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**Motivation in Learning
English as a Foreign Language
(EFL)**

Comparative study on students' opinions on their
own motivations in EFL learning and their
teachers' views on it

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Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the fundamental issue of motivation in language learning and teaching. Some of the major theories on motivation will be outlined briefly, as a theoretical framework for the research that has been carried out.

The research is about students' motivation in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) and it aims mainly at discovering if EFL learners are motivated, what type of motivation theirs is and what role the teacher plays in creating and sustaining motivation in learners. The participants of this study were both students and teachers who were asked to fill in a questionnaire on motivation in EFL learning.

The results obtained from the students' questionnaires will be compared with the teachers' perceptions on learners' motivation and similarities and/or discrepancies between the two will be analysed and discussed in order to shed some light on the classroom praxis that enhances students' motivation the most.

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Introduction

Motivation drives all human behaviours and it is no different when it comes to learning. It underpins learning and acquisition and that is why it is a crucial factor to be taken into consideration in teaching any subject and particularly in teaching English as foreign language, which is the focus of this study.

This research stems precisely from the idea that motivation is essential for learning and acquisition and it intends to shed light on the following matters: Are students motivated to learn English as a foreign language (EFL)?, What kind of students' motivation underpins EFL learning?, Do teachers create and sustain motivation in EFL learning, and if they do, how do they attain it through their classroom praxis? These are the major questions that the present research aims to address.

The first chapter will attempt to supply a definition of *motivation* and will provide a brief overview of previous research in the field of motivation in language learning. Furthermore, it will give some insight into the theories of motivation put forward by some of the principal scholars in this field, deemed to be appropriate to support this study.

The second chapter will illustrate the details concerning this research; particularly, it will present the context in which it was conducted, its purpose and the methodology used to carry it out. In addition, it will report the main features and characteristics of the participants and the instruments employed to collect the data, that is, the questionnaires. Their structure and contents will be explained in detail.

In the third chapter, the data collected through students' questionnaires will be analysed and commented on.

The fourth chapter, instead, concerns the analysis and the discussion of the teachers' questionnaires.

Chapter 5 will provide an in-depth discussion of the questionnaire results. Firstly, the outcomes of the students' and teachers' questionnaires will be thoroughly recapitulated and, secondly, they will be attentively compared, in order to highlight the similarities and discrepancies that emerged. Afterwards, the possible implications of the findings will be discussed, in order to outline some practical suggestions and solutions to be applied within the foreign language learning and teaching context. To conclude, the probable weaknesses

of this research will be commented on and finally, some inputs for further research will be presented.

The conclusions will summarise the main findings of this research.

Chapter 1

Theoretical framework

This chapter will deal with motivation in language learning. Firstly, a definition of the term and a brief review of previous research in the field of motivation will be provided. Secondly, some theories and models concerning motivation that are deemed appropriate to support the research will be outlined more in detail.

1.1 DEFINING MOTIVATION

The term *motivation* comes from the Latin verb “movere” that means “to move”. It identifies a complex phenomenon determining human action and behaviour. Motivation has been the focus of a considerable amount of studies and researches over the last decades both in the field of psychology and later specifically in that of language learning. Because of the different approaches and perspectives adopted, it is difficult to formulate a unique definition that is suitable for each context and that proves to be comprehensive of all its aspects. Notwithstanding, attempts to define the concept of motivation with particular reference to the language learning and teaching field have been made and some definitions will be provided below.

Robert H. Gardner (1985) explained that

“ Motivation in the present context refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language” (Gardner, 1985:10).

The scholar, therefore, presents motivation as the result of different factors: the striving to learn the language, the wish to do so and the favourable attitude toward the goal. These three components must be present all at the same time in order to create motivation.

Zoltán Dörnyei and István Ottó (1998) tried to provide a general definition of the term that attempts to comprise the range of variables that they deem essential in motivation. They stated that motivation is a

“dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes

whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised, and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out” (Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998:64).

Effort and desire are part of this definition as well, but we can also identify dynamicity, personal engagement in deciding the course of action to be taken and variable outcome. Thus, in the latter definition also time is taken into consideration, with the changes it involves along the learning process, suggesting that motivation varies along the path leading to goal achievement. Moreover, the personal commitment is emphasised in the decision-making process; the individual is responsible for his/her own learning decisions through which willingness and self-determination are displayed. Finally, a variable that was not mentioned before is the outcome of the effort that can be either positive and successful or negative and therefore unsuccessful. This last concept is quite critical with respect to language learning, as it can influence the individual’s motivation (and self-esteem) greatly.

Another definition to be analysed is Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci’s (2000) interpretation of motivated behaviour that they explain as follows:

“To be motivated means *to be moved* to do something. A person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated, whereas someone who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated” (Ryan and Deci, 2000:54).

This definition highlights the major roles of the desire one feels towards learning a language, of the action to be taken, a notion that can be assimilated to the previously mentioned effort, and of goal-orientedness.

An attempt to postulate an exhaustive definition that can be applicable to different contexts and that can be agreed upon by most researchers and scholars was made by Zoltán Dörnyei and Ema Ushioda (2011), who argue that motivation

“by definition, concerns the *direction* and *magnitude* of human behaviour, that is: the *choice* of a particular action, the *persistence* with it, the *effort* expended on it. In other words motivation is responsible for *why* people decide to do something, *how long* they are willing to sustain the activity, *how hard* they are going to pursue it” (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011:4).

Two new concepts are presented here, that is, *choice* and *persistence*. However, a choice can be the result of the willingness to fulfil a desire or need that an individual feels, being therefore in line with all the previous definitions. Although persistence was not mentioned

above, it recalls and emphasises the variable of time, which is quite crucial in processes (which may be life-long) like language learning. Another factor shared by the majority of definitions presented here is effort, which is essential in order to attain any (learning) objective.

In sum, through this short list of definitions proposed by different scholars over time, we can understand the multifaceted nature of motivation and the difficulty of taking a focussed and comprehensive picture of it. Quoting Dörnyei's words:

“I believe that just as motivation is a dynamic, ever-changing process, its research should also evolve over time. After all, motivation concerns the fundamental question of why people think and behave as they do, and we should never assume that we know the full answer” (Dörnyei, 2005:66).

However, some recurrent factors are identifiable, such as: the individual's desire to do something, the decision of taking action in fulfilling the desire, and putting effort in that specific activity in order to achieve the determined goal. This process gives the idea of “motion” toward something specific, i.e. an objective, which the word “motivation” intrinsically entails thanks to its derivation.

1.2 BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The amount of literature about motivation and particularly motivation in second language (L2)¹ learning is quite vast, considering it has been a topic of interest for more than fifty years, from the 1960s up to the present day. In order to present a schematic summary of the work that has been done so far, we will follow Dörnyei's (2005) division of the different phases of language learning motivation research. According to the mainstream perspective of the period, he identifies:

- ***The social psychological period:*** from 1959 to 1990, it was characterized by the work of the social psychologists Robert C. Gardner and Wallace E. Lambert, who were

¹ In the field of language learning and teaching there is a basic distinction among the concepts of first language (L1), second language (L2), and foreign language (FL). The L1 identifies an individual's mother tongue, an L2 is a language which is different from an individual's mother tongue that is learned rather “spontaneously” because it is spoken as an L1 in the place in question (e.g. an Italian student or immigrant learning English in England) whereas a FL is a language different from an individual's mother tongue that is learnt (normally at school) in a place where this language isn't normally spoken (e.g. an Italian student learning English in Italy). Even if L2 and FL learning are often confused or assimilated, it is important to note that they are different in many aspects. First, the L2 is present in the environment where it is learnt, which is not the case of the FL. Second, in a FL context the input is controlled and graduated by the teacher while in an L2 environment the inputs are of different levels and nature and the teacher can't control what the learners acquire spontaneously on their own (Balboni, 2013:12).

pioneers in researching motivation in L2 learning in the bilingual setting of Canada. The scholars devised the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), a motivation questionnaire made up of over a hundred items, whose use was pervasive. This questionnaire operationalised Gardner's motivation theory (1985) that aimed at explaining the construct of *Integrative motive*, which he deemed the unique main drive underlying the L2 learning. He breaks this concept down into three components: *integrativeness*, in turn made up of integrative orientation, interest in foreign languages and attitude toward the L2 community; *attitude toward the learning situation* comprising attitude both towards the teacher and the language course; and *motivation*, that is wish, attitude, and effort with respect to learning (Gardner in Dörnyei, 2005:68). This theory, although it maintained its leading position during the whole period, has generated some debate. Dörnyei (2005:69-70) identified two problems: first, Gardner's theory led to some misunderstanding because the term *integrative* appears more than once in different "levels of abstraction"; second, over the years the concept of *integrativeness* or *integrative motivation* was opposed to *instrumentality* or *instrumental motivation*. The first, which was actually part of Gardner's construct, refers to the willingness of the learners to integrate with the L2 community, the latter, which instead was not part of Gardner's core theory (but appeared just in his AMTB without further theoretical explanations) is about the utilitarian and practical benefits connected with the L2 knowledge. As Dörnyei states:

“ The misinterpretation of Gardner's theory as the sum of integrative and instrumental motivation has been pervasive, as evidenced even today by the many manuscripts submitted to international journals which start out by conceptualizing motivation purely (and poorly) along the instrumental-integrative dichotomy” (2005:70).

Surely, such a misrepresentation derives from the willingness to simplify the aggregate of variables constructing a complex concept like motivation. However, in his more recent works (2000, 2001) Gardner conceded that there might be instrumental factors influencing motivation and labelled them “instrumental motivation”. Nonetheless, this step further was added later and is not intended to be a central part of Gardner's construct, but a subcomponent of motivation (Dörnyei, 2005:70).

- ***The cognitive-situated period:*** this period identifies with the time span of the 1990s and is grounded on cognitive theories developed in educational psychology. During this phase, motivational research experienced an educational shift, that is, the focus was

sharpened on a more specific analysis of motivation within the learning environment and particularly on classroom practice.

“Thus, there was a growing perception of the need to elaborate and extend motivation constructs not only to account for these situation-specific motives, but also to render them more suitable for immediate classroom application” (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011:47-48).

In this phase of L2 motivation research we can include works such as Deci and Ryan’s Self-Determination Theory (1985) and Dörnyei’s framework of L2 motivation (1994), among others. Growing interest toward learner’s autonomy and task-specific motivation characterised this period as well.

- ***The process-oriented period:*** from the turn of the century up to now, this phase is most concerned with motivational change over time.

“With language acquisition² being a particularly lengthy learning process, the potential importance of a temporal perspective that includes the division of various motivational phases has not gone unnoticed in L2 research” (Dörnyei, 2005:83).

Indeed, considering the dynamic nature of motivation, various researchers tried to analyse and explain the process along a temporal line. For instance, Ushioda (1996, 2001) proposed to view motivation as a “flux” rather than something stable; Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) developed a three-stage motivational process (further elaborated by Dörnyei, 2000, 2001) distinguishing an initial stage, in which motivation is generated and leads to the decision of an objective to be pursued, an actional stage, in which motivation is maintained and transformed into practical effort, and finally a postactional stage that involves a “retrospective evaluation” of the whole process and its outcomes (Dörnyei, 2005:84). This period paved the way to new issues that are still of interest nowadays, such as motivational self-regulation, demotivation and group dynamics.

It is to be noted that the works and theories mentioned above are just instances of the principal researches on motivation but are not to be considered a complete enumeration of the major studies.

² In his Second Language Acquisition Theory (SLAT) Krashen makes a distinction between the concepts of *acquisition* and *learning*. The first, *acquisition*, is a spontaneous and unconscious process, chiefly directed by the right hemisphere of the brain; what is *acquired* becomes part of the long-term memory and is easier and faster to recall and use. The latter, *learning*, is instead a rational process, therefore governed by the left hemisphere, that does not lead to *acquisition* per se; what is *learnt* may be stored in the medium-term memory but it is not permanent as what is *acquired*. (Balboni, 2013:12)

1.3 THEORIES OF MOTIVATION

In order to conduct this research, some influential theories regarding motivation have been taken into consideration and will be noted below as the theoretical foundations for the study itself. These theories are different from one another in many aspects, but withal they are complementary and all together they represent an exhaustive theoretical background of motivation, relevant for the research that has been carried out.

First, *Stimulus Appraisal Theory* will be presented; it helps to shed some light on how the brain works when it comes to react to an external stimulus. The theory gives some insights on how the appraisal of the input happens and how it leads to a reaction on the part of the individual. This process will be regarded particularly for its implication in the language-learning context.

Second, Deci and Ryan's *Self-Determination Theory* (1985) will be described in order to analyse the different types of motivation they distinguished and to understand what their impact on learning is.

Third, Balboni's *Tri-polar Model* (1994) will be outlined, especially as far as one of the components of the model is concerned, that is, pleasure in learning, which is one of the major points of interest in this research.

Finally, Dörnyei's *L2 Motivational Self System* (2005) will be explained briefly. This theory is most concerned with the learner and with his/her views on personal identity in the present and in the future and on the impact these ideas have on the L2 learning. Dörnyei draws from psychology the concept of the *possible selves* and elaborates it in a second language acquisition (SLA) perspective, considering them as guides for the learner to achieve his/her L2 goals.

1.3.1 STIMULUS APPRAISAL THEORY

In his 1997 work, *The neurobiology of affect in language*, John H. Schumann, outlines his hypothesis about how the brain functions in appraising external stimuli. He posits that this *appraisal* is carried out through a neurobiological process that involves mainly three areas of the brain, namely the orbitofrontal cortex, the amygdala and the body proper.

Let us start from defining what is meant by *appraisal*, which the scholar presents quoting Lazarus and Smith (1988) and Smith and Lazarus (1993) who distinguished

between *knowledge* and *appraisal*, defining *knowledge* as “an individual’s construal, understanding or beliefs about the factual nature of the stimulus event – what is happening” whereas the *appraisal* is interpreted as

“ the assessment of the personal relevance of this knowledge. It involves judgements about how the stimulus agent, action, or object might be personally harmful or beneficial. Positive emotions are seen as products of appraised benefit and negative emotions as products of appraised harm.” (Lazarus and Smith in Schumann, 1997:16)

In short, the *appraisal* consists in the personal evaluation of an external stimulus that is estimated to be either beneficial or harmful for the individual, who will experience a positive or a negative feeling accordingly. The association to positive or negative emotions comes from the emotional memory of an individual, which, in turn, results from the interaction of different value systems that are the basis of “preferences and aversions acquired in the lifetime of the individual” (Schumann, 1997: 36).

However, the question to be addressed at this stage is how the appraisal happens, that is, on which criteria a stimulus is evaluated and assessed.

Schumann (1997) presents different theories and models of stimulus appraisal, nonetheless he maintains that the most exhaustive and the one that comprises the majority of the variables highlighted in the work of various scholars and researchers is the model devised by Klaus Scherer (1984) who identifies the following “stimulus evaluation checks”:

- ***novelty***: the brain judges whether the input presented is new, or if it displays unexpected or unusual traits;
- ***intrinsic pleasantness***: the quality assessed in this case is the attractiveness of the stimulus, in short, if an individual likes the input or not from a perceptual and emotional point of view: the more an input is deemed pleasant, the more it fosters approach whereas if it is perceived as unpleasant and unattractive it tends to be avoided;
- ***goal/need significance***: this appraisal evaluates whether the stimulus is in line with a subject’s personal goals or needs and to what extent it enables the individual to satisfy or attain them or, on the contrary, if it interferes with them. Moreover, it creates the individual’s expectations (connected to the input) in the present situation or in the near future;

- ***coping potential***: what is assessed at this stage is the subject's ability to deal with the input and to control it, facing its possible (positive or negative) outcome also in terms of psychological reaction;
- ***norm/self compatibility***: this check appraises the compatibility of the stimulus in relation to the self and the social and cultural norms of the environment, that is, whether the input may enhance an individual's self and social image (Scherer in Schumann, 1997:8-9).

Once this appraisal process has taken place, the individual's brain decides how to react to the stimulus and "on the basis of the feeling, personal and social decisions are made" (Schumann and Wood, 2004:26), thus the subject decides what behaviour or mental activity is appropriate in response to the stimulus.

The implications of this theory in the language learning setting are significant. Every external input goes through this appraisal mechanism, and therefore

"These appraisals guide our learning and foster long-term cognitive effort (action tendencies) necessary to achieve high levels of mastery or expertise. The appraisals also curtail learning, producing variable success". (Schumann, 1997:36)

Thus, in order for them to be the most effective, the stimuli proposed during the classroom activities should be: novel and varied, attractive and pleasant, functional in terms of satisfying a learner's need or helping the achievement of a goal. Moreover, they should be feasible, that is, not too easy or too difficult to avoid boredom and failure respectively, but possibly in the zone of proximal development and they should guarantee the learner psychological and social security: the student should respond to the input in an environment in which he/she feels safe, without putting at risk their self-confidence and/or their social image - such a situation could activate the affective filter and hinder learning (Balboni, 2013:21).

1.3.2 SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY

In 1985, Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan formulated the *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT) in which they distinguished between "different types of motivation based on the different reasons or goals that give rise to an action" (Ryan and Deci, 2000:55). The primary distinction they made was between:

- ***Intrinsic Motivation***: it is to be interpreted as “the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence.” (Ryan and Deci, 2000:56). That is, doing something because of the pleasure, fun or challenge it inherently entails, without other ends; doing something for the satisfaction and the enjoyment of the task itself. The scholars point out that although *intrinsic motivation* exists in each of us, it is a very subjective phenomenon to be found, more precisely, in the relation between an individual and a particular activity; not all of us are intrinsically motivated to carry out a specific task (Ryan and Deci, 2000:56). According to Deci and Ryan’s SDT, this type of motivation, though very powerful in fuelling human action, can be influenced by social and environmental conditions that may either enhance or subdue it. Within the learning and teaching setting, the factors that can elicit and sustain learners’ *intrinsic motivation* are the *feeling of competence* and the *sense of autonomy* (which must coexist in order to foster *intrinsic motivation*) whereas a limiting factor can be the (excessive) control exercised by the teacher. In other words, the boost for *intrinsic motivation* comes from the learner’s perception of his or her competence combined with the experience of being given an appropriate share of autonomy, so that they perceive their behaviour to be more self-determined. Indeed,

“Several studies have shown that autonomy-supportive (in contrast to controlling) teachers catalyze in their students greater intrinsic motivation, curiosity, and the desire for challenge [...]. Students who are overly controlled not only lose initiative but also learn less well, especially when learning is complex or requires conceptual, creative processing” (Ryan and Deci, 2000:59).

- ***Extrinsic Motivation***: it is defined as “a construct that pertains whenever an activity is done in order to attain some separable outcome” (Ryan and Deci, 2000:60) and thus, not for the pleasure deriving from the activity itself, differing in this from *intrinsic motivation*. Within the frame of SDT, the scholars claimed that *extrinsic motivation* can vary substantially on the basis of its “perceived locus of causality”, that is, its origins, the degree of the autonomy of the behaviour in question. From the most externally imposed to the most internalised, four distinct categories of *extrinsic motivation* were identified: *external regulation*, *introjection*, *identification*, and *integration*. *External regulation* is the first type of *extrinsic motivation* described and it comprises all those behaviours that are externally regulated, controlled and imposed and that the individual experience as completely determined from external factors and conditions. The actions performed in such cases aim at external contingent rewards or

at avoiding external possible punishments. The second form of *extrinsic motivation* is *introjection* or *introjected regulation* that consists of those actions one carries out in order to avoid feeling guilty or anxious and to maintain their self-esteem, so they are concerned with approval, both on the part of one's self and of others. In such cases the personal involvement is a little higher, but the causality is still perceived as mainly external. *Identification* is a more self-determined type of *extrinsic motivation*. In these cases an individual acknowledges the importance and the personal relevance of a particular action or behaviour and accepts it. Finally, the most internalised kind of *extrinsic motivation* is *integration* or *integrated regulation* that comprises those behaviours and actions that have been completely assimilated by an individual.

“This occurs through self-examination and bringing new regulations into congruence with one's other values and needs. The more one internalizes the reasons for an action and assimilates them to the self, the more one's extrinsically motivated actions become self-determined” (Ryan and Deci, 2000:62).

These last two steps, *identification* and *integration*, differ from the previous ones in that their causality is perceived as mainly internal rather than external and they share this particular quality with *intrinsic motivation*. Nonetheless, they are still part of *extrinsic motivation* because integrated behaviour is performed for its instrumental purpose towards an outcome that is separate from the behaviour itself, even if there is a significant degree of volition in it (Ryan and Deci, 2000:60-62).

