levels of classroom motivation.

In Gardner's (1985) model of motivation, the role of intrinsic motivation was played down, or perhaps partly assimilated into the integrative motive under the form of 'attitudes to the target language'. The present study clearly shows that the intrinsic orientation and the cultural orientation are at opposite extremes on a scale of student endorsement. The intrinsic motive gets the highest endorsement, and the cultural integration gets the lowest.

Another interesting insight into FL learning is the suggestion that students' preferences are a function of their motivational orientations and their strength of motivation. Evidence shows that motivated students are more likely to be receptive to every type of learning, which reinforces the view that motivation, more than instruction, represents a key factor in FL learning. The role of instruction thus resides primarily in sustaining students' motivation. Yet evidence also suggests that what matters for students is not so much the teaching method as the teacher's personality.

## 9.5 Evaluation of the research methodology and implications for further research

By and large, the research methods used in the present study appeared to be appropriate for the aims of the study. The data collection and data analysis instruments were generally effective in obtaining results and findings which were coherent, congruent with each other and also consistent across the two stages of research.

A number of clear-cut patterns of the students' motivation and learning preferences emerged and appeared to fit well together. The intrinsic motive, for example, was predominant among the students and was shown to be a powerful predictor of students' levels of motivation (self-perceived and teacher-rated), and of a wide range of learning preferences. It was also significantly associated with females, strongly motivated students, students coming from higher status schools, and English section students. By contrast, the cultural orientation was perceived as the least important source of motivation and did not seem to play any significant role in predicting students' preferences or differentiating between groups of students, except for those who were committed to studying English as a subject in itself.

Another coherent pattern of student learning preferences emerged consistently across the two phases of research. The students' dominant learning style was characterised by a concern for grammatical awareness, conscious acquisition, active and cognitive involvement in the learning process, as well as a preference for meaningful and guided communication. Their style also included an emotional dimension, shown by their strong preference for songs and their view that a 'humanistic' teacher is the key to motivation and success. The students' less dominant style was essentially defined by the mechanical, artificial and trivial sort of practice exercises, such as parroting, and some of the 'gimmicks' associated with communicative procedures.

However, it is to be noted that although the research tools used yielded reasonably coherent and consistent results, they were not exempt from problems and difficulties. Clearly, questionnaires, scales and factor analysis matrices are no more than what the researcher feeds into them. The success of a scale, for example, depends to a large extent on whether the items chosen for inclusion are adequately and unambiguously mapped onto the construct to be measured.

Item choice was precisely the major problem I was faced with in this research. Clearly, if an item is misused, too vague, nebulous or ill-formulated it may have detrimental effects on the results. For example, in the phase one research, the item 'I like the musicality of English' was one of the items chosen to operationalise the intrinsic orientation. Evidence suggested that the term musicality was probably misinterpreted by some students as meaning 'something related to music'. The result was that the item in question loaded on the intrinsic orientation factor, and on another factor having to do with songs and films. Similarly, in the phase two research, the items 'to learn beautiful expressions' and 'to understand documents' were not fully explicit, and possibly, as a result, each one of them cross-loaded on two different factors. As will be shown below, cross-loading may be inevitable in cases where two or more constructs share the same notion, or naturally overlap with one another. In any case, overlapping constructs or notions are always likely to have an impact on the formation of clusters.

Using factor analysis in order to delineate motivational or learning preference clusters was another source of difficulty. In this respect, the attempt to encapsulate students' instructional preferences into clear-cut patterns or learning styles, using factor analytic procedures seemed to work better with some types of activities than with others. For example, items which typically suggest a studious type of learning tended to cluster together in a consistent way, whereas the items which normally come under the umbrella of the communicative approach did not seem to cluster together across studies. In the phase one research, 'problem-solving', 'games' and 'role-play' all loaded together on the same factor, but in the phase two research, each of these activities loaded separately on three different factors, 'reflective', 'concrete' and 'communicative', respectively. The core of the problem is that although these three activities share some common features with communicative practice, they may also have something in common with other types of learning such as reflective learning or concrete learning. In the phase one research, they clustered together because there were no similar intervening activities with which they could stick together, but in the phase 2 research, a new pattern of clusters emerged, because new items had been added. It seems, then, that altering the chemistry or composition of a questionnaire can affect the way in which items interact with each other, and the nature of the clusters that are formed.

