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Working to understand students' perceptions about English classes at school: the importance of affect in language learning

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I touch the future. I teach.

Christa McAuliffe

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Resumo

EPIFANI PINTO, Barbara Mariane; MILLER, Inés K. (orientadora). **Trabalhando para entender as percepções de alunos sobre as aulas de inglês na escola: a importância do afeto na aprendizagem de línguas.** Rio de Janeiro, 2020. 48p. Monografia – Departamento de Letras, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

O objetivo desta pesquisa é investigar o papel do afeto na aprendizagem de línguas, especialmente o inglês como língua estrangeira ou língua adicional. Com o intuito de entender a aprendizagem de língua estrangeira a partir da perspectiva da Prática Exploratória, encontrei orientação em meus *puzzles* ou perguntas instigantes sobre o tema. Integrei essa investigação às minhas aulas e, com a ajuda de Atividades Pedagógicas com Potencial Exploratório, debati com meus alunos as questões que eu buscava entender melhor. Espero que este estudo incentive outros professores a perceberem que podem investigar suas questões locais – como afetividade e outros aspectos sócioafetivos – com seus alunos e, assim, contribuir para as vidas de alunos e professores, além de promover uma maior conscientização a respeito da importância do afeto em ambientes de aprendizagem.

Palavras-chave: Afeto, Aprendizagem de línguas, Aprendizes, Professores.

Abstract

EPIFANI PINTO, Barbara Mariane; MILLER, Inés K. (orientadora). **Working to understand students' perceptions about English classes at school: the importance of affect in language learning.** Rio de Janeiro, 2020. 48p. Monograph – Departamento de Letras, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro/Brazil.

The purpose of this research is to investigate and identify the role of affect in language learning, especially English as a foreign or additional language. In order to understand foreign language learning from this perspective, I engaged in an Exploratory Practice study driven by puzzles or intriguing questions. I integrated my investigation with my teaching with the help of Potentially Exploitable Pedagogic Activities, which allowed my students and myself to discuss the issues I wished to understand better. I hope that this study will encourage other teachers to perceive that they can investigate their local issues – as affectivity and other socio-affective aspects – with their students and, thus, contribute to the lives of language learners and teachers, as well as to raise deeper awareness of the importance of affect in learning environments.

Key words: Affect, Language learning, Learners, Teachers.

Table of Contents

1 - Introduction

Learning a foreign language can be quite easy for some students. But, at the same time, it can be a struggle for others. There are multiple factors that influence students' learning processes such as lack or deficit of attention, anxiety, stress, emotional or psychological problems, the environment, the lesson content, and so forth. Sometimes we can lose interest, concentration, and focus, but this may be a real issue for learners. The lack of interest can affect the learning process, and what is more, it may even become a barrier to learning.

My first contact with English occurred when I was eleven years old. My mother enrolled me in an English Course in São Gonçalo (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) and explained to me that I was supposed to learn a foreign language in order to get good job opportunities in the future. The same seems to be true for my students who are learning English nowadays.

However, the day I met my teacher, the day I came across this language, I started thinking that if I were to become a teacher one day, I would like to be just like Beth. This was her name and she was the sweetest person I had ever met. The way she used to teach, the way she used to behave and seek to understand each student was for sure the teacher I would like to be one day. From that moment on, I realized that English was not only a new activity I would have during the week, but it was also an open window for new perspectives in my life. I did not know I would like to be a teacher yet, but I knew for sure that I wanted to speak and behave just like the way she used to.

Time passed by, I studied, I worked, and later on, I decided to study languages (English and Portuguese) at university. Throughout that period, my memories of teacher Beth remained alive. One day, after one of my presentations, a professor invited me to join his study group in a university extension project on English language teaching. This invitation gave me the opportunity to act as a teacher in an English course, whose target

audience was the neighborhood surrounding the university. The first time I entered the classroom and started teaching, I knew that was exactly what I really wanted to do for the rest of my life, so I decided to dedicate myself to help people speak English in the best possible way. I would always base this decision on the experience I had over the several years I have spent studying this language.

Learning a new language used to be a great pleasure for me, and, so far, teaching has been too. By the time I started teaching I had several issues to solve in my mind. How could I engage my students? How could I make them interested in learning? What could I do to have them speak English? And I cannot fail to mention that affection was the most important factor for the answers. As a teacher, I have always been concerned with promoting a good environment in my classroom, where students could feel comfortable for learning and engage with positive experiences without fear or anxiety. These are my goals as a foreign language teacher and I believe that they might be every teacher's goals in a classroom.

When I first started working with young learners, I felt that it was going to be really difficult but pleasant at the same time, as the results are more noticeable. Regarding the fear of making mistakes, it is important not to generalize, as some kids are not afraid of making mistakes and accept just about everything teachers suggest but there are other who are afraid of making mistakes, maybe because they feel the pressure of being bullied and the embarrassment or the fear of failure. More recently, since 2018, I have been working with two private students: a 13-year-old teenager and a 10-year-old pre-teen, with whom I could learn by paying attention to their complaints about their English classes at school. This encouraged me to rethink my classes and explore this area. Soon I decided to try to understand how and why affectivity affects teaching and especially the learning process, which involves learning needs.

The puzzle I investigated in this study emerged during these students' private classes. Carol and Cadu both live in Niterói and study in private schools. Carol is 10 years old and is a beginner student; Cadu is 13 years old and is a pre-intermediate student. In this research, I assumed

Exploratory Practice as a pedagogic framework and worked with a Potentially Exploitable Pedagogic Activity (PEPA), which helped me look for deeper understandings about my puzzle.

According to Allwright (2005, p. 361), "Exploratory Practice (EP) is an indefinitely sustainable way for classroom language teachers and learners, while getting on with their own learning and teaching, to develop their own understandings of life in the language classroom". EP has been developed to help understanding the quality of language classroom life rather than problem-solving. EP is a tool for reflection upon the role of educators and learners, observing and trying to understand, raising awareness of the issue itself. As a learning teacher, I try to understand these questions by paying attention to my students and by turning our reflections and understandings into learning opportunities.

In this study, affect is understood as the interpersonal relations built through experiences. These interactions are established between people involved in all parts of the learning process: behaviors, intentions, values, and feelings that naturally affect relationships, which are also seen as important parts of social, cognitive and affective development. In our globalized and modern society, learners experience a time of instability of affective relationships. Most children and adolescents feel insecure and vulnerable in the face of often unstructured family relationships, which in some ways end up hindering the learning process, which is the focus of this study.