It is to be noted that the scholars identified diverse sub-types of *extrinsic motivation*, conceding that some externally imposed actions or behaviours can be or become more and more self-determined, but they highlight that even in this case they are not to be confused with *intrinsic motivation* because of their ultimate end that is still instrumental and separable from the activity itself. They also specify that they

“do not suggest that the continuum underlying types of extrinsic motivation is a *developmental* continuum, per se. One does not have to progress through each stage of internalization with respect to a particular regulation; indeed, one can initially adopt a new behavioral regulation at any point along the continuum depending upon prior experiences and situational factors” (Ryan and Deci, 2000:62-63).

Therefore, the scholars argue that the process of internalisation is not to be interpreted as a phenomenon that can develop gradually every time and for every kind of external regulation, but they emphasise that there can be changes resulting in orientation shifts in the perception of an activity or behaviour, according to contextual and environmental

factors. These changes may happen in both directions: backward and forward. For instance, if an activity begun because of *external regulation* for instrumental aims (e.g. possible external rewards) is perceived as pleasant and enjoyable in itself, then such experience may lead to an orientation upgrade to *intrinsic motivation*. Conversely, a person that has identified with a particular activity may be hindered by a over-controlling mentor and lose interest in the task, not perceiving the sense of value of the behaviour any longer, and slipping back to a situation of *external regulation*.

Thus, the main implications for the (language) learning and teaching context that can be extrapolated from SDT are that in cases of learners who manifest intrinsic motivation, it is best to favour a pleasant atmosphere fostering their felt competence (for example, with supportive and encouraging feedbacks) and sense of autonomy (for instance, with suitable autonomous tasks), without being too controlling. Whereas with learners whose motivation appears to be chiefly extrinsic, it might be appropriate to make them aware of and emphasise the value and the personal relevance that the knowledge of the language in question may have in their lives, as well as try to favour a gradual internalisation of this value. However, given that motivation is a multifaceted phenomenon it may happen that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation coexist in an individual and, indeed, taking action may be determined by more than one motivational factor.

1.3.3 THE TRI-POLAR MODEL

Another model to be considered is the *Tri-polar model* devised by Paolo E. Balboni in 1994. This model doesn't refer specifically to motivation in language learning, but it applies to learning and studying in general (Caon, 2006:16). It was drawn from the theory of motivation applied to marketing, and it is quite straightforward, as Balboni explains:

“ Dalla teoria della motivazione applicata al marketing abbiamo tratto un modello motivazionale, che ha una buona potenza descrittiva [...]. Il nostro modello individua le tre cause che governano l'agire umano: il dovere [...], il bisogno [...], il piacere[...]” (Balboni, 2011:87).

Indeed, this construct is based on three possible factors that can activate motivation, namely: *duty*, *need* and *pleasure*. As these factors are of diverse nature from one another, they will have quite different implications as will be explained below.

- **Duty:** according to Balboni, it is the least effective of the three factors since it does not lead to acquisition of what was learnt because a situation of obligation and probably of disinterest towards a subject and its contents activates the affective filter. As Caon (2006:17) explains, duty can be distinguished according to its origin and it can be either *hetero-directed* or *self-directed*. The first, *hetero-directed duty*, comes from external factors, it is imposed to the learner, for instance through the school curriculum, or because of the authority of the teacher whilst the latter, *self-directed duty*, is an internal drive but it tends to be ephemeral, for instance the will to avoid a bad mark in a test. In these cases, duty rarely creates motivation leading to meaningful learning and acquisition because the student does not learn of his/her own will-to-know. However, duty could generate motivation if it were internalised and developed into “sense of duty” (Balboni, 2011:87).
- **Need:** this factor is chiefly connected with the left hemisphere of the brain that is the rational one. Motivation can be driven by this factor but this presents some drawbacks. Firstly, it is necessary that the learner feels the need, as it may easily be the case for learning basic English, but not as common for studying other subjects such as, for instance, Latin or literature or trigonometry. Secondly, it works as a motivational factor until the learner decides that he/she has satisfied their need (which can represent a very low level of knowledge or skill in the subject in question), in this case the learner may also be disinterested in studying the subject deeper. In sum, need may constitute an effective motivational factor just in the short term, until the need itself is perceived as satisfied on the part of the student and therefore it is not a long-term motivational drive.
- **Pleasure:** motivation deriving from pleasure is the most effective one, according to Balboni. It is mainly connected with the right hemisphere of the brain, the emotional one, but it can involve the left hemisphere as well, becoming even more powerful and effective in creating a fertile ground for meaningful learning and acquisition to take place. Pleasure in language learning and acquisition is not to be interpreted as a mere pleasant feeling in general, but also as the result of diverse situations and variables, such as the personal gratification of achieving a goal or carrying out a specific task (indeed pleasure is subject to be put off in case of failure), the pleasure of challenge, especially with ourselves, the pleasure of novelty, to be interpreted for instance as variety in the teaching/learning materials and activities, and the pleasure of systematising what has been learnt transforming it into personal competence, which can be the case of grammar rules or structures, especially those differing from the L1. Finally, pleasure can derive

from fulfilling one's own sense of duty, and therefore it can foster motivation and willingness to involve in activities, tasks and exercises that are not pleasurable in themselves but that are useful or necessary to achieve a learning goal (Balboni, 2011:87-88).

1.3.4 THE L2 MOTIVATIONAL SELF SYSTEM

The *L2³ Motivational Self System* is a theory resulting from Zoltán Dörnyei's personal elaboration of the psychological concept of the *possible selves* in a language learning perspective. The construct of the *possible selves* was first developed by Hazel R. Markus and Paula Nurius (1986) and is defined as a:

“type of self-knowledge [that] pertains to how individuals think about their potential and about their future. Possible selves are the ideal selves that we would very much like to become. They are also the selves we could become, and the selves we are afraid of becoming. [...] They are different and separable from the current or now selves, yet are intimately connected to them. Possible future selves, for example, are not just *any* set of imagined roles or states of being. Instead, they represent specific, individually significant hopes, fears and fantasies. [...] These possible selves are individualized or personalized, but they are also distinctly social. Many of these possible selves are the direct result of previous social comparisons in which the individual's own thoughts, feelings, characteristics, and behaviors have been contrasted to those of salient others.” (Markus and Nurius, 1986:954).

Thus, the *possible selves* that an individual can imagine are the representation of one's self in the future, connected to his or her aspirations, wishes and fears. It is necessary to emphasise the importance of this visualization: it is not just a mere mental image, but it is felt as reality on the part of the individual, who directs his or her behaviour in accordance with it. Indeed, as Dörnyei notes,

“possible selves give form, meaning, structure and direction to one's hopes and threats, thereby inciting and directing purposeful behavior. The more vivid and elaborate the possible self, the more motivationally effective it is expected to be” (Dörnyei, 2005:100).

³ As clarified in note 1 (cf. p. 9) this theory is about second language (L2) learning, and not specifically about foreign language (FL) learning, which is the focus of this research. However, Dörnyei's theory is deemed to be useful and to some extent applicable also to our context of interest.

As the scholar highlights, the *possible selves* function as incentives, creating motivation and supporting a goal-oriented behaviour.

A further development of the *possible selves* theory was introduced by Edward T. Higgins (1987) who focused on the *ideal* and *ought selves*. The first, the *ideal self*, is “the representation of the attributes that someone would ideally like to possess” (Higgins in Dörnyei, 2005:100) and so it is connected to one’s desires and hopes. The latter, the *ought self*, reflects “the attributes that one believes that one ought to possess” (Higgins in Dörnyei, 2005:100) and refers, for instance, to one’s responsibilities. Higgins devised the *self-discrepancy theory* (1987) that postulates that individuals are motivated to attain a state in which their self-concept is in line with their self-guides (i.e. the ideal and ought selves), confirming the motivational drive that these personalised representations entail.

Drawing from both psychological theories presented above, in 2005 Dörnyei put forward his own theory concerning the field of language learning and teaching, the L2 context in particular, conceptualising it “within a ‘self’ framework” (Dörnyei, 2009:9). The components of his *L2 Motivational Self System* are the:

- ***Ideal L2 Self***: within the broader concept of the *ideal self* it refers specifically to the language competences of the person we would like to become: if our *ideal self* speaks an L2, then it will be an effective motivational drive to learn the L2, because of the willingness to bridge the gap between the actual and the ideal selves;
- ***Ought-to L2 Self***: it concerns the qualities and attributes an individual believes he or she ought to have especially to meet one’s responsibilities and duties and in order to elude possible negative outcomes. It refers mostly to what is expected from an individual by others, rather than to the hopes and wishes of a subject (Dörnyei, 2005:105-106);
- ***L2 Learning Experience***: it refers to the motives connected to the learning environment and experience “(e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success)” (Dörnyei, 2009:29).

To sum up, the scholar proposes a motivational system consisting in three factors. The first and the second, the *Ideal L2 Self* and the *Ought-to Self*, are future self-guides that represent the desires and expectancies of the individual and of others, respectively. The two constituents have different impacts on an individual’s motivation, the *Ideal L2 Self* being a stronger drive with respect to the *Ought-to Self* because it is internally generated and not externally imposed or influenced. The last component of the system, instead,

regards the motivational factors coming from the *L2 Learning Experience* and environment, which has been widely researched and has been linked to a vast range of techniques suitable for enhancing motivation (cf. Dörnyei 2001).

The originality in Dörnyei's *L2 Motivational Self System* theory is mostly due to the first component, the *L2 Ideal Self*, functioning as a motivational self-guide, as he explains:

“The novel area of motivational strategies concerns the promotion of the first component of the system, the Ideal L2 Self, through generating a language learning vision and through imagery enhancement” (Dörnyei, 2009:32).

This concept of vision creating a powerful motivational drive was further developed in the scholar's following work, where it is explained not only the importance of motivating learners through vision and how to attain it, but also the impact of vision in teachers' own motivation and attitude (cf. Dörnyei and Kubanyiova, 2014).

Chapter 2

Presentation of this research

This section will describe the main characteristics of the research, its purpose and the methodology underlying it. Moreover, it will give some information about the participants and it will analyse the instruments used to collect the data for this study.

2.1 CONTEXT, PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

This research was carried out in two secondary schools (*scuola superiore di secondo grado* in Italian) of the region of Veneto, Italy, where English is taught as the first foreign language within the school curriculum.

The idea of this research was conceived out of curiosity by the writer who intends to shed some light on students' perception on their motivations in EFL learning and especially on what impact the teacher has on it, finding out which classroom practices are deemed better for enhancing motivation and which, on the contrary, are not. In order to give a more complete picture of motivation in EFL learning, teachers were involved in the present research as well. The objective of this choice is not to assess or judge teachers' methods and approaches, but to compare the points of view both of students and of teachers on motivation and discover the similarities and discrepancies between the two. In short, the aim of the present research is to understand whether students are generally motivated to learn English or not, what types of motivation prevail among them and what the role of the teacher is with respect to creating, sustaining and influencing students' motivation through classroom practice. Drawing from the outcome, we intend to identify the classroom activities and practices that are perceived as motivating and, on that basis, suggest possible practical implications in EFL learning and teaching.

This primary research is intended to have an ethnographical approach, and is a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research. Indeed, it bears some traits that distinguish quantitative research; it is a cross-sectional research that "typically sample the participants' thoughts, behaviours or emotional stances at one particular point in time" (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011:208) and graphs and descriptive statistics will be widely used in the data analysis part. Nonetheless, it possesses some properties of qualitative research as well, given that some questions require an explanatory and qualitative answer and that the data

collected regard students and teachers' perceptions on motivation "e la percezione è quanto di meno quantitativo ci sia" (Serragiotto, 2012:24).

The instruments used to collect the research data were questionnaires, which were deemed the most suitable means for gathering the information concerning motivation within the possibilities of the writer, the availability of the participants, and the timing of administering the questionnaires, processing the data, and, thus, conducting the research. The questionnaire was first tested on a small sample of students who gave their feedback as for the user-friendliness of the questionnaire and the clarity of the items.

2.2 THE PARTICIPANTS

Given that this research has a comparative purpose, the participants were both students and teachers from two schools in the region of Veneto, Italy. The study, carried out in May 2017, involved 195 students, whose range of age was from 14 to 20. They were all enrolled in secondary school, from the first year to the fifth year (which means the research covers the whole cycle of secondary school studies).

Moreover, 11 teachers of English as a foreign language took part in the study.

2.3 THE QUESTIONNAIRES

The instruments employed to collect the research data were questionnaires. Indeed, two questionnaires were devised in a parallel way for students and teachers, that is, the same questions were adapted for both targets in order to get the equivalent information from the counterpart. The questionnaires are structurally divided into two sections, both of which display various sub-sections that will be outlined below.

The format of the questionnaire used was a paper questionnaire for students and both a paper and an on-line questionnaire for teachers. On-line versions of the two questionnaires had been created to render them more accessible and to give the participants the possibility to ponder their answers without haste, nonetheless, the schools involved in the research preferred the paper version because they deemed it more practical. Notwithstanding, three of the teachers chose to fill in the on-line questionnaire.

As to the administration of the paper questionnaires, the distribution was made in person during two mornings in which the writer met the students and the teachers and

explained to them the scope of the research and gave the general instructions to fill in the questionnaires properly, thanking them in advance for their participation and help. Furthermore, the personal presentation aimed at motivating the participants to answer the questionnaire items sincerely, and at making them aware of the relevance of their responses, illustrating the potential significance of the outcome. In fact, filling in a questionnaire is often regarded as a “nuisance” but

“the good news, however, is that people in general like to express their opinions and do not mind answering questions as long as they think that the survey is related to a worthy cause and that their opinion matters” (Dörnyei, 2003:83-84).

In addition, participants were reassured that their anonymity would be maintained and that their personal data and their overall responses would be treated with confidentiality, which is one of the crucial elements in investigation ethics.

The questionnaires were formulated and administrated in Italian, which was the L1 of the participants, in order to facilitate the comprehension and to avoid possible misunderstandings or misinterpretations because of language difficulties, especially on the part of the less advanced students attending the initial years of secondary school. However, they were subsequently translated into English, in order to align with the rest of this paper. The questionnaires will be presented in their original Italian version in this chapter but all the items will be presented one by one together with their English translation in the next chapter, during the data analysis. Both the original Italian version and the English translation of the questionnaires are available to be consulted in Appendix A and B respectively (cf. p. 108, 112).

In the following paragraphs, the two questionnaires will be presented individually in order to highlight the structure of the research instruments and the purpose of each section that constitute them.

2.3.1 OBSERVATIONS ON STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Students' questionnaire is structured in two main parts, visually distinguishable because of their different format and layout. Initially, students' personal details of age and gender are asked, in order to understand the composition of the sample, after that the real enquiry begins.

2.3.1.1 SECTION ONE

The first part of the questionnaire, comprising questions from 1 to 16 is more varied in terms of types of questions employed, and addresses the students' general opinions on their motivations and then on their classroom experience.

The items directly concerning motivation in EFL learning, from 1 to 3.1, are two closed questions (1 and 3) and two open-ended questions (2 and 3.1) that aim at understanding students' opinion on their own motivation and on the role of the teacher in this respect.

QUESTIONARIO STUDENTE

Età : _____ Sesso: M F

1_ Sei motivato ad imparare l'inglese? Sì No

2_ Perché?

3_ Pensi che l'insegnante d'inglese cerchi di motivarti ad imparare la lingua?

Sì (rispondi alla 3.1 A)

No (rispondi alla 3.1 B)

3.1_ A - **Se sì, come?** / B- **Se no, che cosa dovrebbe fare per motivarti?**

Questions 1 and 3 ask for a direct answer, whereas questions 2 and 3.1 require a sentence, or a couple of sentences as an answer. These are the only open-ended questions present in the questionnaire and were devised in order to obtain a deeper understanding of students' thoughts and impressions, in a qualitative sense. They were proposed at the beginning of the questionnaire in order to stem the tendency of leaving them blank, which is frequent when they are in final position. Question 2 asks for reasons about why students are /are not motivated to learn English, and question 3.1 asks how the teacher motivates students or what the teacher should do to motivate them. The intention underlying the first question is to highlight what the most widespread motivational factors are and what type of motivations they reflect. The second question aims at understanding which teacher's behaviours favour students' motivation in EFL learning and which, on the contrary, do not.

The following items are more concerned with the classroom environment and experience and enquire about the teacher's attitude towards the students' emotional states (4), degree of engagement (5) and the characteristics of the activities proposed during the lessons (7-15). Item 16 deals with students' suggestions about motivating activities.

4_ Pensi chi l'insegnante d'inglese cerchi di ...

... aumentare la tua **autostima**?

Sì No

... aumentare la tua **autonomia**?

Sì No

... diminuire l'eventuale **ansia** durante la lezione d'inglese?

Sì No

4.1 (Se hai risposto con **ALMENO UN NO** alla domanda 4)

Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante ti incoraggiasse di più nei punti indicati alla domanda n°4?

Sì No

5_ L'insegnante ti coinvolge nella **decisione** delle attività da svolgere in classe? Sì No

6_ Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante ti coinvolgesse di più nella decisione delle attività da svolgere in classe? Sì No

7_ L'insegnante propone attività piacevoli:

Sempre	Quasi sempre	Spesso	Quasi mai	Mai
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8_ Le attività proposte in classe che più mi piacciono sono:
(è possibile dare più preferenze, fino ad un massimo di 5; se si sceglie "Altro" specificare l'attività)

- Leggere i dialoghi e i testi del libro
- Leggere un testo autentico in lingua inglese (es. articolo di giornale, testo letterario, ecc.)
- Fare gli esercizi presenti nel libro cartaceo
- Fare gli esercizi interattivi proposti dal libro (es. LIM, espansione esercizi on-line, ecc)
- Fare esercizi di ascolto (solo con CD audio)
- Ascoltare canzoni in lingua straniera e poi lavorare sul testo
- Vedere i video dei dialoghi o degli approfondimenti del libro e poi fare attività connesse ad essi
- Vedere film o video in lingua inglese non collegati al libro e poi fare attività connesse ad essi
- Fare cruciverba in inglese
- Fare esercizi strutturali
- Fare attività ludiche (= di gioco) in lingua inglese
- Fare esercizi a coppie
- Fare lavori di gruppo
- Fare esercizi e presentazioni orali
- Fare traduzioni e/o riassunti di testi in inglese
- Altro: _____

9_ Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività piacevoli? Sì No

10_ L'insegnante propone attività nuove :

Sempre	Quasi sempre	Spesso	Quasi mai	Mai
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11_ Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività nuove? Sì No

12_ L'insegnante propone attività e compiti che ritieni realizzabili :

Sempre	Quasi sempre	Spesso	Quasi mai	Mai
--------	--------------	--------	-----------	-----

13_ Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività realizzabili? Sì No

14_ L'insegnante propone attività che non mettono a rischio la tua autostima e la tua immagine di fronte ai compagni:

Sempre	Quasi sempre	Spesso	Quasi mai	Mai
--------	--------------	--------	-----------	-----

15_ Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività che non mettono a rischio la tua autostima e la tua immagine di fronte ai compagni? Sì No

16_ Per motivarmi di più l'insegnante dovrebbe:
(è possibile dare più preferenze, fino ad un massimo di 3; se si sceglie "Altro" specificare l'attività)

- cambiare più spesso le attività proposte in classe
- proporre più attività ludiche (= di gioco)
- proporre più spesso lavori di gruppo
- proporre più attività individuali di approfondimento su argomenti che mi piacciono
- proporre più spesso la visione di video o film in lingua originale e successive attività sul video o film
- proporre più attività in cui posso parlare in lingua inglese
- proporre più spesso l'ascolto di canzoni in lingua inglese e successive attività connesse
- proporre più spesso materiali diversi dal libro

Altro: _____

This part of the first section is made up of different kinds of questions: there are closed-ended questions requiring a *yes* or *no* answer (4, 4.1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 15), rating scales enquiring about frequency (7, 10, 12, 14) and checklists (8 and 16). It is to be noted that the instructions for these latter items specify the possibility to give more than one answer, up to 5 for item 8 and up to 3 for item 16. The reason for this choice is that the maximum number of answers was about a third of the choices available and, according to the writer, that would lead participants to select the 5 or 3 choices that they deemed more significant

within those available, with the possibility to write an option of their own. In addition, it is to be clarified that the options available in items 8 and 16 originate from the writer's personal experience of classroom practices and from those observed during the academic internship at school.

The items of this part are chiefly based on *Stimulus Appraisal Theory* (cf. 1.3.1), addressing the pleasantness, novelty, feasibility, and psychological and social security of the activities proposed during the English lesson (items 6-15). Moreover, the pleasantness of the input refers to pleasure in Balboni's *Tri-polar Model* as well (cf. 1.3.3). Students are asked how often the teacher presents new, pleasant, feasible and "psychologically and socially safe" activities and whether or not they would be more motivated if tasks of that sort were proposed more frequently.