Clearly, scales development is a task fraught with difficulty. With hindsight, I think that it would have been better, especially with the motivational scales, to start with a more

inclusive battery of items that would then be reduced through piloting, item-analysis and item elimination, until optimal results were obtained. However it is worth pointing out that the main aim of the study was not so much to develop new scales as to test the potential of the selected items in uncovering students' motivational orientations.

Questionnaire measurement may present another type of problem to the researcher. Given the imperfect nature of human language and the constrained way in which questionnaires operate, there seems to be a limit to the range and nature of information or attitude that could be assessed through their use. In the present study, only straightforward learning activities that could readily be described through a short statement were selected. Sophisticated activities such as 'scenarios', 'information gap' work or oral composition based on 'fantasy story telling', for example, did not lend themselves to being assessed through questionnaires. In order to evaluate students' preferences towards such activities, class observation needs to be used. In particular, teachers who are involved in action research are perhaps in a better position to assess students' learning preferences with regard to a wide range of instructional practices.

The follow-up interviews conducted in this study lent ample support to the questionnaire results by providing more evidence for students' motivation and preferences. However, the interviews seemed to work better with some individuals than with others. Certain students, for example, were more articulate than others and elaborated more on their responses. Interviewees also differed in the weight or emphasis they gave to a given question. This variation in response sometimes made it difficult to draw general or accurate conclusions when reporting on the results.

In order to gain more insightful and richer data from the interviews, it would have been better, ideally, to wait until the questionnaire data had been completely analysed and fully interpreted before establishing the interview schedules and starting the interviews. This would perhaps have provided more informed guidance as to what questions to ask of students. In practice, however, this was simply not a feasible option, if only for reasons of time.

*In conclusion*, all the data collection, and data analysis instruments used in the present study were generally very useful in providing insights into Moroccan EFL students' motivations and preferences. Furthermore, as was suggested throughout the discussion above, the process was at least as important as the product.

However, more work needs to be done to improve the scales that were shown to be

less reliable, such as the short-term instrumental orientation. Similarly, the split between social and cultural orientations needs to be further investigated to find out whether this dichotomy reflects the existence of more finely-grained constructs underlying the integrative orientation. More research also needs to be carried out in order to identify the link that may exist between the intrinsic motive and achievement in FL learning, and to examine the relationship between students' leaning preferences, their cognitive style and their personality types. Teachers involved in action research would then perhaps be in a better position to investigate students' learning preferences with particular reference to the actual activities they use with their students in the classroom.



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## Appendices

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### APPENDIX A (Preliminary study one)

#### QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION 1: Est-ce que le prof. d'anglais fait avec vous les activités suivantes ?  
 Veuillez cocher la case qui correspond à la fréquence de chaque activité.

	souvent	de temps en temps	rarement
1. Les élèves participent à des discussions en classe.			
2. Les élèves travaillent à deux.			
3. Les élèves travaillent en groupe.			
4. Le prof. explique la grammaire.			
5. Le prof. organise des jeux.			
6. Les élèves répètent les phrases du prof.			
7. Les élèves apprennent des phrases ou des dialogues par coeur.			
8. Deux élèves jouent différents rôles et pratiquent un dialogue ensemble.			
9. Le professeur fait écouter des chansons en classe.			
10. Le prof. apprend aux élèves à prononcer des mots.			