2 –Literature Review

Learning a Foreign Language requires more than mastering grammar rules or fluency. This process requires interactions among other learners and the teacher. As the main purpose of language learning is to communicate effectively, learners tend to be aware to their performance to avoid mistakes and embarrassment. These feelings can lead learners to discouragement and the belief of failure regarding the learning of a foreign language.

Affection is essential in the learning process. Several authors, such as Paulo Freire, Henri Wallon, among others, have confirmed, over the years, that teaching-learning relationships are based on affective factors. Paulo Freire (1996) stated that affectivity and love permeate pedagogical relationships, as far as we are dealing with human beings constantly involved in learning processes. The development of intelligence, which is inseparable from affectivity, is important in the process of strengthening the knowledge-construction process.

The passion for teaching and learning, usually reported by teachers, is an example of how the affective factor is present in the educational environment, directly influencing such actions. Studies based on the theories of Wallon and Vygotsky have been seeking to understand affective factors, among other aspects, in the teacher-student relationship, its influences and its consequences in the learning process.

The use of terminology regarding affect needs to be addressed. Some authors tend to refer to affect and emotion as if they were synonyms, while others emphasize differences between such concepts. A basic review of the literature suggests that "affect" can be used more broadly, referring to relational, complex and fundamentally human experiences. Furthermore, the term "emotion", on the other hand, can be

found in relation to a biological issue, that is, referring only to a physical change.

Regardless of the different approaches found in the literature, many researchers agree on the important point that these phenomena refer to particular and subjective experiences, which demonstrate the specificities of each subject, that is, they are based on inner experiences rather than facts. Wallon (1971) has vast research in the area of affectivity. This author has always articulated affect with the biological and the social. Wallon is an author who devoted much work to the study of affect, adopting, a social approach to human development. Wallon's studies attribute to emotions an important role in the formation of a human being. The child's relations with the world are, from the very beginning, relationships of sociability, since the child is born. In his words:

> Means of action on the surrounding things, which is why the satisfaction of their needs and desires has to be accomplished through the adult people around them. Therefore, the first reaction systems that are organized under the influence of the environment, emotions, tend to perform, through consonant and contagious manifestations, a fusion of sensitivity between the individual and his entourage. (WALLON, 1971 p. 262)

Therefore, it is important to understand that affect is interlinked to several factors such as influence of the environment and emotions. It is of crucial importance to discuss this element and to pay attention to this in contemporary classrooms, specifying its individual factors, its internal factors, as well as the unfolding of these elements within the school environment.

The theoretical framework of this research is drawn from analyzing the connections among my experiences and emotions concerning my students' language. This section aims at presenting some theoretical background which can contribute to the understanding of the issues to be investigated.

The purpose of this research is to study the students' perceptions of their feelings experienced in their English classes at schools and how

affect can enhance motivation in their learning. Despite the fact that the various definitions for affect are similar, each researcher has a point of view, not only because of the area of study, but also because of their impact. For example, positive affect is necessary, but not enough on its own, for acquisition to take place. This means that for a good learning environment to be created, the teacher should be intent on motivating and engaging students. On the other hand, a low level of anxiety is also necessary for success in language learning.

Concerning teaching, it is necessary to highlight how teachers have been dealing with pedagogical duties and how they are influenced or convinced to adopt some traditional roles, such as holding the absolute authority in the classroom and being the main one responsible for the learning process. Within this perspective, students are conceived as the receivers of knowledge, as "blank slates" who are supposed to follow teachers' instructions to become competent individuals (LARSEN-FREEMAN, 2000). Fortunately, however, educationalists have come to be critical of this model and there has been a propensity to hold alternative views concerning how to manage knowledge-construction and conscientious and meaningful classes (ALLWRIGHT & HANKS, 2009).

Students' needs and expectations started being taken into account through humanistic and constructivist learning approaches, but even nowadays, there is still an attempt to control what happens inside the classroom and a necessity for improving the quality of teachers' work in order to make the learning process meaningful and effective for the learners. Thus, by means of good lesson plans and meaningful and entertaining activities, classes are supposed to become varied and successful.

Many researchers have described studies embodied in values, beliefs, and social relationships that intensify the teaching and learning process. In order to support this research, I resort to Carl Rogers, an American psychologist known for the development of new methods of therapy and for his widely published books, articles, and videos, in which he separated the learning process into two types: cognitive, which is the

academic knowledge and experiential, which is applied knowledge. According to Rogers (1969, p. 157) "all human beings have a natural propensity to learn, and the role of the teacher is to facilitate such learning". It means that a positive climate for learning should be settled, and he emphasized processes rather than results, which means that affective classrooms, self-confidence, and trust have a positive association in the learning process. This author claims that the learning process happens as a consequence of self-interest and that it involves feelings as well as cognition, which sometimes tends to be extensive and fixed.

Michalinos Zembylas (2003), a Professor of Educational Theory and Curriculum Studies at the Open University of Cyprus, has written about emotion and affect in relation to social justice pedagogies, intercultural and peace education, human rights education, and citizen education. Zembylas argues that affect in education enhances the engagement and the learning process. The author also addresses the significance of teachers' emotions in the construction of their identity and formation as teachers.

Brazilian researchers have also been studying affect and emotions in the field of teacher education, such as Ana Maria Ferreira Barcelos from Universidade Federal de Viçosa, and Rodrigo Camargo Aragão from Universidade Estadual de Santa Cruz, support the theories of affection in teachers' education process under the light of Paulo Freire's conception of loving-kindness[1] in learning process. Barcelos (2010a) decided to investigate her own practice while she as conducting an education program for English teachers – PECPLI[2]. According to the stories shared by the participants, confidences and emotions made her reflect her own practice as a teacher trainer, the researcher wanted to understand her role in the project and understand how her emotions were related to those who were participating in it. Barcelos (2010a) perceived that her experiences on teachers' emotions were confused with her own emotions and all of this helped her rethink her own actions and practice. The present research

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[1] In Freire's wording in Portuguese, "amorosidade".
[2] PECPLI - Projeto de Educação Continuada para Professores de Língua Inglesa.

study illustrates the importance of teachers' emotions in their attempt to construct a better learning environment.

The humanistic approach to teaching languages was also determined by the so-called alternative methods, like the Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning and Total Physical Response. Thus, currently, the teaching of languages with humanistic tendencies has established itself as one of the significant areas in Second Language (L2) studies. Generative linguists have also supported these humanistic approaches. The focus on the learner was a reaction to behaviorism, which believed that language acquisition was the result of mechanical and conditioned responses.