The purpose of this first part of the questionnaire is to collect students' perceptions of the classroom environment, atmosphere, and activities, in order to identify which factors motivate them the most within the EFL learning situation.

2.3.1.2 SECTION TWO

The second section of the questionnaire, consisting in statements 17 to 30, is a set of rating scale items, precisely Likert scales (Dörnyei, 2003:36-38), enquiring about students' attitude towards EFL learning (17-21) and classroom activities (24-26) and asking about their views on motivation (22, 23, 27) and their goals and interests connected with English learning (28-30). It is the more quantitative section of the questionnaire, however, the nature of these data allows for practical and qualitative speculations.

Esprimi quanto sei d'accordo con le seguenti affermazioni:

17_ Imparo l'inglese perché mi piace	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
18_ Imparo l'inglese perché è utile	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
19_ Imparo l'inglese perché devo	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
20_ Imparo l'inglese per avere un bel voto	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
21_ Imparo l'inglese per far piacere ai miei genitori	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
22_ Sarei più motivato se i miei genitori mi incoraggiassero di più all'apprendimento dell'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
23_ L'insegnante ha un ruolo molto importante nel motivarmi ad imparare l'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
24_ Fare attività più coinvolgenti durante le lezioni mi motiverebbe di più ad imparare l'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
25_ L'uso di materiali diversi durante le lezioni mi motiverebbe di più ad imparare l'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì

26_ L'uso della tecnologia durante le lezioni mi motiverebbe di più ad imparare l'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
27_ La motivazione ad imparare l'inglese dipende solo da me e nessuno può modificarla	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
28_ Imparare bene l'inglese è uno dei miei obiettivi personali	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
29_ Mi immagino come parlante di inglese in futuro	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
30_ Sono interessato a scoprire le diverse culture dei parlanti nativi d'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì

This section of the questionnaire is mainly based on Balboni's *Tri-polar Model*, Deci and Ryan's *Self-Determination Theory* with the aim of distinguishing between the degree of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that guide learners, and Dörnyei's *L2 Motivational self System* (cf. 1.3.4)

Indeed, items 17 to 19 ask for the reasons for studying English: pleasure, usefulness, or duty; pleasure and duty are two of the components of the *Tri-polar Model*, the third component is need. It has been chosen to enquire about the utility (and not the need) of learning English because the two terms are similar in meaning to a certain extent and it seemed more appropriate considering that English has attained the status of a global lingua franca in the last decades (Crystal, 2003). Moreover, the reference to practical usefulness of the language has to do with instrumentality and extrinsic motivation as well. Other items concerning an extrinsic kind of motivation are 20 and 21. Items 22, 23 and 27 enquire about students' ideas about motivation, the first two statements regard the influence of significant others on EFL learners while the latter asks for a strictly personal opinion on motivation. Statements 24 to 26 deal with classroom activities and their style; the writer's intention was to understand whether the relevance of engagement, use of varied materials and of technology is significant for students within the EFL learning context. Item 28 is concerned with goal/need significance and may refer to intrinsic motivation too, as item 30, which moreover refers to students' attitude towards the FL community. Statement 29 deals with goal/need significance and with the students' future L2 self guide.

The major goal of this second section, thus, is to identify the principal types of motivation underlying EFL learning, paying attention to students' attitudes towards the FL learning and the environment in which they are learning it, the classroom activities, and the possible influences of significant others and, last but not least, their personal views of their future.

7_ Propone attività piacevoli:

Sempre Quasi sempre Spesso Quasi mai Mai

8_ Le attività proposte in classe che ritieni più motivanti e piacevoli per gli studenti sono:

(è possibile dare più preferenze, fino ad un massimo di 5; se si sceglie "Altro" specificare l'attività)

- Leggere i dialoghi e i testi del libro
- Leggere un testo autentico in lingua inglese (es. articolo di giornale, testo letterario, ecc.)
- Fare gli esercizi presenti nel libro cartaceo
- Fare gli esercizi interattivi proposti dal libro (es. LIM, espansione esercizi on-line, ecc.)
- Fare esercizi di ascolto (solo con CD audio)
- Ascoltare canzoni in lingua straniera e poi lavorare sul testo
- Vedere i video dei dialoghi o degli approfondimenti del libro e poi fare attività connesse ad essi
- Vedere film o video in lingua inglese non collegati al libro e poi fare attività connesse ad essi
- Fare cruciverba in inglese
- Fare esercizi strutturali
- Fare attività ludiche (= di gioco) in lingua inglese
- Fare esercizi a coppie
- Fare lavori di gruppo
- Fare esercizi e presentazioni orali
- Fare traduzioni e/o riassunti di testi in inglese
- Altro: _____

9_ Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se proponesse più spesso attività piacevoli?

Sì No

10_ Propone attività nuove :

Sempre Quasi sempre Spesso Quasi mai Mai

11_ Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se proponesse più spesso attività nuove?

Sì No

12_ Propone attività e compiti che gli studenti ritengono realizzabili :

Sempre Quasi sempre Spesso Quasi mai Mai

13_ Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se proponesse più spesso attività che ritengono realizzabili?

Sì No

14_ Propone attività che non mettono a rischio l'autostima e l'immagine degli studenti di fronte ai compagni:

Sempre Quasi sempre Spesso Quasi mai Mai

15_ Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se proponesse più spesso attività che non mettono a rischio la loro autostima e la loro immagine di fronte ai compagni?

Sì No

16_ Per sostenere la motivazione degli studenti dovrebbe:

(è possibile dare più preferenze, fino ad un massimo di 3; se si sceglie "Altro" specificare l'attività)

- cambiare più spesso le attività proposte in classe
- proporre più attività ludiche (= di gioco)
- proporre più spesso lavori di gruppo
- proporre più attività individuali di approfondimento su argomenti che piacciono agli studenti
- proporre più spesso la visione di video o film in lingua originale e successive attività sul video o film
- proporre più attività in cui gli studenti possono parlare in lingua inglese
- proporre più spesso l'ascolto di canzoni in lingua inglese e successive attività connesse
- proporre più spesso materiali diversi dal libro
- Altro: _____

The theoretical bases for devising this section of the questionnaire are the same as those explained in 2.3.1.1 above.

The aim of this set of items is to obtain a comprehensive picture of teachers' perceptions of their lessons, considering their awareness and attitudes towards the students' emotions, involvement, and motivation. Their views will be compared with

students' perceptions on the same topics and we will analyse the results of the comparison, highlighting similarities and differences between the two views.

2.3.2.2 SECTION TWO

The second section of the questionnaire comprises items 17 to 28. It is made up of Likert scale items that are intended to identify teachers' agreement with the statements presented. These items ask for teachers' perceptions on students' motivations, especially with respect to some classroom practices, and attitude towards English learning.

Esprima in che misura si trova d'accordo con le seguenti affermazioni:

17_ Gli studenti imparano l'inglese perché piace loro	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
18_ Gli studenti imparano l'inglese perché è utile	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
19_ Gli studenti imparano l'inglese perché devono	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
20_ Gli studenti imparano l'inglese per avere un bel voto	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
21_ Gli studenti imparano l'inglese per far piacere ai genitori	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
22_ Gli studenti sarebbero più motivati se i genitori li incoraggiassero di più all'apprendimento dell'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
23_ L'insegnante ha un ruolo molto importante nella motivazione degli studenti ad imparare l'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
24_ Fare attività più coinvolgenti durante le lezioni motiverebbe di più gli studenti ad imparare l'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
25_ L'uso di materiali diversi durante le lezioni motiverebbe di più gli studenti ad imparare l'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
26_ L'uso della tecnologia durante le lezioni motiverebbe di più gli studenti ad imparare l'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
27_ La motivazione ad imparare l'inglese dipende solo dallo studente e nessuno può modificarla	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì
28_ Gli studenti sono interessati a scoprire le diverse culture dei parlanti nativi d'inglese	Per nulla	Più no che sì	Più sì che no	Decisamente sì

As illustrated in 2.3.1.2, the creation of these statements draws chiefly from Balboni's *Tri-polar Model* and Deci and Ryan's SDT.

The principal objective of this part of the questionnaire is to understand what the teachers' views are with respect to student's types of motivation underpinning EFL learning. Moreover, teachers are questioned about the impact their behaviours and attitudes have on students' motivation and the possible improvements in classroom activities that may be motivating for learners.

Chapter 3

Analysis of students' questionnaires

This chapter will be dedicated to the analysis of the questionnaire data obtained from student participants. The data collected will be illustrated with the support of various graphs that will be described in detail one by one. Each item of the questionnaire will be presented singularly both in the original Italian version and in the English translation.

3.1 GENERAL NOTIONS

As anticipated above, the following paragraphs will show the results of the students' questionnaires.

It is to be noted that where the graphs below display percentage data, they were calculated on the total number of students that took part in this research, that is 195, except where different indications are given in the comment. Moreover, the section "no answer", where present, comprises those items that were left blank and those that were not clearly marked, for instance where more than one option was ticked when the item required a single answer.

Let us start by comprehending the composition of our sample of 195 informants.

Age of the participants

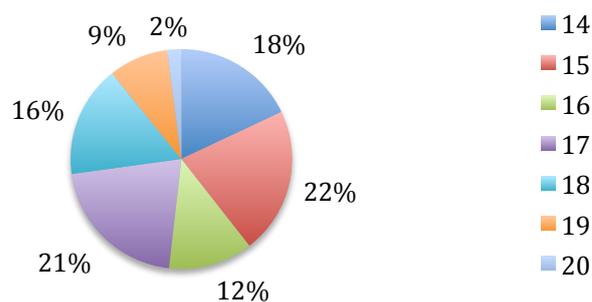


Figure 1

As illustrated in fig. 1 above, the participants' range of age is from fourteen to twenty years of age. The majority of the students who answered the questionnaire were fifteen-year-olds (22%), followed by seventeen-year-olds (21%) and fourteen-year-olds (18%), and all together these categories constitute more than a half of the participants, precisely

61% of the total. The remaining 39% of the participants is composed of eighteen-year-olds (16%), sixteen-year-olds (12%), nineteen-year-olds (9%) and twenty-year-olds (2%).

Gender of the participants

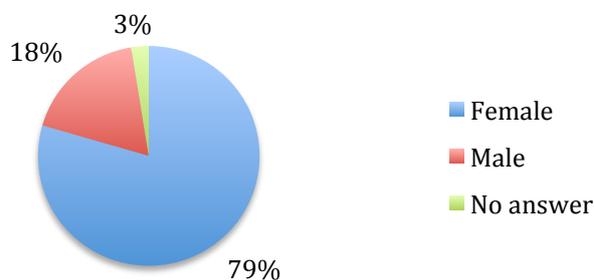


Figure 2

The pie chart in fig.2 above shows the surveyed students' gender. The vast majority of the participants are females (79%), while males represent less than a fifth of the total (18%). A small percentage (3%) of the surveyed students preferred not to mark their gender.

3.2 SECTION ONE

Let us now initiate the analysis of the responses to the items of the questionnaire. This paragraph will be about the first section, comprising items from 1 to 16.

Item 1: Sei motivato ad imparare l'inglese? / Are you motivated to learn English?

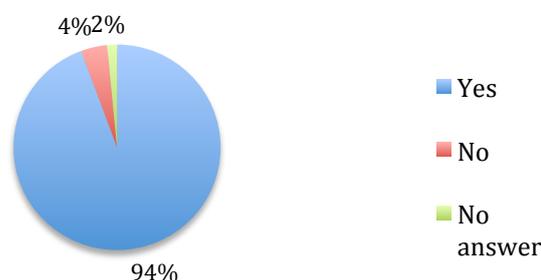


Figure 3

The graph in fig. 3 shows that the vast majority of the informants (94%) state that they are motivated to learn English, whereas just 4% claimed the opposite, that is, that they are not motivated to learn English. Only 2% of the surveyed students did not answer this item.

Item 2: Perché? / Why?

Here we must distinguish between those students who gave a positive answer to the previous item (i.e. *yes*) that correspond to the 94% (184 out of 195) and those informants who answered it negatively (i.e. *no*) that consist in the 4% (8 out of 195). In addition, the 2% who left the previous item blank (3 students out of 195), answered item 2 in any case and their responses were considered positive or negative according to their content, and thus were inserted in the corresponding category.

It is to remember that, since item 2 is an open-ended question, the students were free to highlight their personal reasons for being motivated to learn English and, therefore, in a single answer more aspects may appear. The various reasons and motivation that students adduced were analysed and grouped in diverse macro-areas.

We will start considering the first group, that is, the students who answered item 1 positively. Seven macro-areas were individuated to group their responses:

- I. ***Mi piace l'inglese / I like English***: this category comprises a range of positive comments on the language going from "... mi piace molto" to "... è una bella lingua", "... è una lingua che mi appassiona" and "... mi piace il suono" or "... è la mia lingua preferita", even though these comments retain a different degree of appreciation they manifest the liking of English on the part of the students;
- II. ***Mi piacciono le lingue / I like languages***: this category considers a general liking for foreign languages on the part of the students;
- III. ***Facilità / Easiness***: it deals with the easiness of English and of learning the language;
- IV. ***Apertura mentale / Open-mindedness***: it concerns the new views that the knowledge of a foreign language in general, and in our case English, involves;
- V. ***Culture / Cultures***: this category comprises those answers concerning the curiosity towards the culture of the various native speakers of English, as in "E' una lingua parlata in molte parti del mondo nonché porti con sè una cultura magnifica", and at the same time the possibility to get to know different cultures through English, as we understand in some answers: "Mi piace viaggiare e mi incuriosiscono altre culture e lingue" or "Perché mi piace imparare questa lingua per poter scoprire nuove culture parlando questa lingua";
- VI. ***Utilità - Importanza / Usefulness – Importance***: this aspect will be further developed later, and the students responses about the utility of English will be illustrated in a

dedicated graph, considering the huge amount of utilitarian motivations comprised in it;

VII. **Obiettivo / Objective**: this category is about considering EFL learning as a personal objective.

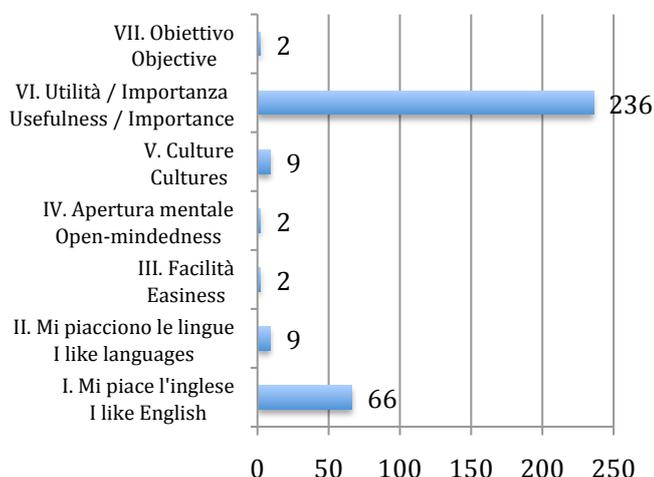


Figure 4

The graph above (fig.4) represents the reasons of the participants for being motivated to learn English. As we can easily see the *Usefulness / Importance* category (VI) is the most mentioned (236), followed by the first category *I like English* (I) with 66 preferences, and *I like languages* and *Cultures* that were mentioned 9 times each. Finally *Easiness*, *Open-mindedness* and *Objective* received 2 mentions each.

Let us now focus on category VI. *Usefulness / Importance* that comprises more motivational and utilitarian aspects, such as:

- I. **Utilità - importanza generale / General usefulness – importance**: this category has been maintained because a lot of students indicated just the general utility and importance of English without specifying a precise aspect of its usefulness in answers such as, for instance: “Serve nella vita”, “E’ utile” or “Perché è una lingua importante”;
- II. **Futuro /Future**: this category comprises a range of comments on the importance and / or usefulness of English for the future of the world in general and of the single student in particular, such as: “Perché è la lingua del futuro...”, “ Perché mi piace e mi permetterà molti sbocchi nel futuro”, “E’ una lingua utile e necessaria per il futuro”;

- III. **Film / TV series**: it deals with the utility of knowing English for watching films or TV series in their original language, as explained in the following answer, for example: “Perché è una lingua utile e serve per guardare serie TV e film in lingua originale (non solo)”;
- IV. **Comunicazione / Communication**: this category is about the emphasis put on communication, both to those who do not speak Italian (L1 of the participants) and to people from different nationalities around the world, as we understand, for instance, in the following answers: “... è molto utile se si vuole comunicare con uno straniero che non sa parlare italiano”, “Perché credo sia molto importante poter comunicare con tutte le altre persone del mondo” and “Ritengo che l’inglese sia necessario per la comunicazione poiché tutto il mondo lo parla”;
- V. **Canzoni / Songs**: it deals with the possibility of understanding and translating songs, as demonstrate answers like: “Perché mi piace tradurmi le canzoni in inglese” or “Per poter capire le canzoni ...”;
- VI. **Lavoro / Job**: it is about the usefulness and importance of English in finding a job and building a career, as in: “Perché so che serve nel mondo del lavoro”, “...é necessaria per il mio futuro lavorativo” and “... ti serve in qualsiasi ambito lavorativo”;
- VII. **Viaggi / Travels**: this category regards the utility of English with respect to travelling, which is reflected in answers such as: “Per l’importanza della lingua inglese per girare il mondo ...”, “E’ utile per viaggiare” or “Perché voglio girare il mondo”;
- VIII. **Lingua globale / Global language**: it regards the special status of English and its leading position as a lingua franca. It comprises many shades of this concept, such as: “Perché è la lingua più importante del mondo e quasi tutti la parlano un pochino”, “Perché oggi l’inglese si parla in tutto il mondo...”, “Perché è importante sapere una lingua internazionale” or “ E’ una lingua molto usata”, “... è una lingua che conoscono tutti”;
- IX. **Eestero / Abroad**: this category concerns the usefulness of English for those students who would like to live or work abroad, as we can see in answers like the following: “... nella speranza di futuro all’estero, magari in Inghilterra”, “ ... in futuro desidero vivere, anche solo per un periodo, in un paese anglofono” and “... voglio lavorare all’estero”;

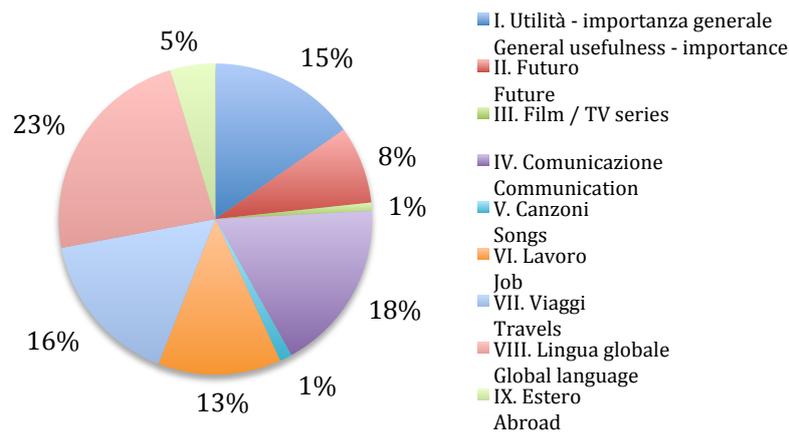


Figure 5

The graph in fig. 5 above shows the composition of the whole category *Usefulness – Importance* in fig. 4 (cf. p. 35 above) that obtained 236 mentions; the percentage shown above, thus, refer to this total number. We can notice that the aspect that motivate students the most to learn English is its status of global language and indeed the corresponding category represents a significant 23% of the total answers regarding utility. This motivational factor is followed by *Communication* that makes up 18% of the whole, and *Travels* that obtained mentions accounting for a 16%. These three categories all together form the 57% of the total responses dealing with the usefulness of English and, therefore, represent the principal reasons why our sample of students are motivated to learn it as a foreign language. The previous categories are followed by *General usefulness – importance* that represents the 15% of the total; however, this section does not give much insight on the practical purposes that lead students to be motivated to learn EFL. Notwithstanding, more specific categories obtained a consistent number of mentions, such as: *Job*, 13%, *Future* with its 8% and *Abroad*, 5%. Finally, the sections that obtained less preferences were *Film / Tv series* and *Songs*, covering 1% of the total each.

The following part, instead, will deal with the responses of those informants who answered item 1 negatively. We will consider their answers plus another one of a student who left item 1 blank, but responded to item 2.