SECTION 2: Comment préférez-vous apprendre l'anglais ? Veuillez **cocher** la case qui correspond à votre préférence.

	très utile	assez utile	peu utile	pas du tout utile	pas d'opinion
1. Participer à des discussions en classe.					
2. Comprendre des règles de grammaire.					
3. Apprendre à bien prononcer les mots en anglais.					
4. Pratiquer l'anglais à deux en classe.					
5. Apprendre par coeur des phrases ou des dialogues.					
6. Faire des exercices de grammaire.					
7. Participer à des jeux en classe.					
8. Pratiquer l'anglais en groupe.					
9. Ecouter et comprendre des chansons en anglais en classe.					
10. Répéter des phrases après le prof.					
11. Répondre aux questions qui me demandent de trouver la réponse dans le texte.					
12. Comprendre les explications de grammaire du prof.					
13. Ecrire des paragraphes ou des lettres en anglais.					
14. Répondre aux questions qui me permettent d'exprimer mes idées.					
15. Utiliser les mots nouveaux dans des phrases.					
16. Apprendre l'anglais en faisant des jeux.					
17. Lire et comprendre des textes ou des histoires en anglais.					
18. Ecouter et comprendre les textes que le prof. lit en classe.					

JE PREFERE:	beaucoup	assez	un peu	pas du tout	pas d'opinion
19. Comprendre les règles de grammaire.					
20. Demander au prof. de corriger mes fautes.					
21. Faire des exercices de grammaire.					
22. Suivre des programmes en anglais à la radio ou à la télévision.					
23. Discuter en anglais en classe.					
24. Etudier dans mon livre d'anglais.					
25. Corriger mes fautes moi-même.					
26. Regarder des images qui m'aident à comprendre des mots ou des textes.					
27. Ecouter de l'anglais enregistré sur cassette.					
28. Faire des activités où il faut réfléchir et trouver des solutions.					
29. Recopier les mots nouveaux et les expressions nouvelles dans mon cahier.					
30. Exprimer mes idées sans faire attention aux fautes.					
31. Demander au prof. de corriger mes fautes.					
32. Lire des textes à voix haute.					
33. Avoir la traduction des mots difficiles en arabe ou en français.					
34. Chercher les mots difficiles dans le dictionnaire.					



**SECTION 3: Qu'est-ce qui vous aide mieux à apprendre l'anglais ?**  
 Veuillez **cocher** la case qui correspond à votre préférence.

	tout à fait d'accord	un peu d'accord	pas d'accord	pas du tout d'accord	pas d'opinion
1. Voir les mots écrits, m'aide mieux à les retenir.					
2. Ecouter les mots, m'aide mieux à les retenir.					
3. En classe, j'apprends mieux quand je travaille tout seul.					
4. J'apprends mieux quand je travaille avec d'autres élèves en classe.					
5. J'apprends mieux les phrases en les écoutant.					
6. Je préfère pratiquer l'anglais avec un groupe d'élèves.					
7. J'apprends mieux les phrases en les lisant.					
8. J'apprends mieux quand je fais des choses en classe (dessiner, faire des mots croisés, remplir des cases avec des mots etc...)					
9. J'apprends mieux quand je joue un rôle dans un dialogue, et je le pratique avec un autre élève.					
10. En classe, j'apprends mieux l'anglais quand je pratique tout seul.					
11. J'apprends mieux en lisant ce que le prof. écrit au tableau.					
12. J'apprends mieux en écoutant ce que le prof. dit en anglais.					
13. J'apprends mieux les mots en les répétant.					
14. J'apprends mieux les phrases en les répétant.					
15. J'apprends mieux les mots en faisant des exercices.					

SECTION 4: Quelles sont les caractéristiques du bon professeur d'anglais ?  
Veuillez **cocher** la case qui correspond à votre choix.

	très important	assez important	peu important	pas du tout important	pas d'opinion
1. Contrôler les élèves et leur montrer ce qu'ils doivent faire.					
2. Aider les élèves à découvrir les choses par eux mêmes.					
3. Créer une ambiance amusante en classe.					
4. Transmettre des connaissances concernant l'anglais.					
5. Pousser les élèves à participer en classe.					
6. Enseigner dans une ambiance sérieuse.					
7. Etre dynamique et plein d'enthousiasme.					
8. Corriger les fautes des élèves.					
9. Contrôler la discipline en classe.					
10. Encourager les élèves par des compliments.					
11. Donner à l'élève un sentiment de sécurité.					
12. Utiliser une grande variété d'activités en classe.					
13. Etre sympathique avec les élèves.					
14. Encourager les élèves à apprendre par eux mêmes.					
15. Donner beaucoup de devoirs à faire à la maison.					