According to Arnold (1998), although much has been written about humanist approaches, it is not easy to make a brief description about them, but it is necessary to relate some important things. We need to consider the learner as mind and body. The emotional side of the learner must be especially considered as an important aspect towards an effective teaching process. Therefore, motivation, self-esteem, and anxiety are some of the concerns for humanist language teachers, which we are going to talk about the next sections, "affect has to do with aspects of our emotional being" (ARNOLD AND BROWN, 1999, p.1).

The learner's own experience is seen as one of the main resources for language learning, and what is learned is more important than what is taught, which means that the role of the teacher is not only to transfer knowledge, but rather to facilitate the learning process. Thus, working with learning strategies and learners' autonomy are tools to achieve success in the process of teaching and learning. It is important to be concerned with creating a safe and engaging learning atmosphere, in a way that helps students to feel confident with the use of the language. Thus, the student is a better learner when he is predisposed, when he feels confident and when he is interested. The learning process can be attributed to the development of human potentials and values that are individually and socially useful.

As I mentioned when I discussed my interests in the scope of affective factors in language teaching, I find it necessary to study the importance of the work of English Language teaching and learning provided in the official documents. The use of strategies for foreign language teaching according to the Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais, or simply PCNs (BRASIL, 2006, p. 91) point out that:

> […] the subject Foreign Languages at school aims to teach the language and, at the same time, fulfil other commitments with students, such as contributing to the formation of individuals as part as educational concerns […]

According to what is stated by the Foreign Languages PCNs, the formation of the individual learner is one of the roles of Education and, with regard to English Language teaching in our global society, where English is the language that is important to the construction of globalization (MOITA LOPES, 2008), teaching English, or at least teaching some notions of this language means to contribute to the construction of a citizen. In order to do this, it is essential to highlight the role of affectivity and its influence on the teaching-learning of English, considering affective factors in their different conceptions.

3 – Affective Factors in Teaching-Learning Processes

Affectivity is the capacity to experience the set of affective phenomena as emotions, passions and other feelings. This means that affectivity is related to the aspects of emotions and the attitudes which influence our behavior (ARNOLD, 2006). As mentioned earlier, the affective factor can also be defined as a psychological state of a human being and may or may not be modified by experienced situations. This helps us understand how important affection is to any experience we go through. In the case of this research, it is extremely important when the student is going through learning a foreign language, which is a totally different experience in his life.

Arnold and Brown (1999, p. 1) argue that the term affection has a close relationship with aspects of our emotional condition, but that there is a huge difficulty in defining the concept. It can be found considering affect as broad aspects of emotion, feeling, temperament and attitude that condition behavior and affect learning.

> It should be noted that the affective side of learning is not in opposition to the cognitive side. When both are used together, the learning process can be constructed on a firmer foundation. Neither the cognitive nor the affective has the last word, and, indeed, neither can be separated from the other. (ARNOLD AND BROWN (1999, p. 1)

However, the school environment is not the only one to interfere with students' behavior. The student as a part of society has other influences and other concerns, especially from family. The latter has a primary role in the emotional balance of the subject since childhood as well as in the development of affective aspects throughout life. It is not difficult to perceive the difficulties generated by the presence of negative affective factors during the learning process. With respect to teaching foreign languages, in general, and English Language in special, the affective factor is considered to be of great importance and this is

perceived by students in the interactions or negative affect during classes. The difficulties are the lack of attention, anxiety, shyness in using the foreign language with confidence and even the lack of interest in learning the language itself, which can culminate in the distancing of learners in the teacher-student relationship.

Affectivity changes through the development of the child's knowledge. The human being learns through culture and interaction with the people around him. This feeling is the motivating agent of a cognitive scheme. According to Piaget (1977), affectivity would be the energy that moves the action, while the reason would be what enables the subject to identify desires, varied feelings, and succeed in actions. Affect in education is a theme that ought to be discussed more in the educational context, because teachers should know how to deal better with themselves and with others. Knowing more about affective aspects is important to improve interaction with our students.

According to Wallon (1971), affectivity cannot be dissociated or disregarded. As mentioned in the previous section, affective aspects should be considered a powerful tool in the teaching process. Apart from all the technological advances and the transformations in society, affectivity has stood out in social relations, either by its positive or negative aspects, especially in school environments.

Although teaching a foreign language can be arduous, it is very pleasurable when we get positive results from our learners. For various reasons, we may not achieve the expected goals, especially if we understand that factors such as motivation, anxiety, self-esteem and self-confidence, attitude, personality, etc. are perhaps those that most influence success or failure. According to Brown (1994), if we were to come up with theories of acquisition of L2 or teaching methods that were based solely on cognitive considerations, we would be omitting the most important side of human behavior. The concepts discussed in Carl Rogers' studies had substantial effect on one of the most well-known and innovative language teaching methods, which has gained a prominent place during the last two decades.

The issue of affectivity is a theme approached by the area of Applied Linguistics by authors such as Arnold and Brown (1999), Zembylas (2003), Barcelos (2010), Rogers (1969), among others. Based on these studies, the present research is an attempt to understand the causes of difficulty in learning related to the emotional aspects, as well as to show the balance between affective and cognitive conditions in the process of teaching/learning of a foreign language, and investigate the affective relationships in this process.

The individual factors in teaching-learning a foreign language are related to the individuals' personality. Among the factors that interfere in the entire learning/teaching process, we can mention anxiety, inhibition, frustration, insecurity and fear.

3.1 – Anxiety

Anxiety, which is related to feelings of frustration, fear, apprehension and tension, may be associated with an unconscious psychological cause. Arnold and Brown (1999) state that anxiety may be a negative factor which interferes with the learning process. In the language classroom environment, anxiety is related to the fear of performing in the foreign language and also to the apprehension about not succeeding as expected. Learners are exposed to the evaluation of the teachers and to their peers' views. This tension generates more diverse feelings linked to anxiety.

> Heron (apud Arnold and Brown, 1999) refers to what he terms existential anxiety, which arises out of a group situation and has three interconnected components that are relevant to the language classroom: "Acceptance Anxiety". Will I be accepted, liked, wanted?... "Orientation anxiety". Will I understand what is going on?... "Performance Anxiety". Will I be able to do what I have come to learn? (HERON, 1989, p. 33 *apud* ARNOLD and BROWN 1999).

It is important to understand that the teacher's role in the process of learning is not only identifying, but also trying to reduce the level of anxiety in classroom settings, creating a favorable learning atmosphere.