Some categories were devised in order to group the responses; the initial three of them regard the relationship between the student and the FL, English, and the last is about the relationship with the EFL teacher:

- I. *Non mi piace l'inglese / I don't like English*: it is about the appreciation of the language on the part of the students;

- II. *Lo trovo difficile / I find it difficult*: it concerns the difficulty of the language and of learning it;
- III. *Non mi serve / I don't need it*: it deals with the irrelevance of English for the student, the response represented in this category is: “Non mi serve perché tanto sto in Italia”;
- IV. *Non mi piace l'insegnante / I don't like the teacher*: this category comprises all those answers concerning the relationship with the teacher, for instance: “Perché tutte le insegnanti avute fino ad ora non mi hanno trasmesso l'amore per la lingua”, “Perché non mi piace molto la mia insegnante, non è per niente brava ad insegnare” and “Perché la prof mi ha presa di mira”. Interestingly, the response of an informant that left item 1 unanswered was: “Perché mi piace l'inglese però la mia prof non sa spiegare e ti fa odiare la lingua”.

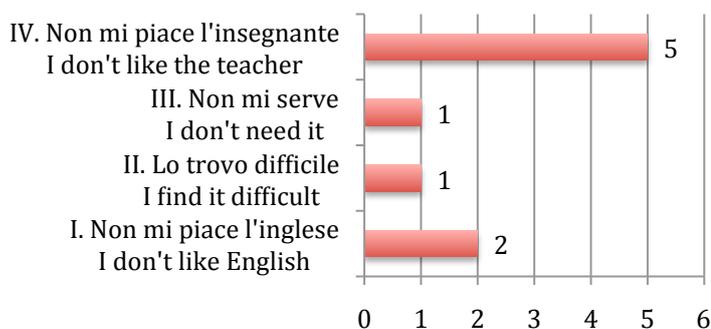


Figure 6

In fig. 6 above, it is noticeable that the most quoted issue was in the relationship with the EFL teacher: category IV, *I don't like the teacher*, had 5 mentions out of 9, which is more than a half of the total negative answers to this item. The remaining 4 responses are divided within the first category, *I don't like English*, that was mentioned twice (2) and *I find it difficult* and *I don't need it* that obtained 1 mention each.

Item 3: Pensi che l'insegnante cerchi di motivarti ad imparare la lingua? / Do you think that the teacher tries to motivate you to learn English?

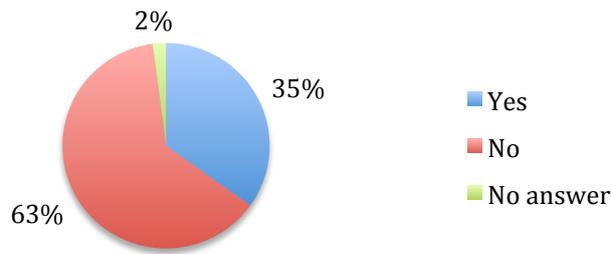


Figure 7

From the responses we obtained to this question, we can see that more than a half of the students, 63%, do not think that their EFL teacher tries to motivate them to learn the language. However, there is a consistent 35% that believes that the teacher tries to motivate them. Only 2% of the informants gave no answer to this item.

The following item subdivides in two parts: Item 3.1 A and Item 3.1 B. They consist of two open-ended questions addressed to those informants who answered item 3 positively (Item 3.1 A), which accounted for 35% of the students, and to those participants who responded negatively in the previous item (Item 3.1 B), which correspond to 63% of the total.

A number of macro-areas were identified in order to collect the various aspects named in the students' answers. The majority of them are common to Item 3.1 A and Item 3.1 B, but some factors emerged only in one of the two groups.

It is to be noted that some students left item 3 blank, but answered item 3.1. These responses were analysed on the basis of their content and inserted in Item 3.1 A or B accordingly.

Item 3.1 A: Se sì, come? / If yes, how?

The following categories were devised in order to gather together those answers that regarded the same or similar factors that the informants found motivating in their teacher's attitudes and behaviours, namely:

- I. ***Coinvolgimento / Involvement***: it is about the students' involvement and engagement in the classroom activities on the part of the teacher, displayed in answers like: "Cercando di coinvolgermi nella lezione...", "Rendendo le attività coinvolgenti...";

- II. **Argomenti / Topics**: it concerns the interest that the students demonstrate with respect to the topics of the English lessons as shown in answers such as “Perché è competente e tratta temi attuali”, “ Proponendo argomenti interessanti” and “Mostrando video interessanti in lingua su argomenti di nostro interesse”;
- III. **Spiegazione / Explanation**: it is about the ability of the teacher to explain clearly, as stated, for instance in: “ Mi piace molto il suo metodo di insegnamento, spiega bene”;
- IV. **Speaking**: it refers to speaking activities, mentioned in responses like: “Facendoci sempre parlare inglese” and “ Con molti esercizi e dialoghi con lei o tra noi”;
- V. **Nuove attività / New activities**: it regards the novelty of the activities or tasks proposed, as in: “Con attività innovative che stimolano anche creatività e manualità” and “Con attività non inerenti al programma...”;
- VI. **Metodo / Method**: this category is about the liking of the general way of teaching on the part of the students, understandable in answers like the following: “ Mi piace molto il suo metodo d’insegnamento, lo trovo efficace, inoltre ha una pronuncia perfetta” and “La mia prof cerca di motivarci ad imparare l’inglese insistendo sulle attività orali in modo tale da renderci più autonomi. Lo trovo un metodo consono per acquisire la lingua”;
- VII. **Equilibrio attività / Activities balance**: it regards the general balance of the activities that emerges from answers such as: “...mostrando che non c’è solo teoria o grammatica ma anche la pratica”;
- VIII. **Film / video**: this category refers to the exploitation of films and videos in English for teaching/learning purposes, which appears to be appreciated by students in responses as the following: “Proponendoci la visione di film in lingua...” or “Mostrando video interessanti...”;
- IX. **Lavori di gruppo / Group work**: it consists of those answers mentioning the group work as a motivating factor such as: “Con lavori di gruppo...” or “Attraverso lavori di gruppo...”;
- X. **Approfondimenti / Projects**: it deals with individual projects that students do and then comment in class, as outlined in responses like: “Con ricerche” or “ Attraverso ... e ricerche personali poi commentate in classe”;
- XI. **Interattività / Interactivity**: it comprises all those answers referring to dialogic lessons where students intervene in discussions, for example: “ Rendendo le lezioni interattive”, “ Facendoci parlare ed intervenire” or “ Con... e discussione in classe”;

- XII. *No ansia / No anxiety*: this category emphasises the lack of anxiety during the English lessons, it is expressed in responses like: “Facendomi passare la paura di parlare inglese davanti a tutta la classe...” or “... mette noi studenti a proprio agio durante la lezione...”;
- XIII. *Aiuto – Incoraggiamento / Help – Encouragement*: it refers to the help and encouragement that the teacher provides to students, which appears in: “... e se sono in difficoltà cerca di aiutarmi il più possibile” and “ Dandoci fiducia e autonomia, insistendo affinché possiamo raggiungere tutti dei buoni obiettivi”;
- XIV. *Motivazione / Motivation*: this category regards the general drive to learn the language that the teacher tries to enhance in different ways, as explained for instance in: “Ci fa comprendere l’importanza della lingua” or “Cerca di motivarci facendo piccoli esempi di vita” and “ Insegnandomi cose nuove, stimolandomi e incitandomi a studiarle”;
- XV. *Libro di testo / Textbook*: it concerns the use of teaching/learning materials that are different from the textbook;
- XVI. *Professionalità / Professionalism*: it comprises the knowledge and the skills of the teacher, expressed by the informants in answers like: “... è competente” or “... è molto qualificata”;
- XVII. *Passione / Passion*: it is about the passion and the efforts that the teacher puts in her work and transmits to her students, for instance: “Mettendo impegno nell’insegnare la sua materia”, “Ce la insegna con passione” or “Ci trasferisce la sua passione per la lingua...”;
- XVIII. *Consigli / Advice*: it refers to the tendency of the teacher to give some advice to the students, such as: “Ci consiglia di fare esercizio vedendo film in inglese e leggendo libri in lingua” or “Consigliandoci come fare per impararla nel migliore dei modi”;
- XIX. *Tecnologia / Technology*: it deals with the exploitation of technology on the part of the teacher, as expressed in: “ Crede nello sviluppo della lingua tramite le nuove tecnologie...” or “ ...proponendo attività multimediali...”;
- XX. *Altro / Other*: this category comprises those aspects that were mentioned just once, that is: students are motivated by the teacher through pleasant lessons, the use of songs for teaching/learning purposes, the proposal of specific exercises and games for pronunciation and drama activities. Moreover, one student found motivating the fact that the EFL teacher had a perfect pronunciation, while another one highlights

the relevance of the organisation of contacts with mother tongue speakers that the teacher provided.

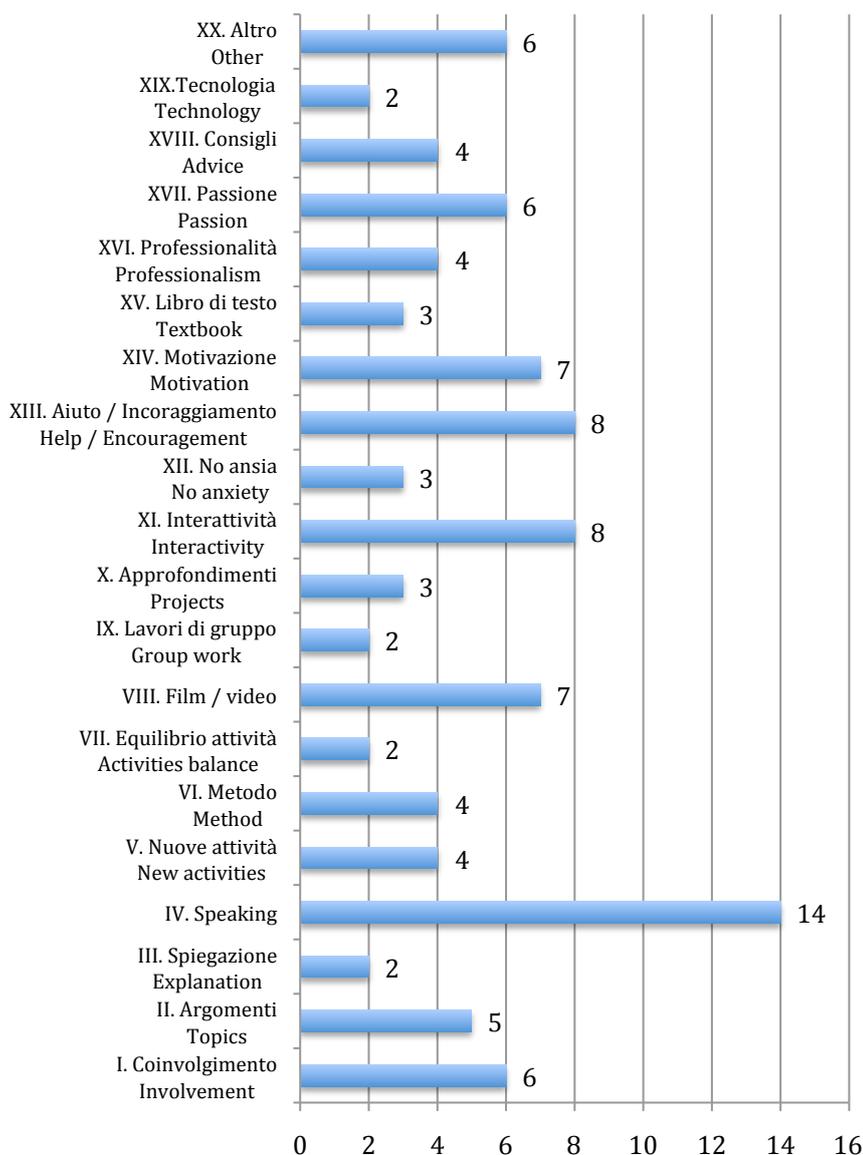


Figure 8

It is clear that the activity that represent the strongest motivational factor is *Speaking*, that was mentioned by 14 students; it is followed by the categories *Interactivity* and *Help - Encouragement*, with 8 mentions. Then *Film / video* and *Motivation* were named 7 times each, followed by *Involvement*, *Passion* and *Other*, that obtained 6 mentions each. The category *Topics* was named by 5 students, whilst *New activities*, *Method*, *Professionalism* and *Advice* were mentioned 4 times each. They are followed by *Projects*, *No anxiety* and *Textbook* that were named by 3 informants each. To conclude, *Explanation*, *Activities balance*, *Group work* and *Technology* received 2 mentions each.

Item 3.1 B: Se no, che cosa dovrebbe fare per motivarti? / If not, what should the teacher do to motivate you?

The categories that were identified to group the students' answers to this open-ended question are:

- I. ***Coinvolgimento / Involvement***: it is about the students' desire for higher involvement and engagement in the classroom activities, displayed in answers like: "Dovrebbe coinvolgerci di più...", "Secondo me dovrebbe cercare di coinvolgere di più la classe..." and "Trovare un modo di renderci più partecipi...". Moreover, this section comprises the desire for involvement in the decision of the classroom activities, expressed in responses as: "Penso che dovrebbe coinvolgerci di più nella scelta della attività e ogni tanto lasciarci scegliere cosa fare...";
- II. ***Argomenti / Topics***: it concerns the requests for different topics, more interesting and closer to the students' situation or age, as shown, for example, in: "Coinvolgerci un po' di più trattando cose più adatte alla nostra età...", "Per motivarmi dovrebbe trattare più spesso argomenti che piacciono di più ai ragazzi", or "Scegliere argomenti diversi da trattare in classe...";
- III. ***Lezione piacevole / Pleasant lesson***: it comprises the desires for funnier and more pleasant lessons, with the exploitation of game activities to learn more easily, as expressed in: "... fare attività anche divertenti che ci motivino...", "Rendere la lezione divertente ma allo stesso tempo istruttiva", "... renderla più interessante e piacevole..." or "... penso che dovrebbe proporre più attività di gioco perché penso che così si imparerebbe l'inglese più facilmente";
- IV. ***Canzoni / Songs***: this category is about the wish to use songs as a teaching/learning means, displayed in responses like: "... Mi piacerebbe anche ascoltare canzoni di lingua straniera e lavorare sul testo";
- V. ***Spiegazione / Explanation***: it regards how the students would like the teacher to explain and it consists of varied and diverse opinions: "L'insegnante dovrebbe spiegare meglio gli argomenti trattati e non ripetere sempre le stesse cose", "Dovrebbe spiegare di più", "... spiegarci di più la grammatica..." or "A mio parere dovrebbe spiegare in maniera più chiara e non vaga";
- VI. ***Speaking***: it deals with the desire on the part of the students to practice more their speaking during the English lessons, as we can understand in answers like: "... dovrebbe proporre più attività dove ci si esercita a parlare", "... fare più lezioni orali...", "Farci parlare di più in inglese..." or "Fare più ore di conversazione";

- VII. **Nuove attività / New activities**: it regards the wish for new activities, as expressed, for instance, in: “Proporre nuove attività in classe”, “Dovrebbe cambiare più spesso tipologia di attività in classe...” or “Dovrebbe cercare di ... fare sempre cose nuove...”;
- VIII. **Metodo / Method**: it refers to the students’ opinion on the teacher’s general way of teaching, which they think should be different (not specifying in detail what should be different) as in the following responses: “Dovrebbe utilizzare metodi differenti di insegnamento...”, “Migliorare il metodo d’insegnamento” or “... cambiare radicalmente modo di insegnare”;
- IX. **Equilibrio attività / Activities balance**: it regards the balance of the activities proposed in class that should be more diversified, as emerges from answers such as: “Bilanciare meglio grammatica e antologia inglese in modo da esercitarsi su entrambi i fronti...”, “... non farci passare intere lezioni a fare solamente esercizi” and “... non farci fare solo grammatica”;
- X. **Pronuncia / Pronunciation**: it concerns the students’ desire for practical exercises on pronunciation, as for example in: “... più esercizi per la pronuncia sarebbero ideali” or “... farci praticare la lingua anche con giochi di pronuncia”;
- XI. **Film / video**: it is about using film and videos in English as learning materials and activities, as suggested in answers like: “... farci apprendere l’inglese anche con film...”, “... una buona idea sarebbe quella di farci guardare film in lingua inglese”, or “... farci vedere video e film in inglese”;
- XII. **Lavori di gruppo / Group work**: it deals with the desire for group work that is displayed in responses such as: “Dovrebbe farci fare esercizi in gruppo...”;
- XIII. **Approfondimenti / Projects**: it is about proposing individual projects on specific topics, as appears in answers like: “Farci fare lavori e approfondimenti sugli argomenti...”;
- XIV. **Interattività / Interactivity**: it regards the attitude of the teacher towards the students, the main ideas suggested among students’ responses are that the teacher should favour the dialogue between them, proposing interactive lessons, as expressed for example in: “Proporre più attività interattive, non usando solo il metodo classico”, “Interagire di più con noi...”, or “Cercando di avere più dialogo con noi...”;
- XV. **Valutazione / Evaluation**: this category is about the teacher’s evaluation system with which some students seem not to agree, as shown in answers such as: “Dovrebbe ...

valutare gli studenti per le loro effettive capacità e conoscenze” or “Cambiare le valutazioni”;

- XVI. ***Ansia / Anxiety***: it concerns the atmosphere that the teacher creates within the EFL classroom, some informants believe that the teacher: “Dovrebbe mettere meno ansia agli studenti...” and “ ... non mettermi ansia durante le interrogazioni e verifiche”;
- XVII. ***Madrelingua / Native speakers***: it regards the contact with mother tongue speakers of English that the teacher should organise or favour as some students stated, for instance in: “Proporre scambi culturali con paesi anglosassoni”;
- XVIII. ***Aiuto – Incoraggiamento / Help – Encouragement***: it deals with the attitude and behaviour of the teacher towards the students, some aspects of what the teacher should do were highlighted: “Dovrebbe aiutare l’alunno ad esporsi meglio nel parlare, aiutarmi nelle cose che non capisco”, “ Dovrebbe ... sostenere e valorizzare gli alunni” and “... darmi autostima”;
- XIX. ***Motivazione / Motivation***: this category comprises the general motivations to learn English that the teacher should convey and enhance in the students, as explained for instance in: “Dovrebbe cercare di farci capire l’importanza dell’inglese al giorno d’oggi”, “Dovrebbe... motivarci a studiarlo” and “Dovrebbe spronarci di più”;
- XX. ***Libro di testo / Textbook***: it concerns the use of learning materials that are different from the textbook, as explained in the following responses: “Utilizzare esercizi differenti da quelli del libro” or “ Cercare di fare attività diverse dal libro”;
- XXI. ***Parlare inglese / Speak English***: this category emphasises that the teacher should speak English during EFL lessons: “Condurre l’intera lezione parlando in lingua e non intervallando il discorso con interventi in italiano”, “... e non spiegando in italiano” and “ Parlare di più in inglese durante la lezione”;
- XXII. ***Pazienza / Patience***: it regards the teacher’s behaviour towards the students that should be “... più paziente” or “... meno severa”;
- XXIII. ***Professionalità / Professionalism***: it concerns the teacher’s knowledge and skills, according to some students the teacher: “Dovrebbe... essere più professionale” and “... dovrebbe essere padrone della lingua”. It is to be noted that within this category 3 informants referred in particular to the teacher’s pronunciation, reporting that the teacher should “... conoscere meglio la pronuncia” or “ ... avere un pronuncia più corretta”;
- XXIV. ***Altro / Other***: this category consists of the sum of those aspects that were mentioned just once in students’ responses, namely: proposing more listening

activities, marking homework writings sooner and following the teaching/learning programme and its order without skipping topics. In addition, the teacher should convey her passion for the language to the students, advise them and propose them to read books in English.