SECTION 5: Pour quelles raisons apprenez-vous l'anglais ? Pour chacune des raisons suivantes, veuillez **cocher** la case qui correspond à votre choix.

	très important	important	peu important	pas du tout important	pas d'opinion
1. Pour connaître la culture anglaise.					
2. Pour avoir de bonnes notes au Bac.					
3. Pour apprendre des chansons.					
4. Pour étudier à l'université.					
5. Pour correspondre en anglais.					
6. Pour connaître la culture américaine.					
7. Pour utiliser l'anglais pour mon travail plus tard.					
8. Pour voyager à l'étranger.					
9. Parce que j'aime l'anglais.					
10. Parce que j'aime le cours d'anglais.					
11. Parce que connaître l'anglais, est le signe d'une bonne éducation.					
12. Pour copier les bons aspects de la culture anglaise ou américaine.					

**APPENDIX B (Preliminary study two)****QUELLE EST L'IMPORTANCE DE L'ANGLAIS POUR VOUS ?**

Veillez évaluer l'importance des raisons suivantes en **cochant la case** qui correspond à votre choix.

<b>J'APPRENDS L'ANGLAIS:</b>	<b>Très important</b>	<b>Assez important</b>	<b>Un peu important</b>	<b>Pas important</b>
1. Pour connaître la culture et le mode de vie des Anglais ou des Américains.				
2. Pour pouvoir apprécier les chansons ou les films en anglais				
3. Pour avoir de bonnes notes au Bac.				
4. Pour parler l'anglais avec un bon accent.				
5. Pour s'informer de ce qui se passe dans le monde.				
6. Parce que j'aime l'anglais.				
7. Parce que j'aime la musicalité de la langue anglaise.				
8. Pour étudier à l'université.				
9. Parce que l'anglais m'intéresse beaucoup.				
10. Parce que j'aime apprendre et utiliser de belles expressions en anglais.				
11. Pour correspondre, avoir des contacts ou des amitiés avec des Anglophones.				
12. Pour avoir plus de chances de trouver du travail.				
13. Pour copier les bons aspects de la culture et du développement des pays Anglophones.				
14. Pour pouvoir apprendre l'informatique.				
15. Pour voyager et connaître les pays Anglophones.				

**COMMENT PREFEREZ-VOUS APPRENDRE L'ANGLAIS ?**

Veillez évaluer les activités suivantes en cochant la case qui correspond à votre choix.

<b>JE PREFERE:</b>	Beaucoup	Assez	Un peu	Pas du tout
1. Comprendre les explications de grammaire du prof.				
2. Participer à des discussions en classe.				
3. Ecouter et comprendre des chansons en classe.				
4. Chercher les mots difficiles dans le dictionnaire.				
5. Pratiquer la conversation en anglais avec d'autres élèves.				
6. Ecouter de l'anglais à la radio ou à la télévision.				
7. Faire des activités en classe où il faut réfléchir et trouver la solution à un problème.				
8. Apprendre à bien prononcer les mots.				
9. Exprimer mes idées en anglais sans faire attention aux fautes.				
10. Apprendre l'anglais en faisant des jeux.				
11. Jouer un rôle dans un dialogue et le pratiquer avec un autre élève.				
12. Faire des exercices de grammaire.				
13. Apprendre par coeur des dialogues.				
14. Lire des livres ou des histoires en anglais.				
15. Apprendre la conjugaison des verbes.				
16. Faire très attention aux fautes avant de parler.				
17. Répéter les phrases après le Prof.				
18. Faire des projets et des exposés en classe.				