MacIntryre and Gardner (1991, p. 86) state that before examining the studies directly related to anxiety and language learning, it is interesting to outline three perspectives under which anxiety has been investigated in different areas, including in the context of language learning. These authors proposed three approaches to the study of anxiety, which are: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. Within the first one, anxiety is considered as a general trait of personality that becomes relevant in various situations, refers to a tendency to respond with anxiety to perceived threats in the environment, and is a relatively stable characteristic of an individual. The second perspective, state anxiety, reflects a transitory emotional state or a condition that is characterized by subjective, consciously perceived feelings of tension and apprehension. State is momentary and thus not an enduring characteristic of an individual's personality. The third perspective, the situation-specific anxiety, reflects a trait anxiety that recurs consistently over time within a given situation and is limited to a specific context. This perspective examines anxiety reactions in a "well-defined situation" such as public speaking, during tests, when solving logic problems, or in a foreign language class (MACINTYRE & GARDNER, 1991, p. 90).

These approaches to the study of anxiety help us understand that the anxiety that students may feel is related to the necessity to communicate or to perform in a foreign language class. This feeling of anxiety usually is heightened or decreases, depending on the activity and on the approach of the teacher and peers, or it gets over as soon as the activity is also over. There are studies on language learning that point out that anxiety may diminish with time (GARDNER, 1981). Notwithstanding, language anxiety may continue over time and students can relate this feeling of expectation with language execution, and, as a result, anxiety may turn into a more recurring trait than situation-specific anxiety feeling (GARDNER & MACINTYRE, 1993).

Some researchers working in the area of Foreign Language Learning (HORWITZ, 1986; MACINTYRE & GARDNER, 1989, 1991a) identified three components of anxiety:

- Seizure of communication, which arises from the learners' inability to properly express their thoughts and ideas.
- Fear of negative evaluation, which arises from the learners' need to make a positive social impression on others.
- Test anxiety or apprehension in academic evaluation.

Other works on Foreign Language inspired by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991a, 1991b, 1991c) and other researchers like Young (1991) and Phillips (1992) have collaborated by giving us useful information on this issue. Such studies conclude that "anxiety in Foreign Language learning can be distinguished from other types of anxiety, and that it can have a negative effect on the language learning process" (MACINTYRE & GARDNER, 1991, p. 112). Anxiety is certainly the most researched affective variable in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Foreign Language Learning (FLL).

3.2 – Inhibition

In the context of language classes, inhibition occurs when students are often able to write a good essay or elaborate a project, but more frequently, teachers come across inhibited students. This situation is common in our classrooms, especially because these inhibited students are not able to perform tasks in which they are supposed to expose themselves to the group of classmates.

According to Brown (1994), the concept of inhibition is closely related, and constantly even confused with the notions of self-esteem. People with high self-esteem have more capacity to overcome threats to their existence, and therefore their defenses become lower. Thus, those with low self-esteem create barriers of inhibition to protect what is self-

perceived as being a weak or fragile ego or lack of self-confidence in a specific situation or task.

Arnold and Brown (1999) claim that making mistakes is implicit in learning languages. According to the authors, we make mistakes while learning our mother tongue, but we are not capable to avoid them when we learn a second language or a foreign language. When we were kids, we were not inhibited and therefore we could participate freely in the learning challenges, risking whenever necessary. There are studies that say that young learners are more capable to learn a new language, because they are not afraid of making mistakes.

Young learners have fewer inhibitions. It is common sense that learning English is much easier when the learner is comfortable, making mistakes and sounding foolish, a hurdle that makes most adults extremely anxious. Young learners are not judged in the way adults are, so they do not receive, or give themselves, as much negative feedback when they make mistakes. They also are not tested the way older children would be, so there is less pressure. The learning process is more playful and natural.

Inhibition develops when children learn to identify an ego which is distinct from the others and their affective traits begin to form. Along with the awareness, comes the need to protect a fragile ego, avoiding anything that could prove to be a threat to that ego. The weaker the ego, the higher the barriers to inhibition. Language teaching approaches have taken into consideration the need to create learning situations in which inhibition and barriers are reduced, so that communication can happen more naturally. Dufeu (1994, p. 89-90), states that it is necessary to establish an affective atmosphere so that learners feel comfortable from the first contact with the foreign language. In his words, "to achieve this, a climate of acceptance should be created that encourages self-confidence and encourages the learner to experiment and discover the target language, taking risks without feeling inhibited". In this point of view, it is important that language teachers be attentive to affective factors at all times of class and, mainly, when it comes to correcting the mistakes of our students.

3.3 – Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence

Self-esteem and Self-confidence are psychological factors that integrate affective domain, they lead us to many questions not only as learners, but also as FL and L2 teachers. Self-esteem is defined by Arnold and Brown (1999) as "a self-judgment of worth or value, based on feelings of efficacy, a sense of interacting effectively with one's own environment". Through our experience, we realize that students with low self-esteem are less self-confident and tend to have more learning difficulties, and according to a great number of researchers used as orientation for this research, have proved the relationship between performing well on language activities and positive esteem. One of the most important points we still question nowadays is whether high self-esteem can cause successful learning or whether it is the product of good performance in FL and L2 learning.

The improvement of self-competence in behavioral sphere is important to contribute positive self-esteem. Whereas, the levels of self-esteem and self-confidence can influence self-efficacy, as it is assumed in stress and coping theories. The relation between self-esteem and learning, takes place in two different directions, which means that we can perform well because we had a positive attitude towards ourselves. On the other hand, we can have a positive attitude in relation to ourselves because we performed well. Several authors present the same opinion as Gardner, Lalonde & Moorcroft (1985). However, Allwright and Bailey (1991) concluded that it cannot be asserted with certainty whether the esteem is a cause of success or the result of this product itself.

As teachers, we believe that by performing a certain task well, the student will have his enhanced self-esteem and, as a result, you will have more confidence in carrying out a new task. Brown (1994, p. 136) points out that self-esteem is probably the aspect that most permeates human behavior, and no cognitive activity or successful affective life can be performed without some degree of self-esteem, self-confidence, self-knowledge and belief in their own ability to do well in some activity. Self-esteem has a great impact on the success or failure of the learner in a

teaching/learning process. This is a decisive factor in the quality of life of those involved in the process of teaching/learning.

3.4 – Motivation

One of the psychological factors that may determine success or failure of the learner of a Foreign Language (FL) is motivation, because it concerns the need, the stimulus, or the desire the learner feels to learn a Foreign Language (FL) or/ and a Second Language (L2). The Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory leaves no doubt of the crucial importance of the variable motivation, which is a group of factors that enhance and give direction to behavior (HILGARD, ATKINSON & ATKINSON, 1979, p. 281). Chomsky (1988) points to the need to activate the motivation of the learner.