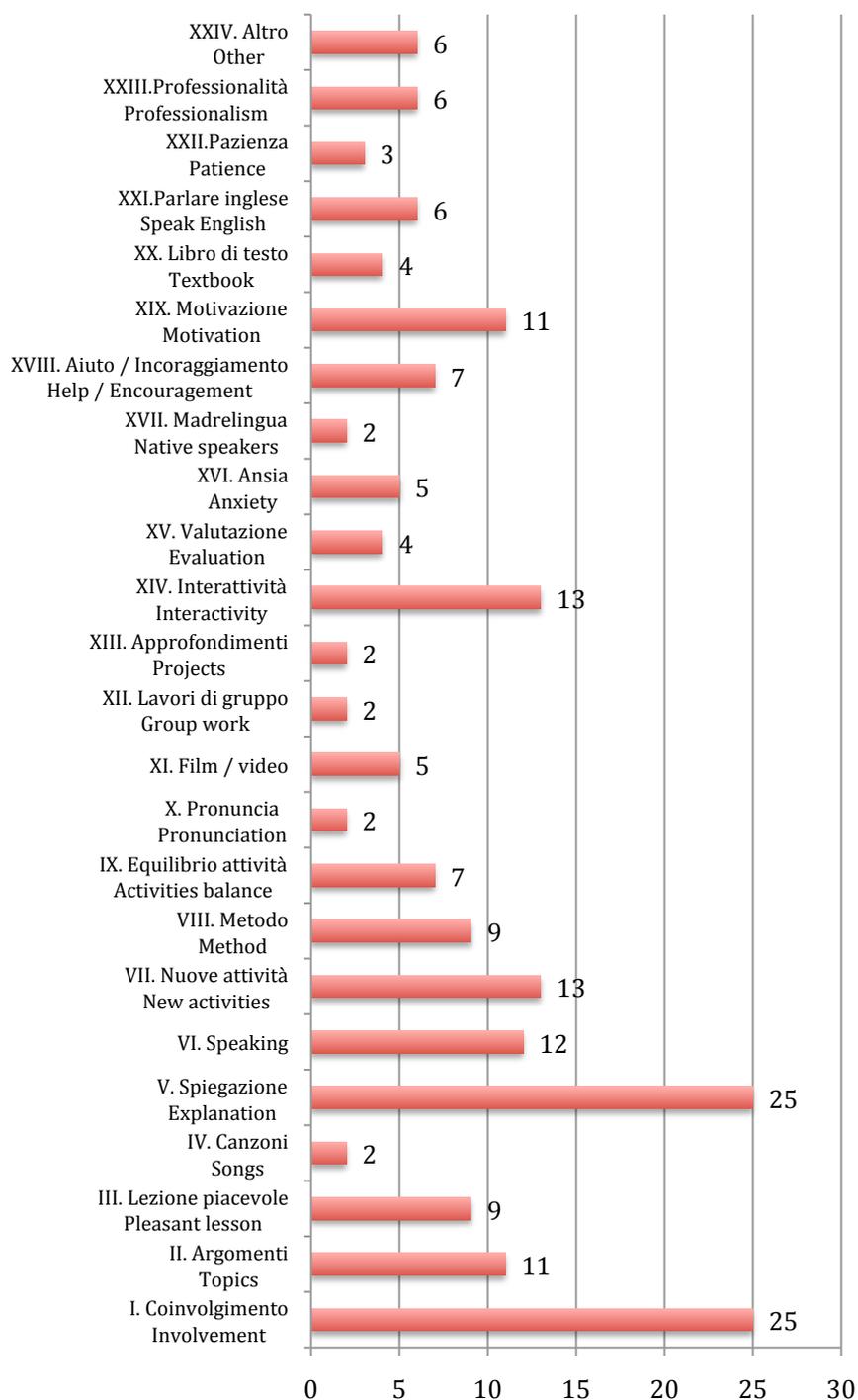


Figure 9

Looking at fig. 9, the first thing to be noticed is that two aspects were mentioned far more than all the others, that is, *Involvement* and *Explanation*; both of them were named 25

times. They represent, thus, the most important aspects on which the teacher should work in order to motivate our informants. These categories are followed by *New activities* and *Interactivity* that obtained 13 mentions each, and by *Speaking*, named 12 times. Other aspects that received a consistent number of mentions were *Topics* and *Motivation*, each one named 11 times, and *Pleasant lesson* and *Method* that obtained 9 mentions each. Continuing our analysis of the graph, we find the categories *Activities balance* and *Help – Encouragement* that were named 7 times each and *Speak English*, *Professionalism* and *Other* that were mentioned 6 times each. With a lower number of mentions, but not to be disregarded, there are: *Film / video* and *Anxiety*, mentioned 5 times each, *Evaluation* and *Textbook*, 4 mentions each, *Patience* (named 3 times) and *Songs*, *Pronunciation*, *Group work*, *Projects* and *Native speaker* that received 2 mentions each.

The next item is internally subdivided into 3 different categories dealing with diverse feelings or emotional states that the students may experience during the EFL lessons. The informants have been enquired about the three aspects of self-esteem, autonomy and anxiety.

Item 4: Pensi che l'insegnante cerchi di... / Do you think that the teacher tries to ...
 ... aumentare la tua **autostima** / increase your **self-esteem**?

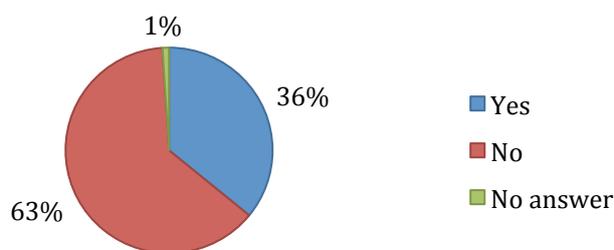


Figure 10

On the one hand, the majority of the informants (63%) perceive that the teacher does not try to foster their self-esteem during the English lessons. On the other hand, a significant 36% believe that the teacher tries to support them as far as their self-esteem is concerned.

... aumentare la tua **autonomia**? / enhance your **autonomy**?

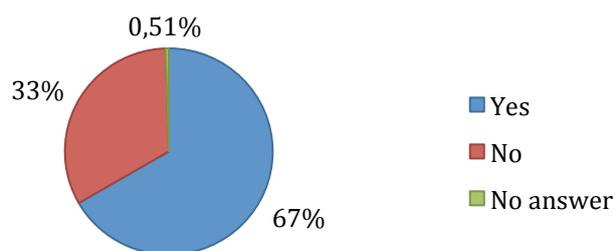


Figure 11

In fig. 11 above the results are almost asymmetrical with respect to the previous sub-category (fig. 10). Indeed, a consistent 67% finds that the teacher tries to boost students' autonomy during English lessons, whilst a third of the participants (33%) believe the opposite.

... diminuire l'eventuale **ansia** durante le lezioni di inglese? / diminish possible **anxiety** during English lessons?

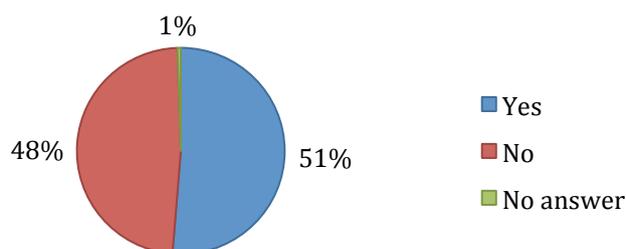


Figure 12

The situation changes significantly when it comes to anxiety. The responses are almost a draw: 51% of the informants affirm that they perceive that the teacher tries to lessen the possible anxiety during the English lesson whereas 48% of the students state that they do not think the teacher tries to diminish their anxiety.

It is to be highlighted that just a small rate of participants left these items unanswered; probably this signifies that the aspects we addressed (i.e. fostering students' self-esteem and autonomy and lessening their anxiety) are generally considered relevant and worthy on the part of the students.

The next item is connected to item 4 and indeed it required an answer just from those students who marked the previous items with at least one *no*. Some of the informants who marked the previous items with all positive responses (i.e. *yes*) answered the following question in any case, but their answers were not taken into consideration because they were deemed inappropriate to the aim of the question itself. The participants who ticked at least

one no in the various items of question n°4 were 149 out of 195, that is 76% of the total sample.

Item 4.1: Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante ti incoraggiasse di più nei punti indicati alla domanda n°4? / Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher encouraged you more in the aspects indicated in question n°4?

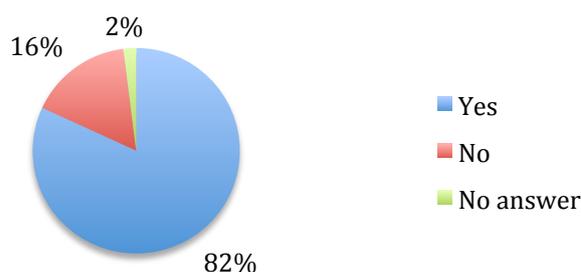


Figure 13

The vast majority of the 149 informants, 82%, answered that they would be more motivated to learn English if the teacher were more supportive with respect to their self-esteem, autonomy and anxiety. Only 16% of them disagreed and 2% did not respond to this item.

Item 5: L'insegnante ti coinvolge nella decisione delle attività da svolgere in classe? / Does the teacher involve you in the decision of the classroom activities?

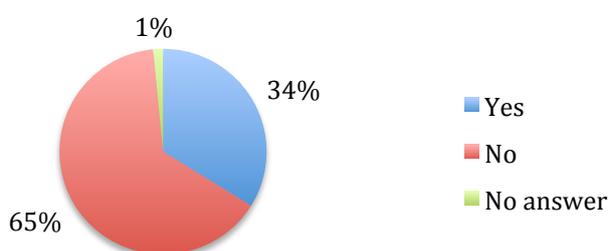


Figure 14

As fig. 14 above illustrates, 65% of the students attest that the teacher does not involve them in the decision of the classroom activities, while 34% confirm that the teacher actually involves them in the decision process.

Item 6: Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante ti coinvolgesse di più nella decisione delle attività da svolgere in classe? / Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher involved you more in the decision of classroom activities?

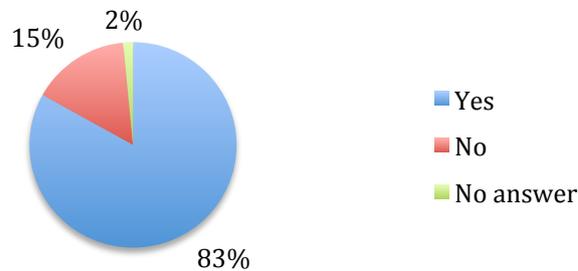


Figure 15

A striking 83% of the participants claimed that they would be more motivated to learn English if they were involved in the decision of the classroom activities more. Just 15% of the students, instead, state that this would not enhance their motivation.

Item 7: L'insegnante propone attività piacevoli: / The teacher proposes pleasant activities:

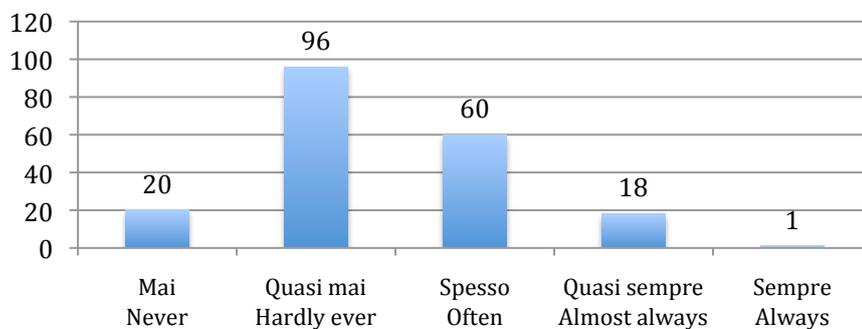


Figure 16

The most quoted answer with respect to the frequency of pleasant activities proposed in class was *Hardly ever*, chosen by 96 students out of 195, which correspond to a 49% of the sample. This result is followed by 60 *Often* (31%), 20 *Never* (10%), 18 *Almost always* (9%) and 1 (1%) *Always*. On balance, the negative answers *Never* and *Hardly ever*, which represent 59% of the responses, outline the positive ones consisting in the sum of *Often*, *Almost always* and *Always*, that all together correspond to 41% of the total.

It is to be highlighted that this is one of the few items that was left blank by no student.

Item 8: Le attività proposte in classe che più mi piacciono sono: / The activities proposed in class that I like the most are:

It is to be noted that, as explained in the previous chapter (cf. 2.3.1.1), the instructions foresaw the possibility of ticking a maximum number of options, that is, 5. The intention of giving a limit to the possible answers aimed at making participants reflect on those options they deemed most relevant. However, given that many informants overlooked this restriction (whether on purpose or out of distraction we cannot tell) and that it would not be fair to consider the first 5 options as the only valid answers, it has been decided to ignore the initial instructions and take into account all the options that the students marked, assuming that they found them all relevant.

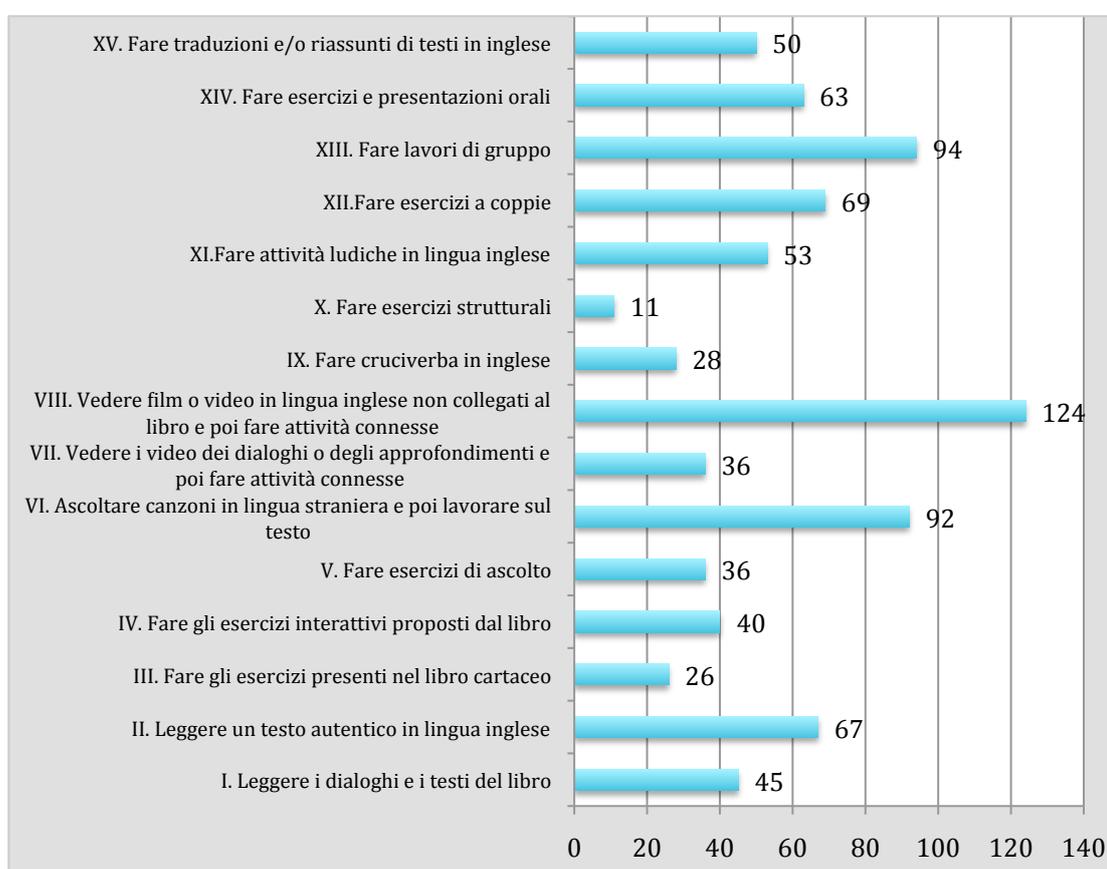


Figure 17

I.	Reading the dialogues and texts in the textbook
II.	Reading an authentic text in English (e.g. newspaper article, literary text, etc.)
III.	Doing the exercises in the textbook
IV.	Doing the interactive exercises that the book proposes (e.g. LIM, on-line exercises expansion, etc.)
V.	Doing listening exercises (with audio CD)
VI.	Listening to songs in English and then working on the lyrics
VII.	Watching the videos of the dialogues or of the supplementary activities proposed in the textbook and then doing activities connected to them
VIII.	Watching films or videos in English that are not connected with the textbook and then doing activities connected to them
IX.	Doing crosswords in English
X.	Doing pattern drills

XI.	Doing game activities in English
XII.	Doing exercises in pairs
XIII.	Doing group work
XIV.	Doing oral exercises or presentations
XV.	Doing translations and/or summaries of texts in English

Table 1 _ Options translation - fig.17 above

This item was not answered by 7 students, therefore the percentage data reported below were calculated on the basis of 188 total informants, who ticked an average of 4 options each.

In fig. 17 we can notice that the option that obtained the majority of the preferences was option VIII, here for brevity, *Watching films or videos in English* that obtained 124 mentions by our informants, that corresponds to 66% of the total. It is followed by option XIII, *Doing group work*, ticked 94 times (50%) and option VI, here for brevity, *Songs* that obtained 92 preferences (49%). Other options that received high scores were: XII, *Doing exercises in pairs*, marked 69 times (36%); II, *Reading an authentic text in English*, that was ticked 67 times (35%); XIV, *Doing oral exercises or presentations* that obtained 63 preferences (33%), and XI, *Doing game activities in English* that was marked 53 times (28%).

In the middle section of the graph there are options: XV, *Doing translations and /or summaries of texts in English* with 50 preferences (26%); I, *Reading dialogues and texts in the textbook* that was marked 45 times (23%), and option IV, *Doing the interactive exercises that the book proposes* that was ticked 40 times (21%).

These options received less than 40 preferences, that is, less than 20% of the informants marked each of the following categories: V, *Doing listening exercises* and VII, here abbreviated in *Watching the videos of the dialogues* obtained 36 ticks (19%), while option XI, *Doing crosswords in English* and III, *Doing the exercises in the textbook* received 28 and 26 preferences respectively (corresponding to 14% and 13% of the total). The option that obtained fewer preferences was option X, *Doing pattern drills* that was marked 11 times (6%).

Just 10 students (about 5%) marked and filled in option XVI. *Altro / Other*, giving different suggestions than those proposed by the questionnaire. The majority of them are concerned with oral activities such as: “Avere dialogo con persone madrelingua inglese”, “Esercitarmi nel parlare la lingua”, “Attività teatrali in inglese”, “Riassunti orali di testi in inglese per migliorare spontaneamente la sintassi” and “Guardare più film senza fare verifica”. Two of them asked for working on songs: “Analizzare i modi di dire contenuti

nelle canzoni” and “Traduzioni di canzoni in inglese”. In addition, the remaining suggestions are: “Scrivere considerazioni sui brani affrontati”, “Fare esercizi singolarmente”, and “UDA su libri”.

Item 9: Saresti più motivato ad imparare l’inglese se l’insegnante proponesse più spesso attività piacevoli? / Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed pleasant activities more often?

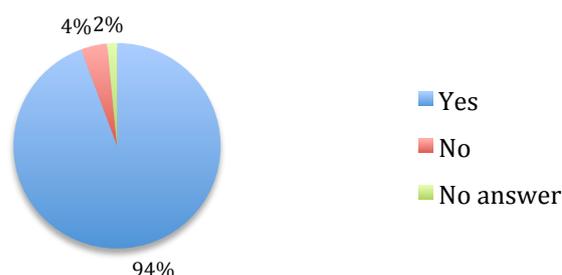


Figure 18

The overwhelming majority of the informants (94%) stated that they would be more motivated if the teacher proposed pleasant activities more often. Only a 4% were of the opposite opinion and a 2% did not answer this item.

Item 10: L’insegnante propone attività nuove: / The teacher proposes new activities:

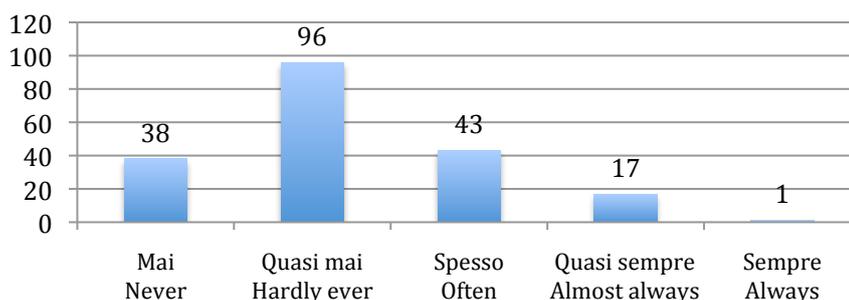


Figure 19

As illustrated in fig. 19, we can notice that the majority of the informants signalled that the EFL teacher *Hardly ever* proposes new activities (96). This data (corresponding to 49% of our sample) added to the 38 ticks on *Never* (19%) make up more than a half of the total, namely 68%. This rate outlines greatly the remaining 32% of positive answers, consisting of 43 *Often* (22%), 17 *Almost always* (9%) and 1 *Always* (1%).

Item 11: Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività nuove? / Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed new activities more often?