**APPENDIX C (Phase two research)****STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE****POUR QUELLES RAISONS APPRENEZ-VOUS L'ANGLAIS ?**

Veillez évaluer chacune des raisons suivantes en **cochant** la case qui correspond à votre choix.

<b>J'apprends l'anglais</b>	<b>Tout à fait d'accord</b>	<b>Assez d'accord</b>	<b>Un peu d'accord</b>	<b>Pas du tout d'accord</b>
1. Pour connaître la culture anglophone.				
2. Pour s'informer de ce qui se passe dans le monde.				
3. Parce que j'aime l'anglais.				
4. Pour comprendre la façon de vivre des anglophones.				
5. Parce que l'anglais peut me servir dans mon travail plus tard.				
6. Parce que l'anglais m'intéresse beaucoup.				
7. Pour faire la connaissance d'anglais ou d'américains.				
8. Pour avoir de bonnes notes au Bac.				
9. Parce que l'anglais a une prononciation agréable à entendre.				
10. Parce que mes chanteurs/mes écrivains préférés sont anglais ou américains.				
11. Pour apprendre et utiliser de belles expressions en anglais.				
12. Parce que l'anglais peut me servir dans mes études supérieures.				
13. Parce que j'aime le caractère et les manières des anglophones.				
14. Pour parler l'anglais avec un bon accent.				
15. Pour s'informer des développements scientifiques et technologiques.				
16. Pour copier les bons aspects de la culture anglophone.				
17. Pour comprendre des documents ou des références écrits en anglais.				
18. Pour parler l'anglais couramment comme les anglais ou les américains.				
19. Pour visiter les pays anglophones.				

## COMMENT PREFEREZ-VOUS APPRENDRE L'ANGLAIS ?

Veillez évaluer vos préférences pour chacune des activités suivantes en **cochant** la case qui correspond à votre opinion.

<b>JE PREFERE :</b>	<b>Beaucoup</b>	<b>Assez</b>	<b>Un peu</b>	<b>Pas du tout</b>
1. Ecouter des chansons en anglais, et le Prof. explique les paroles.				
2. Faire des jeux où il faut poser des questions, deviner, ou trouver la solution à un problème.				
3. Parler et participer à la discussion en classe.				
4. Suivre des programmes en anglais à la radio, ou à la télévision.				
5. Jouer un rôle dans un dialogue et le pratiquer avec un autre élève.				
6. Ecouter et comprendre les explications de grammaire du Prof.				
7. Faire des exercices de grammaire.				
8. Répéter oralement les structures grammaticales.				
9. Noter les exemples et les règles de grammaire dans mon cahier.				
10. Lire des textes en anglais à haute voix.				
11. Pratiquer la prononciation de l'anglais.				
12. Pratiquer l'anglais avec un groupe d'élèves.				
13. Pratiquer l'anglais avec un autre élève.				
14. Pratiquer l'anglais avec toute la classe.				
15. Essayer de découvrir moi-même le sens des mots ou des phrases.				

<b>JE PREFERE :</b>	<b>Beaucoup</b>	<b>Assez</b>	<b>Un peu</b>	<b>Pas du tout</b>
16. Les élèves réfléchissent et trouvent des solutions à un problème discuté en classe.				
17. Les élèves jugent et critiquent les idées contenues dans un texte.				
18. En classe, les élèves parlent de leurs expériences, et de leurs préférences				
19. Ils discutent le pour et le contre d'une question.				
20. Les élèves regardent des images et expriment ce qu'ils ont compris en anglais.				
21. Les élèves discutent une série d'images en classe, ensuite ils écrivent un paragraphe.				
22. Pour expliquer la leçon, le prof. utilise des dessins ou des images.				
23. Pour apprendre l'anglais, je préfère lire des magazines et des journaux en anglais.				
24. Pour apprendre l'anglais, je préfère réviser les règles de grammaire.				
25. Lire des livres/histoires en anglais.				
26. Ecouter des dialogues enregistrés sur cassettes.				
27. Quand je lis en anglais, je préfère deviner le sens des mots.				
28. Je préfère chercher les mots dans le dictionnaire.				
29. Quand je fais des fautes en classe, je préfère d'abord corriger mes fautes moi-même.				
30. Je préfère que le Prof. me corrige.				
31. En classe, je préfère parler l'anglais sans faire attention aux fautes.				
32. Je préfère faire attention aux fautes avant de parler.				