The point, according to the author, is that about 99% of the task of teaching is to make students interested in the material. Motivation involves the reasons why the apprentice tries to acquire a second language or a FL, but surely what will create this motivation is the turning point of the issue. According to Arnold and Brown (1999, p. 13), a different type of motivation is not necessarily more effective than another; what matters is the degree of motivation and the firmness the direction it provides that will also depend on other variables within the learner.

In recent years, many researchers have analyzed motivation (BROWN, 1990; CROOKS & SCHMIDT, 1991; TREMBLAY & GARDNER, 1995; WILLIAMS & BURDEN, 1997; among others). In Arnold and Brown's (1999) concern, what is occurring is that there are proposals to explain the motivation in the process of language learning. Scholars give several useful and practical suggestions to motivate the apprentice of L2 and FL. Gardner and Lambert (1972), for example, classified motivation as integrative and instrumental. The first concerns the desire to learn the language to relate and even become part of the target language culture; it refers to a favorable attitude toward the target language community, possibly a wish to integrate and adapt to a new target culture through use

of the language (GARDNER, 1985, p. 54). The second refers to the reasons for language learning practices, accomplishment of a task, or other learning practices such as passing an exam, getting a better job opportunity or job promotion. One of Gardner's main ideas is that the integrative motivation plays an important role in second language acquisition. It is directly and positively related to second language achievement.

The perspectives of the learner have to be considered, because motivation is part of the human being personal sphere. There has to be an attention to understand what learners' motivation is for learning a Second Language/Foreign Language. Neglecting to do so will have an impact on the learner's acquisition and development. There is a difference between instrumental motivation and integrative motivation, which can be summarized as follows:

> Instrumental Motivation: is the learners' interest in learning a language for getting essential qualifications and improving career prospects. Integrative Motivation: is the learners' desire to learn a language so that they can communicate with confidence with a speaking community. (International Journal of Learning and Development, 2018)

In a classroom, there are different mixtures of both types of motivation, depending on their level of development, age, social group, or culture. A good teacher tries to enhance learners' motivation depending on the tasks to be performed. Different realities will require different combinations. Once a stage is reached, a new combination might be required. Motivation cannot be fixed. Thriving teachers know this and seek the right type for their approaches. These teachers also know that different types of motivation play different roles and will engage learners also based on their needs.

3.5 – Extrinsic x Intrinsic Motivation

Considering the studies by Arnold and Brown (1999), the extrinsic motivation stems from the desire to earn a reward or to avoid punishment;

the focus is on something external to the learning itself. Whereas in the case of intrinsic motivation, the learning experience is its own reward. According to Deci and Ryan (1985, p. 245). "Intrinsic motivation is in evidence whenever the student's interest and natural curiosity energizes their learning".

When discussing the most favorable conditions for the development of intrinsic motivation, Deci (1992, p. 60) highlights "the support of autonomy, feedback competence and interpersonal involvement". Research indicates that, while extrinsic motivation may be beneficial, learning is more intrinsic, especially long-term retentions. Researches show that adding extrinsic rewards can reduce motivation. In experimental situations, some participants showed pleasure and efficiency reduced in interesting intrinsic tasks, when an extrinsic reward was shown (KOHN, 1990).

Arnold and Brown (1999, p. 14) state that most schools encourage only the extrinsic motivation, because the focus is on classrooms directed by the teacher, grades, tests and competitiveness, leading students to work to please teachers or authorities, rather than developing a love of knowledge and independent minds. Bruner (1962) talks about "the autonomy of self-reward," arguing that one of the most efficient ways to help children think and learn is to make them aware of controlling rewards and punishments.

It is wise to assume that our language learners will generally have a better chance of success with the development of intrinsic forms of motivation, in which they learn for their own personal motives of achieving competence and autonomy. Although feedback leads to an increased sense of competence and self-determination, extrinsic reward can lead to new intrinsic motivation (BROWN, 1994, p. 39). Therefore, what matters is how learners internalize external aspects, giving them personal meaning (WILLIAMS & BURDEN, 1997).

Thus, we understand that learners can change their type of motivation, as they can be motivated instrumentally and integratively at the same time, and both types can lead to acquiring the language. In fact, we

believe that what is most relevant for the learning of FL and L2 is the efficiency of this motivation and not the type of motivation.

4 - Methodology

The objective of this section is to describe the criteria adopted to choose the context, the participants of this research, as well as the procedures used to generate the data.

As described in the introduction, this monograph aims at analyzing the findings from a case study that involved two of my private students, who attend two different private schools in Niterói. These private students responded to a survey intended to investigate the students' perceptions about their English classes at school and the role of emotions and affection in our private lessons.

The data generated through this exploratory case study were analyzed and the theory was used to seek for deeper understandings about the role of affection in the teaching-learning contexts of the two students. The relevance of this study is to explore the perceived understandings of two pre-teenagers and contribute to broader understandings of emotions and tensions like anxiety and discomfort, which are part of the learning process.

4.1 – Type of Research

Working within a qualitative paradigm, this research is concerned with the question of affectivity in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language and is guided by the theoretical and methodological framework of Exploratory Practice (ALLWRIGHT; HANKS, 2009; MILLER, 2012; 2013), its principles and the work of the Rio Exploratory Practice Group. This approach helped me find out that it was necessary and possible to understand the context of two of my private students' everyday world, by working with them. In this way, I could use Exploratory Practice in order to generate different perspectives on the important issues they were facing in their school classes.

With the intention of integrating pedagogy and research, we discussed their issues during the last minutes of our classes. These conversations motivated exploratory talks (MORAES BEZERRA; NUNES, 2013), generated by a questionnaire which organized our discussion and guided my search for understandings. The responses to the questionnaire also afforded the construction of deeper understandings about the sustainability of Exploratory Practice, or 'work for understanding' in academic research and teaching (MILLER, 2013), as well as to understand that every teacher is or can be a researcher (ALLWRIGHT, 2016).

4.2 – Exploratory Practice

Exploratory Practice has been developed as a set of standard principles which advances understanding towards teaching/learning issues within the practice rather than prescribing a set of classroom practices (ALLWRIGHT, 2005, p. 353). Exploratory Practice is a form of practitioner research, which highlights the significance of creating opportunities to reflect upon puzzles that emerge from the experiences lived in the classroom/workplace through pedagogical activities (MILLER, 2010, p. 3). Teachers and learners attempt to comprehend their puzzles based on their own social and institutional knowledge looking for understandings rather than trying to solve problems.