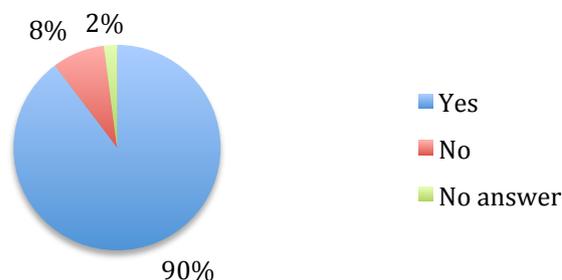


Figure 20

The majority of the students, 90%, think that they would be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed new activities more frequently. On the contrary 8% of them do not believe that novel activities would influence their motivation. Only 2% of the informants did not answer this item.

Item 12: L'insegnante propone attività e compiti che ritieni realizzabili: / The teacher proposes activities and tasks that you deem feasible:

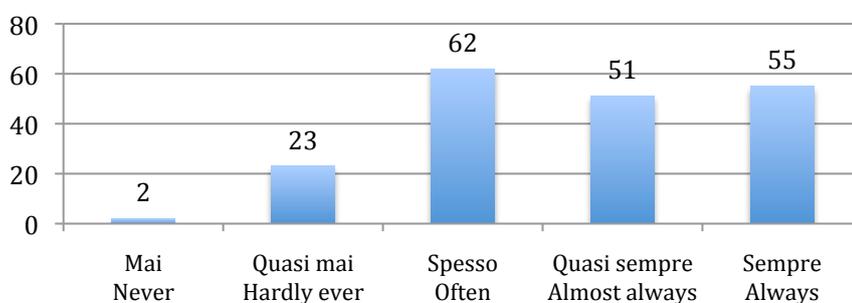


Figure 21

In this case, it can easily be observed that positive responses greatly exceed negative ones. The options that scored higher were *Often*, 62, *Always*, 55, and *Almost always*, 51, corresponding to 32%, 28% and 26% respectively. This means that all together they account for 86% of the total. Negative answers comprises 23 *Hardly ever* (12%) and 2 *Never* (1%). The remaining 1% did not answer this item.

Item 13: Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività realizzabili? / Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed feasible activities more often?

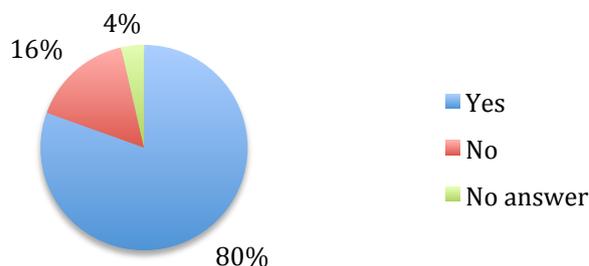


Figure 22

As shown in fig. 22 above, 80% of the informants think that they would be more motivated if the teacher proposed feasible activities more often. Nonetheless, 16% of the students would not be more motivated by this aspect. 4% of the informants did not respond to this item.

Item 14: L'insegnante propone attività che **non** mettono a rischio la tua autostima e la tua immagine di fronte ai compagni: / The teacher proposes activities that do **not** undermine your self-esteem and your image in front of your classmates:

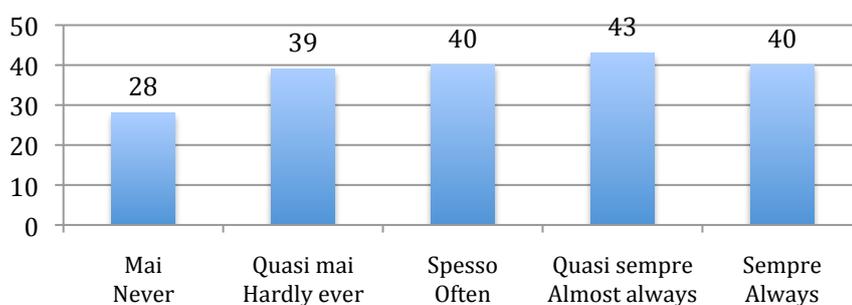


Figure 23

The responses given to Item 14 do not display a clear contrast as in the previous ones; on the contrary, the students' opinions are in this case more varied. The options that obtained more ticks were *Almost always* (43), and *Often* and *Always* (40 each), reflecting 22% and 21% respectively. The sum of these categories accounts for 64% of the total, therefore, the positive answers outline the negative ones. The remaining 36% divides into: 39 *Hardly ever* (20%), 28 *Never* (14%) and 2% without answer.

Item 15: Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività che **non** mettono a rischio la tua autostima e la tua immagine di fronte ai compagni? / Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed activities that do **not** undermine your self-esteem and your image in front of your classmates more often?

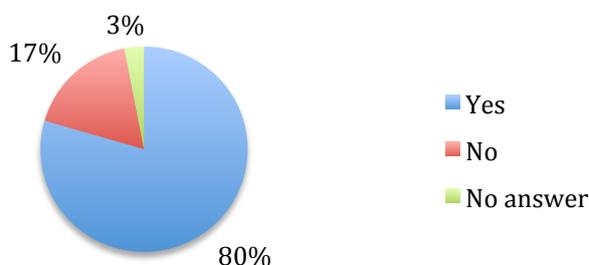


Figure 24

According to fig. 24 above, a relevant 80% of the informants would be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed activities that do not endanger their social and self-image. However, 17% of the surveyed students do not believe that they would be more motivated to learn EFL if the teacher proposed such activities more often. 3% of the total did not respond to this item.

Item 16: Per motivarmi di più l'insegnante dovrebbe: / To motivate me more the teacher should:

As for item 8 a short premise on the responses to this item should be made.

It is to be noted that the instructions gave the possibility of marking a maximum number of options, that is, 3 (corresponding to about a third of the total options). Individuating a limit to the possible number of answers aimed at making participants ponder on their responses and therefore choose the options that they deemed most significant. Nonetheless, many informants did not observe this restriction and it has been decided to overlook the initial instructions and consider all the options that the students marked, assuming that they found them all relevant.

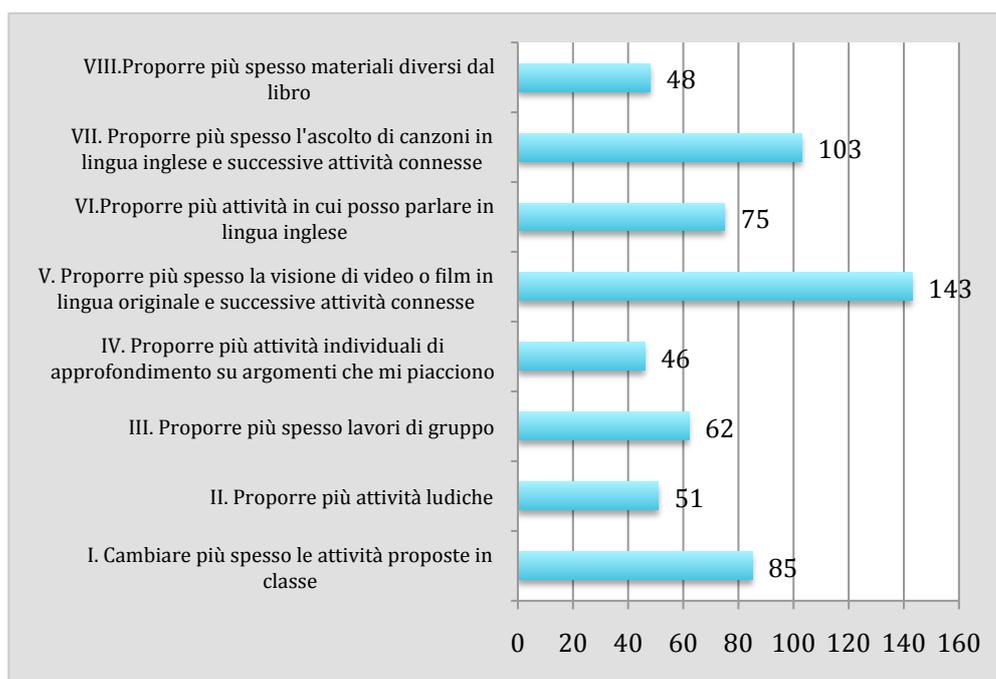


Figure 25

I.	Change the activities proposed in class more often
II.	Propose more game activities
III.	Propose group work more often
IV.	Propose more individual activities to deepen topics that I like
V.	Propose films and videos in English and activities connected to them more often
VI.	Propose more activities in which I can speak English
VII.	Propose the listening of songs in English and activities connected to them more often
VIII.	Propose materials that are different from the textbook more often

Table 2 _ Options translation - fig. 25 above

Analysing fig. 25 above, it immediately emerges that the option that scored the highest number of preferences was option V, here for brevity *Film / video*, which obtained 143 ticks out of 195 that correspond to 73% of the total. It is followed by option VII, here abbreviated as *Songs* that was selected 103 times, which means that the 53% of the students ticked it. Other options that received a consistent number of preferences were: option I, *Change the activities proposed in class more often*, that was marked by 85 informants (44%); option VI, *Propose more activities in which I can speak English* that obtained 75 preferences (38%) and option III, *Propose group work more often*, with its 62 marks (32%).

The options that received fewer preferences, though not really low, were: option II, *Propose more game activities* that got 51 preferences (26%); option VIII, *Propose materials that are different from the textbook more often*, which was marked by 48 students (25%) and option IV, *Propose more individual activities to deepen topics that I like* that was ticked 46 times (24%).

Only two informants marked option IX. *Altro / Other* suggesting that the teacher should: “Darci consigli su come possiamo migliorarci con la pronuncia e come parlare” and “Proporre di parlare con una persona madrelingua”. Both their answers have to do with oral skills that these students perceive that should be fostered by their teacher, giving them some advice on how to better their pronunciation and speech and proposing contact with a native speaker of English. These comments are in line with a widespread preference for speaking activities, marked with a high rate of ticks in option VI (cf. fig. 25 above).

3.3 SECTION TWO

This paragraph will analyse the responses to the second section of the questionnaires, that is, from item 17 to item 30. These items are Likert scales items asking students to what extent they agree or disagree with the various statements proposed.

Item 17: Imparo l'inglese perché mi piace / I learn English because I like it

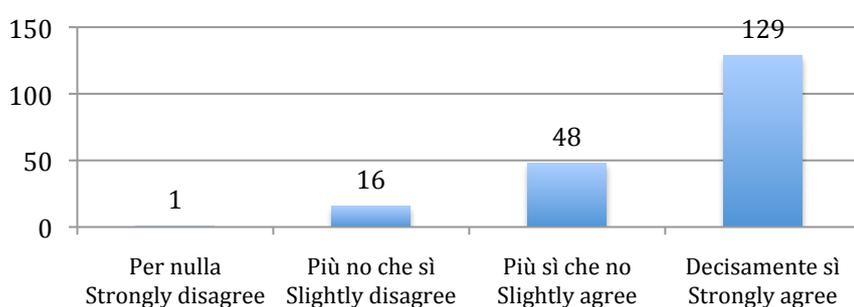


Figure 26

The option chosen by 129 informants out of 195 was *Strongly agree* (66%), that together with 48 *Slightly agree* (25%) account for 91% of the whole sample. Therefore, we can state that the majority of the surveyed students learn English because they like it. Indeed, positive answers outline considerably the negative ones that consist of 16 *Slightly disagree* (8%) and 1 (0,5%) *Strongly disagree*. Just one student did not answer this item (0,5%).

Item 18: Imparo l'inglese perché è utile / I learn English because it is useful

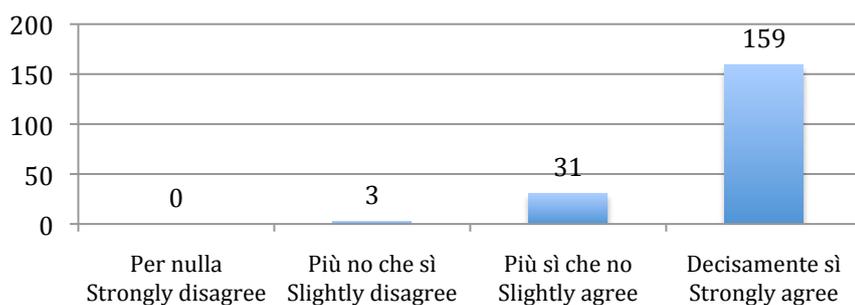


Figure 27

As fig. 27 above displays, the majority of the students agreed that they study English because of its usefulness. Indeed, *Strongly agree* was marked by 159 informants, 82%, and *Slightly agree* was ticked by 31 participants, that is, 16% that added reach 98% of the total. *Slightly disagree* received only 3 preferences, corresponding to 1,5%, while *Strongly disagree* was not marked by any student. Moreover, 0,5% of the sample did not answer this item.

Item 19: Imparo l'inglese perché devo / I learn English because I have to

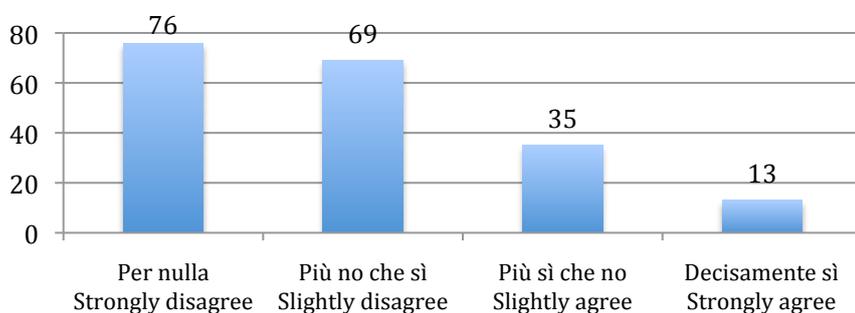


Figure 28

The responses to this item are in line with those give to the previous two items. Indeed, in fig. 28 above, we can notice that the negative options outline the positive ones and the majority of the students stated that they do not learn English because they are obliged to. *Strongly disagree* obtained 76 ticks, that is, 39%, and *Slightly disagree* received 69 marks, corresponding to 35%. Putting together these two categories we obtain a consistent 74%. The remaining 26% can be divided as follows: *Slightly agree*, 18% (with 35 ticks) and *Strongly agree* 7% (13 ticks). 1% of the informants gave no answer to this item.

Item 20: Imparo l'inglese per avere un bel voto / I learn English in order to get a good mark

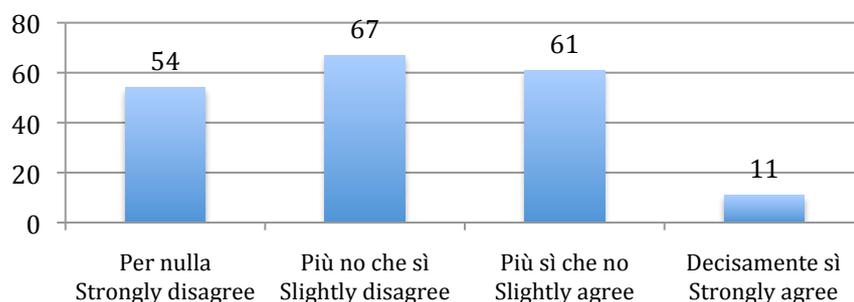


Figure 29

The responses to this item are more varied with respect to the previous ones. *Strongly disagree* received 54 preferences (28%) and *Slightly disagree* was marked by 67 students (34%), whereas *Slightly agree* was ticked by 61 informants (31%) and *Strongly agree* by 11 participants (6%). On balance, negative answers, accounting for a total 62%, exceeded positive ones (37%), revealing that the majority of the surveyed students do not learn EFL in order to get a good grade. Only 1% of the total sample did not respond to this item.

Item 21: Imparo l'inglese per far piacere ai miei genitori / I learn English in order to please my parents

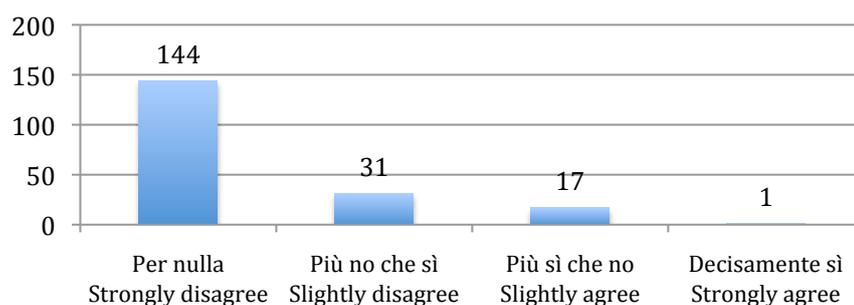


Figure 30

Looking at fig. 30, it is noticeable that the vast majority of the informants (144) strongly disagreed with the statement and do not learn English in order to please their parents. They cover the 74% of the total and are followed by *Slightly disagree*, with 31 preferences that account for 16%. *Slightly agree* was ticked by 17 students (9%) and *Strongly agree* by 1 informant (0,5%). The remaining 0,5% did not answer this item.

Item 22: Sarei più motivato se i miei genitori mi incoraggiassero di più all'apprendimento dell'inglese / I would be more motivated if my parents encouraged me more to learn English

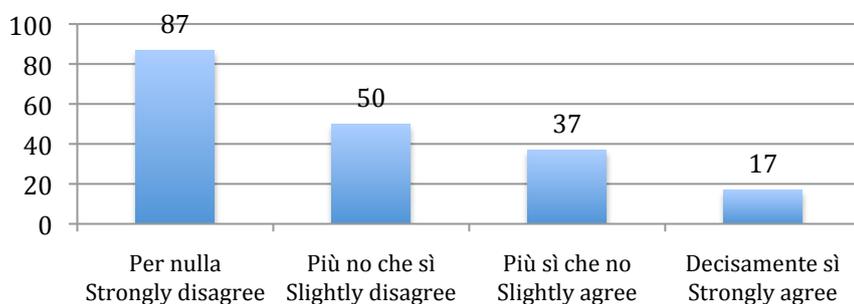


Figure 31

As shown in fig. 31, the answers that received more preferences were *Strongly disagree* (87) and *Slightly disagree* (50), accounting respectively for 45% and 26% of the sample. However 37 students (19%) marked *Slightly agree* and 17 students (9%) *Strongly agree*. All things considered, the negative answers exceed the positive ones and the preponderance of students does not believe that parental support is an improving factor in their motivation to learn English. Notwithstanding, a relevant 28% think that parents' encouragement could lead to an enhancement in their motivation in EFL learning. Only 1% of the informants did not answer this item.

Item 23: L'insegnante ha un ruolo molto importante nel motivarmi ad imparare l'inglese / The teacher plays an important role in motivating me to learn English

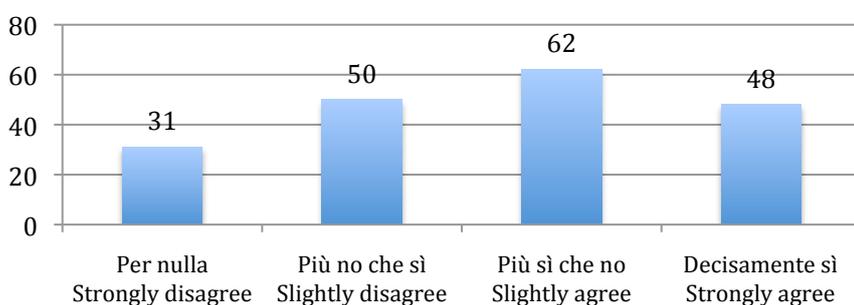


Figure 32

Students' opinions with respect to the role of the teacher in motivating them are quite diversified. *Strongly disagree* was marked by 31 informants (16%) and *Slightly disagree* was ticked by 50 participants (26%). Thus, the negative answers accounts for 42% in total. *Slightly agree* obtained 62 preferences, that is, 32% and *Strongly agree* received 48 marks

that correspond to 25% of the total sample. All things considered, the majority of the students (57%) agree with the statement and believe that the teacher actually plays an essential role in motivating them to learn English. However, a significant 42% that should not be disregarded disagree with the statement and think that the teacher has not got much influence in their motivation. Just 1% of the participants did not respond to this item.

Item 24: Fare attività più coinvolgenti durante le lezioni mi motiverebbe di più ad imparare l'inglese / Doing more engaging activities during the lessons would motivate me to learn English more

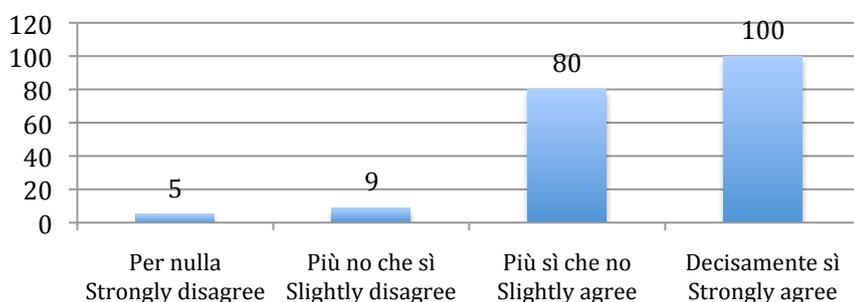


Figure 33

As fig. 33 illustrates, the preponderant part of the students agree with the statement and think that they would be more motivated to learn English through engaging classroom activities. Indeed, 100 informants (51%) marked *Strongly agree* and 80 participants (41%) ticked *Slightly agree*; the sum of these categories constitute the 92% of the whole sample. The residual 8% is made up of: 9 *Slightly disagree*, corresponding to 4%, 5 *Strongly disagree*, accounting for 3%, and 1% without answer.