Veillez exprimez franchement votre opinion sur les efforts que vous faites pour apprendre l'anglais, en **cochant** la case qui correspond à votre opinion.

	Tout à fait d'accord	Assez d'accord	Un peu d'accord	Pas du tout d'accord
1. Franchement, je ne fais pas beaucoup d'efforts pour apprendre l'anglais.				
2. Vraiment, je ne veux pas apprendre l'anglais.				
3. Pour moi, apprendre l'anglais est une perte de temps.				
4. Je n'aime pas faire les devoirs d'anglais.				
5. Personnellement, j'adore travailler l'anglais.				
6. J'essaie toujours de travailler dur en anglais.				
7. A la maison, je commence d'abord par réviser l'anglais.				
8. Si possible, je voudrais suivre des cours supplémentaires d'anglais.				

Avez-vous une **remarque** personnelle à faire au sujet de l'apprentissage de l'anglais?

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## TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Would you please evaluate the usefulness of each of the following activities to your students by **ticking** the box corresponding to your opinion.

	Très utile	Assez utile	Un peu utile	Pas du tout utile
1. Ecouter des chansons en anglais, et le Prof. explique les paroles.				
2. Faire des jeux où il faut poser des questions, deviner, ou trouver la solution à un problème.				
3. Parler et participer à la discussion en classe.				
4. Suivre des programmes en anglais à la radio, ou à la télévision.				
5. Jouer un rôle dans un dialogue et le pratiquer avec un autre élève.				
6. Ecouter et comprendre les explications de grammaire du Prof.				
7. Faire des exercices de grammaire.				
8. Répéter oralement les structures grammaticales.				
9. Noter les exemples et les règles de grammaire dans mon cahier.				
10. Lire des textes en anglais à haute voix.				
11. Pratiquer la prononciation de l'anglais.				
12. Pratiquer l'anglais avec un groupe d'élèves.				
13. Pratiquer l'anglais avec un autre élève.				
14. Pratiquer l'anglais avec toute la classe.				
15. Essayer de découvrir moi-même le sens des mots ou des phrases.				

	Très utile	Assez utile	Un peu utile	Pas du tout utile
16. Les élèves réfléchissent et trouvent des solutions à un problème discuté en classe.				
17. Les élèves jugent et critiquent les idées contenues dans un texte.				
18. En classe, les élèves parlent de leurs expériences, et de leurs préférences				
19. Ils discutent le pour et le contre d'une question.				
20. Les élèves regardent des images et expriment ce qu'ils ont compris en anglais.				
21. Les élèves discutent une série d'images en classe, ensuite ils écrivent un paragraphe.				
22. Pour expliquer la leçon, le prof. utilise des dessins ou des images.				
23. Pour apprendre l'anglais, je préfère lire des magazines et des journaux en anglais.				
24. Pour apprendre l'anglais, je préfère réviser les règles de grammaire.				
25. Lire des livres/histoires en anglais.				
26. Ecouter des dialogues enregistrés sur cassettes.				
27. Quand je lis en anglais, je préfère deviner le sens des mots.				
28. Je préfère chercher les mots dans le dictionnaire.				
29. Quand je fais des fautes en classe, je préfère d'abord corriger mes fautes moi-même.				
30. Je préfère que le Prof. me corrige.				
31. En classe, je préfère parler l'anglais sans faire attention aux fautes.				
32. Je préfère faire attention aux fautes avant de parler.				