The purpose of this research is to enhance my own and my students' perceptions about their complaints about learning English at school. In order to try to understand this, I used the principles of Exploratory Practice. Within the set of the seven principles proposed by Allwright and Hanks (2009, p. 149-155) that follow, two of them refer to quality of life:

Principle 1: 'Quality of life' for language teachers and learners is the most appropriate and central concern for practitioner research in our field.

Principle 2: Working primarily to understand the 'quality of life', as it is experienced by language learners and teachers, is more important than, and logically prior to, seeking in any way to improve it.

Principle 3: Everybody needs to be involved in the work for understanding.

Principle 4: The work needs to serve to bring people together.

Principle 5: The work needs to be conducted in a spirit of mutual development.

Principle 6: Working for understanding is necessarily a continuous enterprise.

Principle 7: Integrating the work for understanding fully into existing curricular practices is a way of minimizing the burden and maximizing sustainability.

For data generation, I also found orientation in the principles of Exploratory Practice and used Potentially Exploitable Pedagogic Activities (PEPAs), which are classroom activities that helped me integrate the research into my teaching. Using these activities (BARRETO et al, 2019), I proposed a questionnaire for the learners to respond. The purpose of creating a PEPA was to try to understand my students' complaints about their English classes at school, and moreover to have a better idea about their opinion about how English classes at school could be better. Additionally, four questions to investigate the referred students' complaints were used in order to understand my students' thoughts and opinions concerning the issue. It is also worth mentioning that their answers are presented and discussed in the next section.

Exploratory Practice is a modality of practitioner research in language education, a sustainable way of carrying out classroom investigations which provides language teachers and learners with a systematic framework within which to define the areas of language teaching and learning they wish to explore, to refine their thinking by using pedagogic activities rather than 'academic' research techniques, as investigative tools.

Exploratory Practice was developed in the 1990s by Dick Allwright, former professor in the Linguistics Department at Lancaster University, United Kingdom, at least partly in response to his dissatisfaction with more traditional forms of classroom-based research. EP promotes the idea of teachers and learners puzzling about their language learning and teaching experiences, using "normal pedagogic practices as investigative tools" (ALLWRIGHT, 2003, p. 127). According to Bezerra and Miller (2006), we can recognize Exploratory Practice as a manner of teaching, learning and understanding a particular classroom lifestyle. One important aspect of Exploratory Practice, according to Allwright and Hanks (2009, p.1), is to see learners as "key developing practitioners".

It is common to see the teacher as a practitioner in a language classroom. However, the learner also performs this role. As Allwright and Hanks (2009, p.2) explain, "teachers are officially in charge of the practice of language teaching in the classroom, but they ought to leave the actual practice of the language learning to the learners." Therefore, learners are as important practitioners as teachers. These authors claim that the learner is in constant development and this is why they use the notion of key developing practitioner. Aligned with Allwright and Hanks (2009), Miller, Cunha and Allwright (forthcoming) reinforce the idea that not only students but also teachers should be considered as learners.

Exploratory Practice acknowledges the fact that not only learners, but also teachers are involved in the accomplishment of mutual understandings (ALLWRIGHT, 2003, pp. 113-114). In an attempt to realize an investigation within the EP approach, Allwright established a few steps for the development of this process. They are not strict prescriptions to be followed; rather, they are ways of getting started and going about the investigation:

1. **The Puzzle**: the first thing to be done is to identify or recognize a puzzle, not as a question to be solved, but as an issue to be understood; refine your thinking about the puzzle area and focus on the selection of a particular topic related to the puzzle area.

2. **The Method**: find an appropriate method to explore the puzzle, it can be pedagogic tasks as group work discussions, survey, role-play, diaries, and poster sessions, as well; adapt the classroom procedure to the puzzle you want to explore; use the procedure in class.

3. **Implications**: at this moment, the students or/and teachers should interpret and reflect on the data collected and identify the implications within the context of the classroom in order to plan accordingly.

Allwright and Hanks (2009, p.2) encompass the word 'key' in their definition because they want to reinforce the concept that the learners "are the only people who can do their own learning". Allwright's influence takes teacher research, action research, and reflective practice (SCHÖN, 1983, 1987) a step further. By incorporating research into pedagogy, Exploratory Practice seeks to handle the issue of the demands of research by dissociating practitioners from their teaching and learning responsibilities. Exploratory Practice emphasizes the logically prior stage of attempting to reach understanding before trying out potential solutions to practical problems.

Within Exploratory Practice, students and teachers are understood as learners. With this in mind, Allwright and Hanks developed a list of propositions about learners, which provide a framework for understanding what Exploratory Practice, what classroom language learning is, and to emphasize that students and teachers are learners. The objective is to create an environment in which "teachers and learners are co-practitioners, and where learners investigate their own puzzles about their own learning lives." (Allwright and Hanks, 2009, p.5)

In order to understand my students' complaints, it was necessary to consider the students as co-practitioners or, sometimes, as practitioners themselves. Thus, the following Five Propositions about Learners (ALLWRIGHT & HANKS, 2009, p. 5-7) systematize some understandings about teachers and students as learners:

1) Learners are unique individuals who learn and develop best in their own idiosyncratic ways.

2) Learners are social beings who learn and develop best in a mutually supportive environment.

3) Learners are capable of taking learning seriously.

4) Learners are capable of independent decision-making.

5) Learners are capable of developing as practitioners of learnin

In order to understand these propositions and put them into practice, it is necessary to consider learners' autonomy and responsibility for their own learning development. It is valuable to understand our students, especially because most part of their daily routine is spent inside the classroom, dealing with their teachers and classmates. Therefore, it is possible to get to know the learners and help them see themselves as unique individuals, with their ability to learn in their own ways. Besides, considering students' differences in society, family and cultural backgrounds, turns them into unique learners. Thus, as teachers, we need to understand that what we offer in order to foster their language development, becomes a variety of learning opportunities for each student in the group. Our classroom might be considered as an area in which learners may work collectively, helping each other in a pleasant environment. Students should also have possibilities to work individually, in pairs, and in groups. It is necessary to provide different strategies for a productive learning environment.

4.3 – The Context and Participants of the Research

The present research took place in two different English language private classes, in Niterói, in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Both private students are middle-class and live in well-known neighborhoods; one, in Itaipu, and the other one, in Icaraí. They study in two different traditional

and well-known schools in Niterói. Both schools are comfortable, well-equipped, with technological resources like whiteboard and projectors, educational software, with classes from early childhood to high-school. The private classes happened in their homes, with all the facilities for a good learning environment.