Item 25: L'uso di materiali diversi durante le lezioni mi motiverebbe di più ad imparare l'inglese / Using different materials during the lessons would motivate me to learn English more

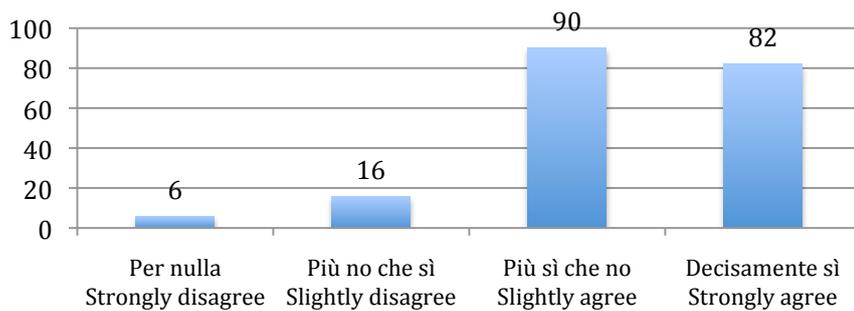


Figure 34

The majority of the informants seem to agree with the statement and believe that the use of diversified and varied materials would foster their motivation in EFL learning. Indeed, *Strongly agree* received 82 preferences (42%) and *Slightly agree* obtained 90 ticks (46%), constituting together 88% of the total. The negative responses are divided into 16 *Slightly disagree* (8%) and 6 *Strongly disagree* (3%). Only 1% of the informants left this item blank.

Item 26: L'uso della tecnologia durante le lezioni mi motiverebbe di più ad imparare l'inglese / Using technology during the lessons would motivate me to learn English more

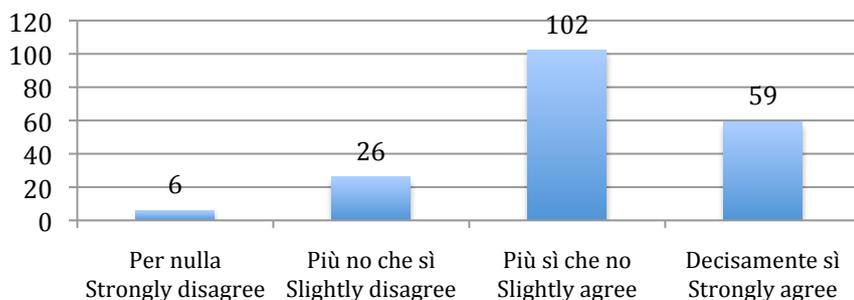


Figure 35

Even fig. 35 shows a preponderance of positive responses on the part of the surveyed students, who chiefly agree with the statement in item 26, that is, the use of technology during their EFL lesson would improve their motivation to study the language. The options that obtained more preference were *Slightly agree*, 102, reflecting 52% of the total, and *Strongly agree*, 59 ticks that correspond to 30%. These two categories together represent 82% of the total. Negative answers, instead, are divided as follows: 26 *Slightly disagree* (13%) and 6 *Strongly disagree* (3%). 2% of the students did not respond to this item.

Item 27: La motivazione ad imparare l'inglese dipende solo da me e nessuno può modificarla / Motivation in learning English depends just on me a nobody can change it

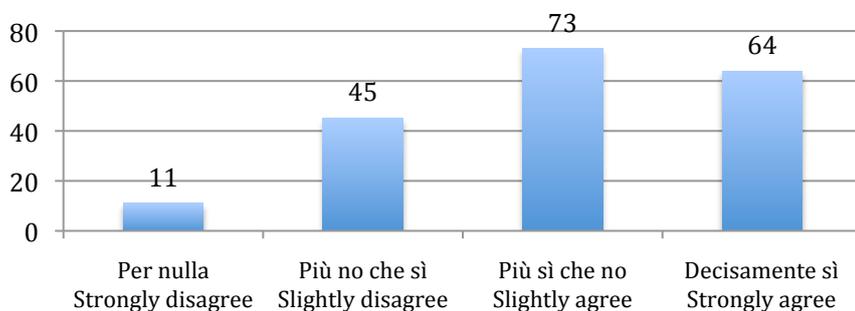


Figure 36

As fig. 36 displays, the majority of the students gave a positive answer to this item: 64 *Strongly agree* (33%) and 73 *Slightly agree* (37%), which together make up the 70% of the sample. The high rates of these two categories show that, overall, the surveyed students believe that their motivation is independent of external factors. However, a consistent 29% is in disagreement with the statement and, thus, think that their motivation does not depend just on them: *Slightly disagree* obtained 45 ticks (23%) and *Strongly disagree* was marked 11 times (6%). The remaining 1% did not answer this item.

Item 28: Imparare bene l'inglese è uno dei miei obiettivi personali / Learning English well is one of my personal objectives

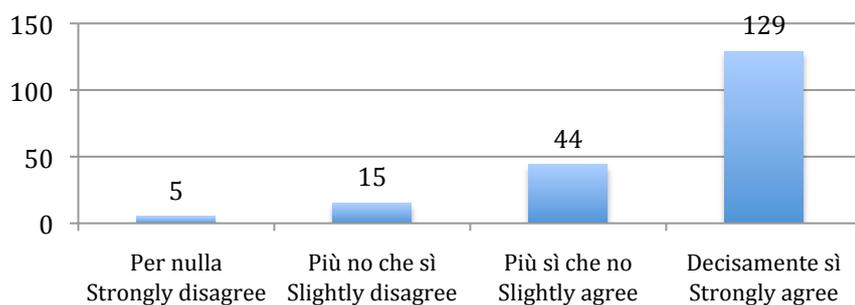


Figure 37

As illustrated in fig. 37, *Strongly agree* received 129 preferences, corresponding to 66% of the surveyed students. *Slightly agree*, instead, obtained 44 ticks (23%), therefore, totally the positive answers account for 89% of the informants that claim that learning English well is one of their personal objectives. The residual 10% that believes the opposite

consists of: 15 *Slightly disagree* (7%) and 5 *Strongly disagree* (3%). Students who gave no answer account for 1%.

Item 29: Mi immagino come parlante di inglese in futuro / I see myself as a speaker of English in the future

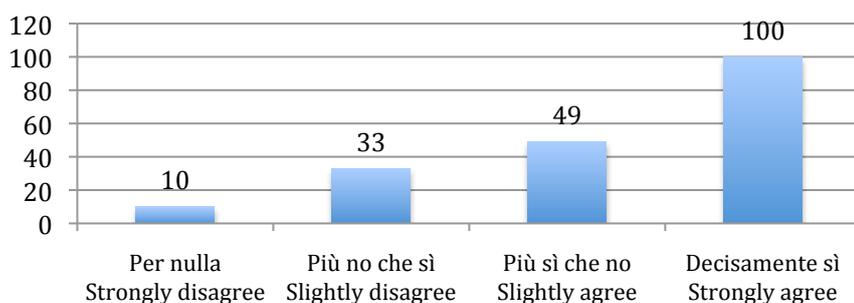


Figure 38

Here, again, the sum of favourable responses exceed the sum of the negative ones, displaying a general accordance with the statement, that is, the majority of the students imagine themselves as speakers of English in their future. The responses were distributed like this: 100 *Strongly agree* (51%) and 49 *Slightly agree* (25%) opposed to 33 *Slightly disagree*, accounting for 17%, and 10 *Strongly disagree*, reflecting 5% of the students' responses. 2% of the informants did not answer this item.

Item 30: Sono interessato a scoprire le diverse culture dei parlanti nativi d'inglese / I am interested in discovering the different cultures of the native speakers of English

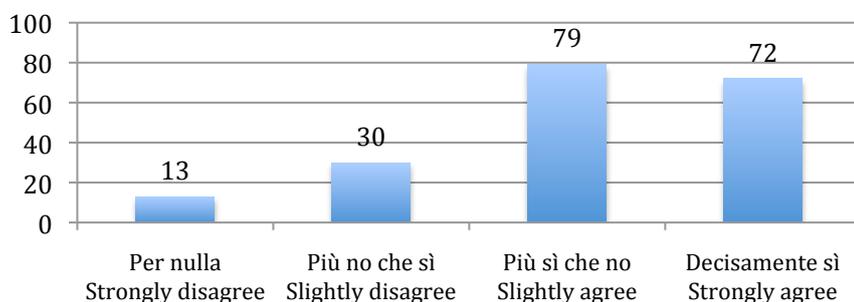


Figure 39

As displayed in fig. 39, the categories that received the preponderance of the students' responses were *Slightly agree*, 79 ticks, and *Strongly agree*, 72 preferences, accounting for 40% and 37% respectively. Together these two options make up 77% of the students, who

state their interest and curiosity towards the culture of the mother tongue speakers of English. On the contrary, 22% of the informants show their disagreement with the statement ticking 30 *Slightly disagree* (15%) and 13 *Strongly disagree* (7%). The residual 1% of the sample did not respond to this item.

Chapter 4

Analysis of teachers' questionnaires

This chapter will deal with the analysis of the questionnaire data obtained from teachers' responses. The results will be displayed with the support of diverse graphs that will be commented singularly and in detail. Each item of the questionnaire will be presented in the original Italian version together with its English translation.

4.1 GENERAL NOTIONS

The following paragraphs will illustrate the outcome of the teachers' questionnaires.

It is to be remembered that 11 EFL teachers participated in this research and all of them are females.

The data presented here (be they percentage or absolute values) were calculated with respect to 11 as total number. In addition, the section "no answer" in the graphs below, where it is present, represents those items that were left blank by the participants.

4.2 SECTION ONE

Let us now commence the analysis of the answers to the items of the questionnaire. This paragraph will deal with the first section, that is, items from 1 to 16.

Item 1: Secondo lei, la maggioranza dei suoi studenti è motivata ad imparare l'inglese? /
In your opinion, is the majority of your students motivated to learn English?

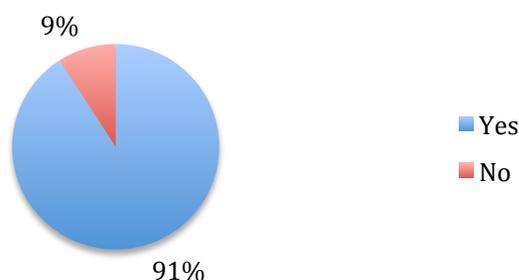


Figure 40

It can easily be seen, from fig. 40 above, that the vast majority of the teachers (91%) believe that their students are motivated to learn English. However, one of the informants (9%) has the opposite view.

Item 2: Tra i suoi obiettivi didattici rientra anche la motivazione degli studenti all'apprendimento dell'inglese? / Is motivating students to learn English within your teaching objectives?

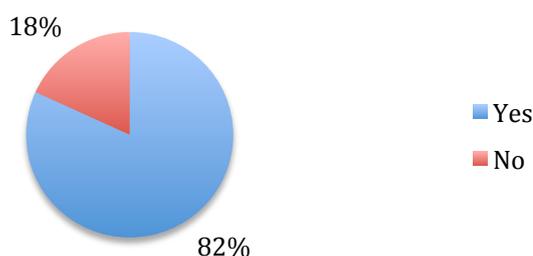


Figure 41

For 82% of the informants, motivating students to learn English is part of their teaching objectives, whereas the remaining 18% do not insert this aspect among their teaching goals.

Item 3 A: Se sì, perché? / If yes, why?

This item was addressed to the participants who answered item 2 positively and aims at understanding the reasons for including motivation within the teaching objectives.

The responses given to this item were analysed and grouped into two categories according to the aspects that they highlighted:

VIII. *Utilità – Importanza dell'inglese / Usefulness – Importance of English*: this category comprises a range of responses quoting the utility of the language, firstly, for its current (and future) status of global language as suggest answers like: “L’inglese è una lingua che acquisterà sempre più universalità nella nostra società contemporanea e anche in quello futura...” or “ Importanza della lingua inglese nel futuro”, secondly, for its instrumentality in obtaining a job, as explained in responses such as: “Perché se non sanno l’inglese non potranno aspirare ad un lavoro” or “Ritengo che l’apprendimento e la conoscenza della lingua inglese siano di fondamentale importanza nella società moderna, sia nell’ambito lavorativo che in quello sociale...”;

IX. *La motivazione è alla base dell'apprendimento / Motivation underpins learning*: this category consists of responses emphasising the essential role of motivation in learning and acquisition and comprises answers such as the following: “Se lo studente risulta motivato, l'apprendimento della lingua risulta più efficace”, “Ritengo che la motivazione sia fondamentale per il processo di apprendimento” and “Perché una buona motivazione facilita l'apprendimento”.

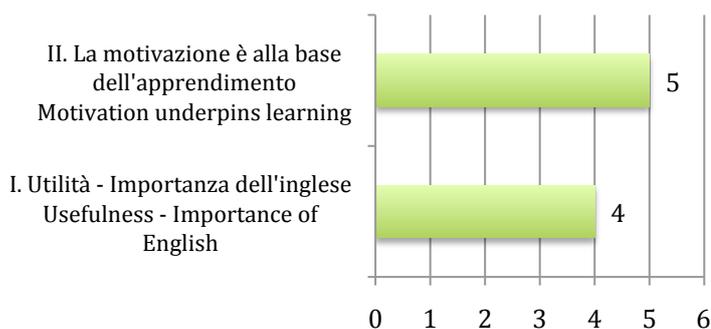


Figure 42

As illustrated in fig. 42, the 9 participants who answered item 2 positively, adduced two main reasons for including motivation in their teaching objectives, that is, *Usefulness / Importance of English*, that was mentioned by 4 teachers (44%) and *Motivation underpins learning* was named by 5 participants (56%). Therefore, we gather that the majority of the surveyed teacher deem motivation a crucial part of the learning process and thus include it in their teaching goals.

Item 3 B: Se no, perché? / If not, why?

The participants who answered item 2 negatively accounted for 18% of the teacher informants (corresponding to 2 informants) and their responses to this item were:

- “Generalmente gli studenti che frequentano un Liceo Linguistico non hanno bisogno di essere motivati all'apprendimento della lingua inglese, poiché essa fa già parte del loro bagaglio culturale”;
- “Ritengo difficile, se non impossibile, che la motivazione possa arrivare dall'esterno; nella mia esperienza si tratta di qualcosa che gli studenti hanno o non hanno e qualunque strategia venga applicata all'insegnamento della lingua straniera non cambia tale situazione.”

To sum up, the first answer is concerned with the type of school attended by the student (liceo linguistico) whose curriculum is mainly based on foreign languages, thus, this teacher argues that if a student chooses to attend such a school, then he / she must already be motivated to learn English and there is no need to work for creating and increasing motivation. The second response, though similar to the first as for the uselessness of including motivation within the teaching objectives, states that motivation cannot come from the outside, that is, it is something that a student either possesses or not and external factors, such as using different strategies in teaching the language, are not going to influence students' motivation.

Item 4: Durante le sue lezioni, nelle attività proposte e nei feedback agli studenti cerca di... / During your lessons, in the activities proposed in class and in the feedback to the students do you try to...
 ... aumentare l'**autostima** degli studenti? / enhance students' **self-esteem**?

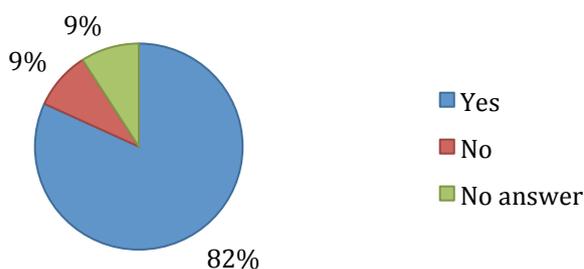


Figure 43

As displayed in fig. 43 above, 82% of the informants try to improve students' self-esteem, whereas 9% do not. Another 9% of the total did not respond to this item.

... aumentare l'**autonomia** degli studenti? / enhance students' **autonomy**?

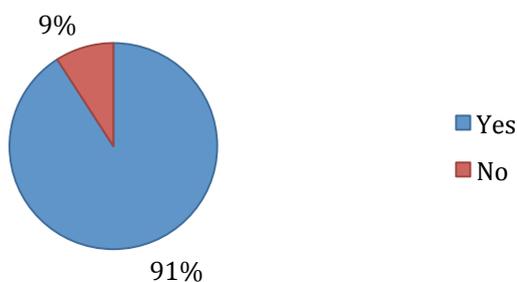


Figure 44

The vast majority of the teachers (91%) state that they try to foster students' autonomy in their English classroom, whilst 9% do not.

... diminuire l'eventuale ansia degli studenti durante la lezione di inglese? / diminish possible anxiety on the part of the students during the English lesson?

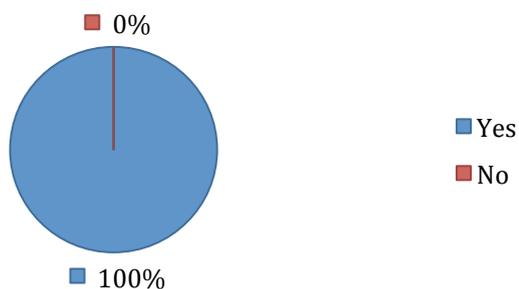


Figure 45

The totality of the informants (100%) confirmed that they try to lessen students' possible anxiety during the EFL classroom.

Item 4.1: Crede che tali incentivi (domanda 4) favoriscano la motivazione degli studenti? / Do you think that these incentives (item 4) foster students' motivation?

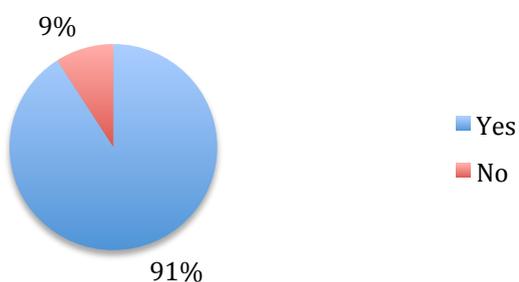


Figure 46

The majority of the surveyed teacher (91%) believes that the aspects addressed in item 4 are incentives to enhance students' motivation. 9% of them, however, think the opposite.

Item 5: Coinvolge gli studenti nella decisione delle attività da svolgere in classe? / Do you involve students in the decision of the classroom activities?

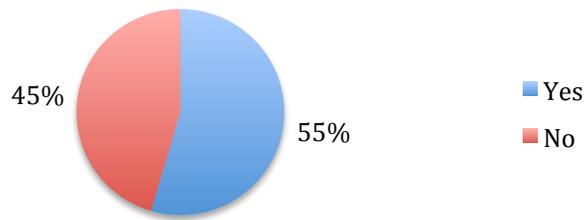


Figure 47

With respect to students' involvement in the decision of classroom activities, we can notice no wide discrepancies between the positive and negative answers, which was the case in the previous items. Indeed, 55% of the teacher informants confirmed that they involve students in the decision process whilst 45% of them do not.

Item 6: Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se li coinvolgesse di più nella decisione delle attività da svolgere? / Do you think that students would be more motivated to learn English if you involved them more in the decision of classroom activities?

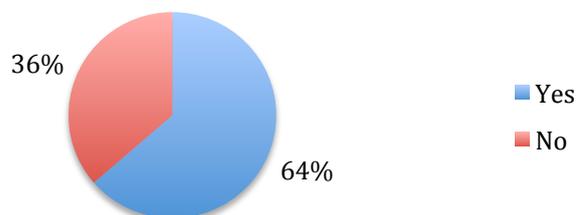


Figure 48

As fig. 48 above illustrates, the majority of the informants (64%) believe that students would be more motivated to learn EFL if they were involved in the decision of the classroom activities more. Nonetheless, a consistent 36% hold the opposite opinion.