The two students who participated in the study were chosen on account of some of their complaints about studying English, such as having a large amount of homework and tasks to hand in. Carol, aged 10, was in the 5th grade of Elementary School, where she used to have four 50-minute English classes a week, plus one hour of private English classes with me, reaching the range of more than 4 hours of English classes a week. The other student, Cadu, is a 13-year-old teenager, who was studying in the 7th grade of Elementary School and used to have the same exposure time to English as Carol. But, differently from her, Cadu has Asperger's syndrome, a type of autism, which is characterized by social and communication difficulties and repetitive or restrictive behavior patterns.

Although this research is focused on these two students' perceptions about their English classes at school, it is important to understand that, by working within Exploratory Practice, I consider myself a participant in this study. We were co-practitioners working to understand our classroom lives.

I have been an English Teacher for eleven years. Teaching English was not my first job, as I mentioned earlier, I was motivated by my first English teacher in my childhood and I wished to be a good teacher as she was. The way she used to teach English was so positive that going to the English Course used to be a treat for me. She was friendly and caring towards all the students and English became my favorite subject.

My private students' complaints about their English classes made me try to understand these complaints and led me to think about how to help them turn these complaints into learning opportunities, maximize

their development in their classes and, probably, have a better time in my classes too.

4.4 – Data Generating Activity

A survey based on four open-ended questions and a small conversation about the questions and answers were done with Carol and Cadu indivdually in our private separate lessons. These questions were written in English and explained in their mother language (Portuguese) in order to avoid misunderstandings and allow them to express themselves freely. Carol and Cadu had 15 minutes to answer the questions, which were written in English, although Carol has mixed English with some Portuguese expressions. They also had another 10 minutes to talk about their answers. The expectation was that each private student would answer the questions in different ways. As they do not know each other, they would probably have different perspectives and levels of learning.

4.5 – Procedures and Data Generation

Before handing out the questionnaire in print, I made sure the participants had no objection to participate in this research, I used their real names and I had a conversation with them about this study: I assured them that the information would be strictly confidential, used for research purposes, and that the 'research' would take place within the time of our classes. So, the questionnaire was given to them in the last minutes of class, as I have already mentioned in the Data Generation section. I supervised the time they spent answering and I gave the explanation to all the questions. The questionnaires were returned by the students immediately after they finished giving their answers.

4.6 - The Potentially Exploitable Pedagogic Activity (PEPA)

The process of learning a foreign language requires interaction among other speakers in order to foster an understanding of language and also to improve the knowledge of our own language. Learning a foreign language is much more than learning grammar rules. Every time we ask why people are learning a foreign language, communication is one of the most frequent answers.

I encouraged my students to feel comfortable during the questionnaire, saying that if they could not understand any question they could ask me. After they wrote their answers, I believed it was important to listen to them, as an attempt to understand their answers and try to get more information about their perspectives. This exploratory talk was important to me, since I wanted them to share their experience with me so that I could have a clearer idea about their beliefs about the "ideal class and teacher". When I read my students' answers, I noticed that they had reflected in a critical way on the classroom environment. In the following section, I analyze their answers, which may reflect some of their beliefs in relation to their classes.

Question 1: Why do you think it is important to have English Classes at school?

Cadu's answer: "Because English is the most important language in the world, because English is everywhere. It is important to know English because it is used to speak with other countries, and I can understand my video games very well."

Carol's answer: "Because English is used to speak in a lot of countries."

Question 2: Why do you say you do not like your English Classes at school?

Cadu's answer: "Because English at school is very horrible, the students don't pay attention, the teacher has to scream all the time. I do not

understand the teacher and sometimes what the teacher is speaking. My friends at school do not help in the class."

Carol's answer: "The teacher is very boring. The teacher speaks 'loud'. The class is not good. I hate. The students disturb the class, and the teacher has to say stop, 'vou tirar seu ponto' all the time."

Question 3: What can a teacher do to deliver an interesting class for you?

Cadu's answer: "The teacher has to stop screaming and the students have to make silence, then I can understand better".

Carol's answer: "My teacher can smile more, she isn't happy. She can play games and stop the 'gritaria'.

Question 4: What would you do if you were the teacher in your class?

Cadu's answer: "I would try to organize the classroom and the students, say nice words to my students and play games."

Carol's answer: "Smile and be good with my students, don't let the student disturb."

5 – Data Analysis

Based on the data and on the theoretical framework presented in this research, I tried to categorized the answers in order to achieve better understandings of my private students' complaints about their English classes at school and about my own practice in our private lessons. The following are the four themes that emerged from the students' answers:

1 - Relevance of affectivity in the English classroom.

2 - Importance of the teacher's good mood.

3 - Teacher's words or actions that make students feel well.

4 - Anxieties and frustrations regarding learning English.

Cadu and Carol's accounts lead us to realize the importance of positive feelings in the classroom and refer us to the fact that affective education is essential. It appears that the students believe that affect increases the development of skills and maintenance of good relationships, demonstrating concern and mutual support. According to the students' answers, the classroom environment has to be positive for higher learner motivation and better learning achievement.

According to Brown (1994), people with low self-esteem maintain barriers of inhibition to protect the self-perception, from a weak or fragile ego or lack of self-confidence in a situation or task. In their statements, Cadu and Carol mention the issue of their classmates' bad behavior in the classroom, which leads us to think that exchanging experiences and connecting with the other students in the classroom corroborates Vygotsky's (1984) assumptions regarding the characteristics of each individual. These relationships are constructed in constant interaction with the environment, understood as physical and social world, which includes interpersonal and cultural dimensions. Such human development takes place through reciprocal exchanges, which are established throughout life, between individuals who influence each other.

According to the students' answers to the fourth question, both participants seem to recognize the importance of affect because it provides a comfortable environment, interaction, friendship, and absence of negative feelings such as anguish, inhibition and fear of being criticized. When Carol says that the teacher should "smile and be good to the student", it leads us to understand that the teacher's good mood is important because it is believed to facilitate learning. Thus, corroborating Williams' (1994) statement that if teachers do not take into account the affective side of language learning, conflicts at the level of identity can develop, making the learning process more difficult.

Cadu says, "I don't understand the teacher and sometimes what the teacher is speaking" and relates this to his feeling anxious and frustrated when he cannot keep up with the class. He adds that he feels impatient with his classmates when they disturb the class by talking or playing during the teacher's explanations. Cadu's attitudes towards the classroom environment help us understand that there is a desire to learn the language in the classroom, that is, there is an intrinsic and integrative motivation. As mentioned earlier, for Arnold and Brown (1999), with intrinsic motivation, the learning experience is the reward itself; and for Graham (1984), the integrative motivation would be the learner's desire to learn a foreign language. In this case, in order to communicate and know about the culture of this language.

According to the analysis of the students' answers, the importance of affectivity becomes noticeable, just as the success or failure of learning of English in a classroom environment. Also, another aspect that negatively influences this process is the fear of making mistakes, which leads these learners to fail or to feel discouraged about learning the language. Based on the results of this study, we can confirm the widely held belief that affectivity has a key role in the language teaching/learning process. Affectivity can help students not only to remain motivated for learning but can also lead them to new learning perspectives.

The data analysis shows that, according to my private students, the role of the teacher in the learning process is to provide a pleasant

atmosphere, and that this is decisive in this process. Although we know that the teacher is not responsible for all the learning process. Teachers and learners are co-practitioners in the teaching-learning process. Students and teacher have their roles and are all responsible to what is going on in the classroom. My two students believe that it is up to the teachers to lead the group and to cultivate a good relationship among colleagues. But, as stated in the Principle 6, which considers that work for understanding should be continuous (ALLWRIGHT & HANKS, 2009 p. 153-154), understanding leads to a collaborative atmosphere, in a mutual and respectful environment where students and teacher can recognize each other's development.

According to the students, this will certainly minimize frustration and fear which, without a doubt, permeate the classroom environment, contributing to the failure of learning. As stated by the researchers reviewed for this study, we realize that negative feelings such as low self-esteem, insecurity, anxiety, inhibition and fear, negatively affect learning a foreign language. However, these feelings are inevitable, as they are part of human beings' personalities.

In this research, the students complained about teachers' attitude and classmates' behavior in class and the implications generated by these behaviors. For them, it is the teachers' job to manage classroom behavior in order to offer a better learning environment. Although it is necessary for teachers and students to work together, sharing understanding, ideas, and experiences, in order to facilitate this process, teachers should involve learners with well thought-through lesson plans that involve them and help them learn effectively, in an affective atmosphere.

The results of this study are important to help us reflect on the many emotions and feelings experienced in a classroom, reminding us that it is possible to be efficient teachers by catering to the students' needs, without forgetting that each learner is a social being that has feelings, emotions and is able to take learning seriously and make choices that will definitely guarantee or not the success of his/her learning. This study offered the possibility of contributing with learners' perspectives

about the issue of affectivity in the classroom context and how it transforms the actions and relationships of the people who share language teaching and learning processes.

6 – Final Considerations

In this research the perceived impact of affectivity on the success of foreign language learning/teaching, as well as on other aspects that influence this process, were addressed. My private students refer to the insecurity and lack of motivation for the study of English at school. Based on the results of this study and the connections made with the theoretical research reviewed, it can be affirmed that, for my students, affectivity has an important role in the foreign language teaching/learning process.

Affectivity can motivate the student not only for their studies, but also to avoid rejection for language learning. Furthermore, it can help them adapt to the method adopted by the school as well as to the teacher and the group to which they belong in the school environment. It was possible to observe, through Exploratory Practice, that there are still factors beyond the students' control, that often lead them to demotivation, such as when they are studying in an uneven and disorganized group, concerning behavior.

The findings of this exploratory study show that understanding what is going on in the class may help students and teacher to try to act in favor of their engagement, involvement, affectivity and mutual development. The teacher is not responsible for everything that happens between and within the people in the classroom. But this data indicate that it is up to teachers to lead the group, leading it to cultivate a good relationship, which will certainly minimize negative feelings and emotions that, without any doubt, permeate the classroom environment, contributing to the failure of learning and the lack of motivation.

During the research process, it was possible to realize that negative feelings such as low self-esteem, insecurity, anxiety, nervousness, inhibition and fear can be negatively affecting FL learning/teaching. Nevertheless, these feelings are inevitable, as they are part of human beings' personalities. According to all the participants, it is necessary for teachers to be only attentive, but also prepared to identify and understand the differences, weaknesses and limitations of each student, so that they can somehow help them overcome these issues.

This study was important to point out the significance of other characteristics that are part of the learning process, such as the classroom community itself. Therefore, it is important to encourage teachers to become explorers of life in their own classrooms. In this way, they may increase the understandings about language classroom learning and they may improve their learners' chances of making good progress (ALLWRIGHT & BAILEY, 1991, p. 194-200). That is why I conclude that Exploratory Practice may contribute to understanding the importance of affectivity in classes. According to Allwright and Bailey, regardless of how much intellectual energy is placed into the invention of new methods, the main thing is what happens when teachers and learners get together in the classroom.

Another important thing to consider is the fact that people who enter the classroom both in order to teach and to learn a FL are human beings who think, teach, learn, make mistakes, succeed, fail and especially feel emotional in various ways. These actions and emotions happen not only in the complex environment that is the universe of the classroom, but also in everyday situations of people's lives as they carry these experiences wherever they go.

Another fact that caught my attention in this research, during my conversation with the students, was that they understand the importance of teachers worrying about their needs. Worrying about feelings is certainly important, and the data and the conversations I had with them, indicate that the participants feel good, knowing that the teacher cares about their development and their questions. The teacher's interest in his/her students' learning process was understood by the learners who participated in this study as an interest in creating a good learning environment.

The students' perceptions echo Arnold's (2004) statements about the fact affective factors of a positive nature can provide a favorable environment for learning to happen. According to the author, negative factors can limit learning in such a way that can lead students to have no interest or decrease the interest in learning.

It is also possible to conclude that if classroom management is based on teachers' and students' strategies to understand what goes on in the classroom and create a pleasant atmosphere, with positive feelings, there will be an attempt at avoiding negative emotions. Finding the balance between emotion and cognition, makes it possible to create an atmosphere and an environment conducive to students' good development. The purpose of this study was to help us reflect on the emotions and feelings experienced in a classroom. These feelings can be both of joy, pleasure, as well as of frustration, insecurity and inhibition, as I have already discussed. The authors presented in this research recommend that feelings and purposes be united. They also advise the field of FL teaching that it is conceivable to be effective teachers, supplying for the students' needs, without forgetting that each learner is a human being who, in addition to thinking and being able to learn, is likewise able to have positive and negative feelings that will ensure or not the achievement of his/her learning.

Based on these suggestions, I hope that this study can contribute to my own practice and to that of the students'. Also, hopefully, to other teachers' practice, so that attention to the issue of affectivity in the classroom context can transform the actions and relationships of those who are responsible for the foreign language teaching and learning process.

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