Item 7: Propone attività piacevoli: / You propose pleasant activities:

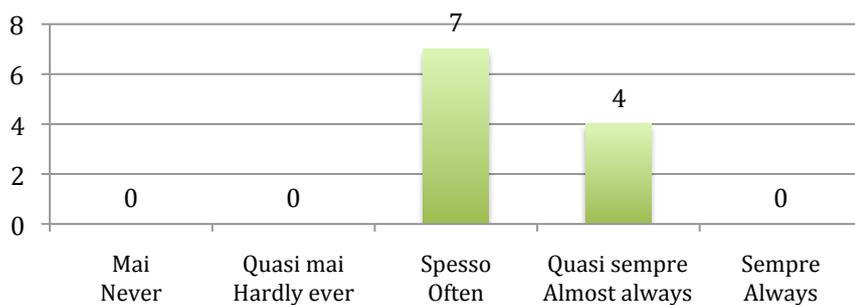


Figure 49

All the surveyed teachers gave a positive response to this item: the majority of them (7) think that they propose pleasant activities often, whereas 4 of them marked *Almost always*, corresponding to 64% and 36% respectively.

Item 8: Le attività proposte in classe che ritiene più motivanti e piacevoli per gli studenti sono: / The activities proposed in class that you deem more motivating and pleasant for students are:

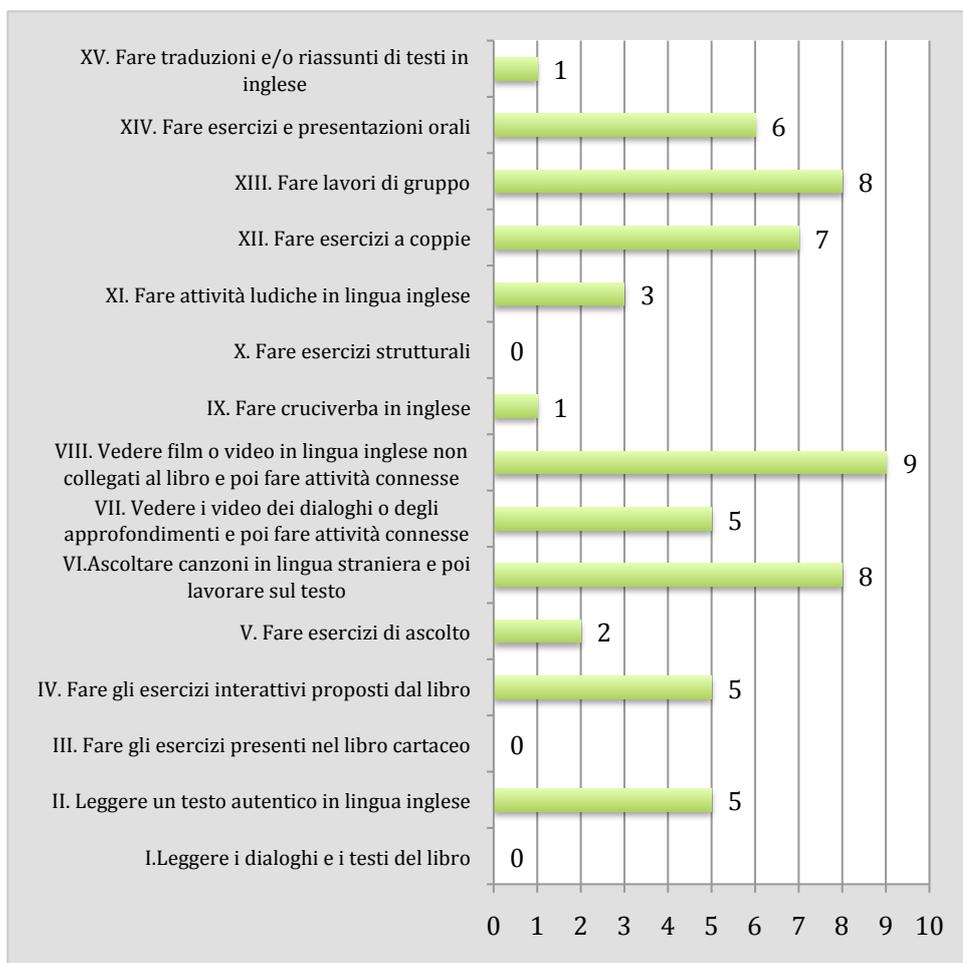


Figure 50

XVI.	Reading the dialogues and texts in the textbook
XVII.	Reading an authentic text in English (e.g. newspaper article, literary text, etc.)
XVIII.	Doing the exercises in the textbook
XIX.	Doing the interactive exercises that the book proposes (e.g. LIM, on-line exercises expansion, etc.)
XX.	Doing listening exercises (with audio CD)
XXI.	Listening to songs in English and then working on the lyrics
XXII.	Watching the videos of the dialogues or of the supplementary activities proposed in the textbook and then doing activities connected to them
XXIII.	Watching films or videos in English that are not connected with the textbook and then doing activities connected to them
XXIV.	Doing crosswords in English
XXV.	Doing pattern drills
XXVI.	Doing game activities in English
XXVII.	Doing exercises in pairs
XXVIII.	Doing group work
XXIX.	Doing oral exercises or presentations
XXX.	Doing translations and/or summaries of texts in English

Table 3 _ Options translation – fig. 50 above

It is to be remembered that, as explained before (cf. 2.3.1.1, 3.2), the instructions foresaw the chance of ticking a maximum number of options, that is, 5. The idea behind giving a limit to the possible responses was intended to make participants reflect on the options given, so that they marked just the most significant ones. Notwithstanding, since many informants overlooked this limitation and given that it would not be fair to take into consideration the first 5 options as the only valid answers, it has been decided to ignore the initial instructions and take into account all the options that the teachers marked, assuming that they believed in their relevance.

As shown in fig. 50 above, the option that obtained more preferences was option VIII, here abbreviated as *Film / video*; this category is immediately followed by *Listening to songs in English and then working on the lyrics* (VI) and *Doing group work* (XIII) that received 8 ticks each. Other options that were chosen various times were: option XII, *Doing exercises in pairs* that obtained 7 preferences, option XIV, *Doing oral exercises and presentations* that obtained 6 ticks, and option II, *Reading an authentic text in English*, option IV, *Doing the interactive exercises that the book proposes*, and option VII, here shortened in *Watching the videos of the dialogues* that were marked 5 times each. To conclude, the options that received fewer preferences were: XI, *Doing game activities in English* (3); V, *Doing listening exercises* (2); IX, *Doing crosswords in English* (1) and VI, *Doing translations and / or summaries of texts in English* (1).

In addition, one of the participants also chose option XVI, *Altro / Other* and specified “Drama activities” among the activities that she deemed more pleasant and motivating for students.

Item 9: Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se proponesse più spesso attività piacevoli? / Do you think that students would be more motivated to learn English if you proposed pleasant activities more often?

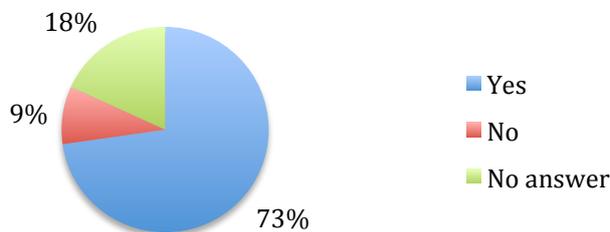


Figure 51

The majority of the teachers (73%) responded positively to this item. 9% of the participants, instead, do not think that students would be more motivated to learn English if they proposed pleasant activities more often. 18% of the surveyed teacher did not answer this item.

Item 10: Propone attività nuove: / You propose new activities:

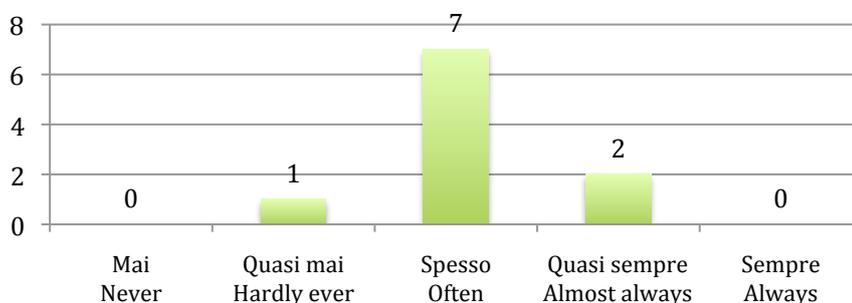


Figure 52

As fig. 52 displays, the preponderance of the surveyed teachers, that is 7 out of 11 (64%), answered that they propose new activities often, while *Almost always* received 2 preferences (18%) and *Hardly ever* only 1 (9%). One of the informants (9%) did not respond to this item.

Item 11: Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se proponesse più spesso attività nuove? / Do you think that students would be more motivated to learn English if you proposed new activities more often?

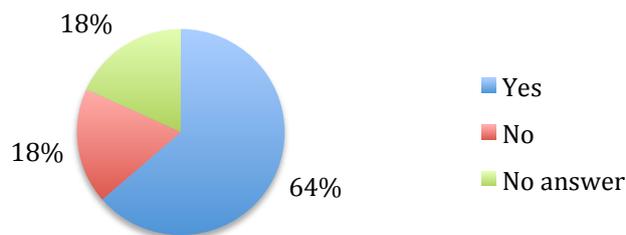


Figure 53

The pie chart above, fig. 53, illustrates that the informants that answered this item positively account for 64% of the participants, who believe that proposing new activities more often would improve students' motivation in EFL learning. 18% of the teachers, instead, hold the opposite view. The remaining 18% left this item blank.

Item 12: Propone attività e compiti che gli studenti ritengono realizzabili: / You propose activities and tasks that students deem feasible:

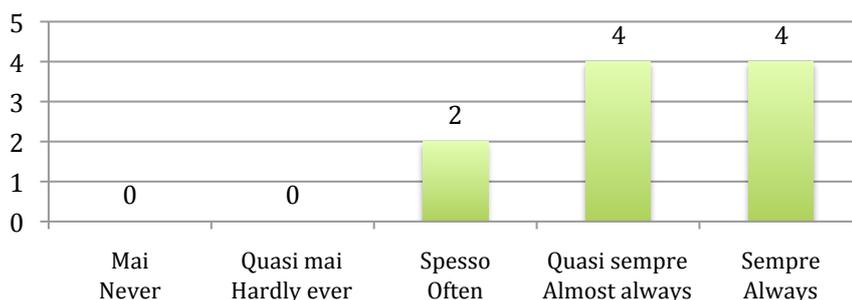


Figure 54

This item concerns the feasibility of the tasks and activities proposed by the teacher during the EFL class. The responses are all positive: *Often* was marked by 2 teachers (18%), while both *Almost always* and *Always* were ticked by 4 participants (36%). Only one informant (9%) did not answer this item.

Item 13: Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se proponesse più spesso attività che ritengono realizzabili? / Do you think that students would be more motivated to learn English if you proposed activities that they deem feasible more often?

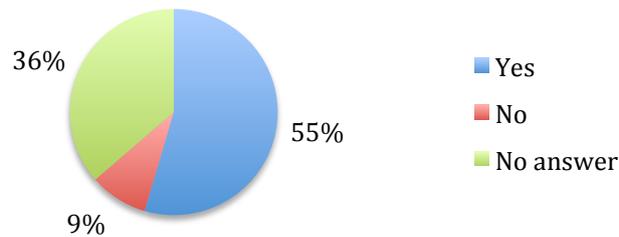


Figure 55

55% of the teachers believe that students would be more motivated if they proposed feasible activities more often, whereas 9% do not agree with it. A significant 36% of the informants did not respond to this item.

Item 14: Propone attività che **non** mettono a rischio l'autostima e l'immagine degli studenti di fronte ai compagni: / You propose activities that **don't** undermine students' self-esteem and their image in front of their classmates:

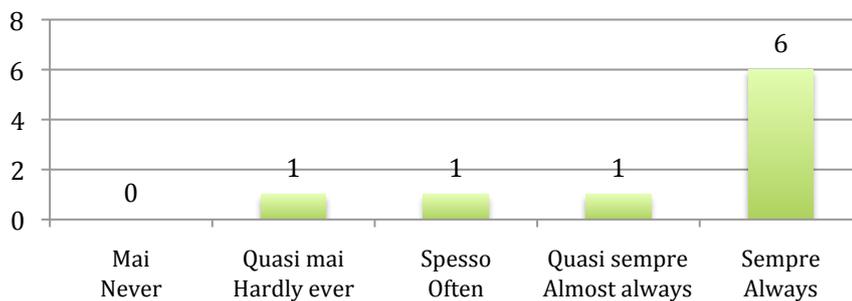


Figure 56

As illustrated in fig. 56, the majority of the informants marked *Always* (55%) and *Almost always* and *Often* received 1 preference each (9% each). *Hardly ever* was chosen just by one participant (9%), therefore we can say that the positive responses exceed the negative ones. Two teachers (18%) gave no answer to this item.

Item 15: Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se proponesse più spesso attività che non mettono a rischio la loro autostima e la loro immagine di fronte ai compagni? / Do you think that students would be more motivated to learn English if you proposed activities that don't undermine their self-esteem and their image in front of their classmates more often?

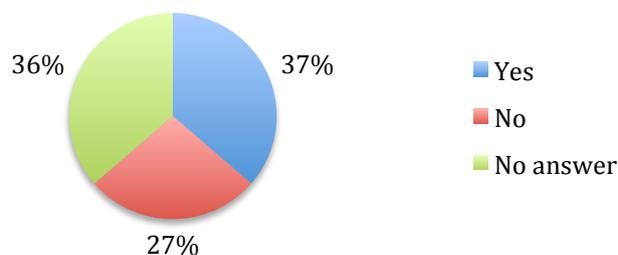


Figure 57

On the one hand, 37% of the teachers think that students would be more motivated if they proposed more often activities that do not put students' self and social image at risk. On the other hand, 27% of the informants hold the opposite opinion. A consistent 36% did not answer this item.

Item 16: Per sostenere la motivazione degli studenti dovrebbe: / To support students' motivation you should:

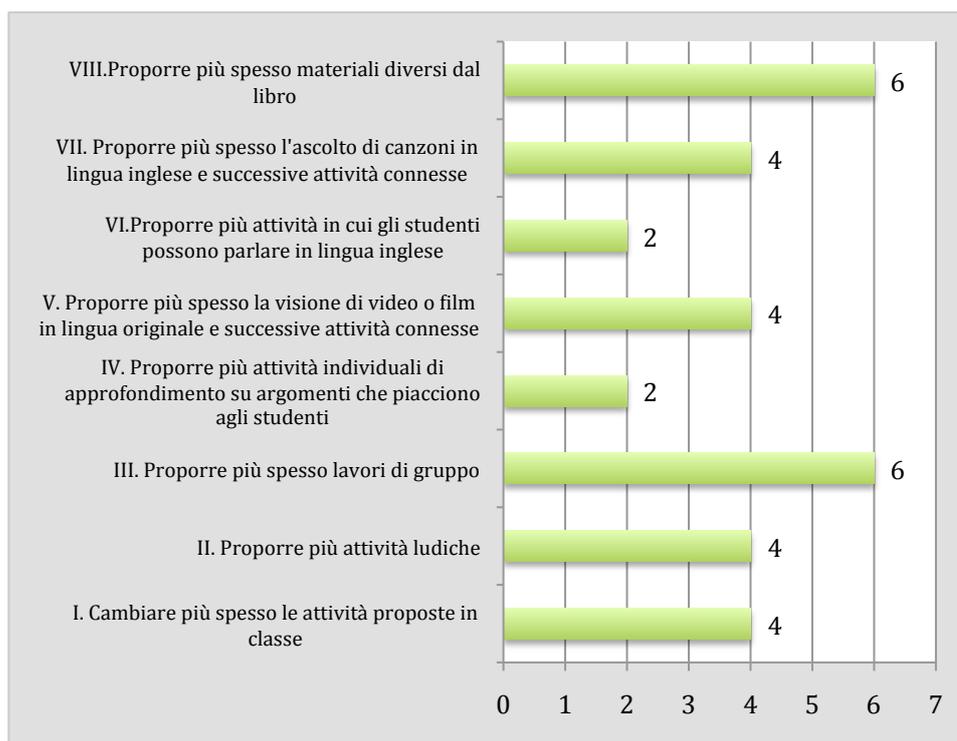


Figure 58

IX.	Change the activities proposed in class more often
X.	Propose more game activities
XI.	Propose group work more often
XII.	Propose more individual activities to deepen topics that students like
XIII.	Propose films and videos in English and activities connected to them more often
XIV.	Propose more activities in which students can speak English
XV.	Propose the listening of songs in English and activities connected to them more often
XVI.	Propose materials that are different from the textbook more often

Table 4 _ Options translation - fig. 58 above

Similarly to Item 8 above, the instructions to this item foresaw a maximum number of answers, that is, 3. However, considering that many informants disregarded this restriction, the initial instructions were overlooked and it has been determined to take into consideration all the responses given by the participants.

In fig. 58 it is easily noticeable that the options that obtained more preferences were option III, *Propose group work more often* and option VIII, *Propose materials that are different from the textbook more often*, each of them was ticked by 6 informants. Other answers that retained a good position were option I, *Change the activities proposed in class more often*, option II, *Propose more game activities*, option V, *Propose films and videos in English and activities connected to them more often*, and option VII, *Propose the listening of songs in English and activities connected to them more often*; each of them was marked by 4 participants. Finally, the options that received fewer preferences among the others were: *Propose more individual activities to deepen topics that students like* (IV) and *Propose more activities in which students can speak English* (VI) that were both chosen by 2 informants.

4.3 SECTION TWO

This paragraph is concerned with the analysis of the responses to the second section of the questionnaire, consisting in items from 17 to 28.

Item 17: Gli studenti imparano l'inglese perché piace loro / Students learn English because they like it

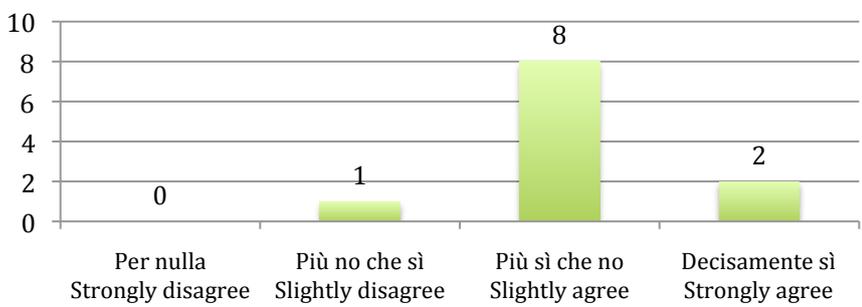


Figure 59

The majority of the teachers agree with the statement and think that students learn English because they like it: 8 teachers marked *Slightly agree* (73%) and 2 of them ticked *Strongly agree* (18%). Just 1 of the informants marked *Slightly disagree* (9%).

Item 18: Gli studenti imparano l'inglese perché è utile / Students learn English because it is useful

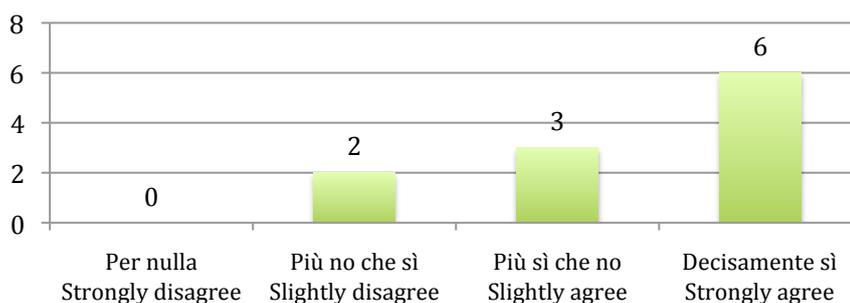


Figure 60

The preponderance of the surveyed teachers gave a positive answer, showing their agreement with the statement; 6 of them (55%) marked *Strongly agree* and 3 of them (27%) chose *Slightly agree*. Nonetheless, 2 of the informants (18%) marked *Slightly disagree*.

Item 19: Gli studenti imparano l'inglese perché devono / Students learn English because they have to

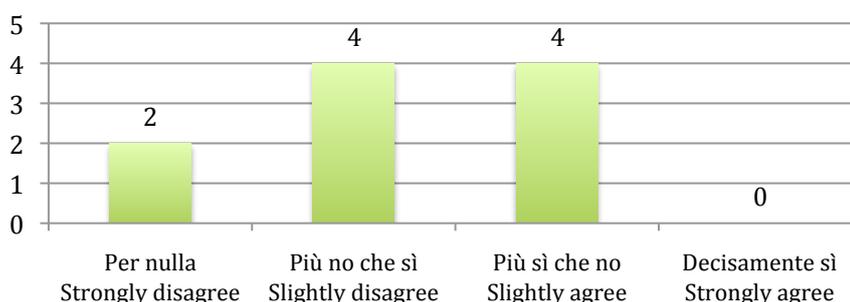


Figure 61

The answers that received more preferences, that is, 4, accounting for 36% of the total, were *Slightly agree* and *Slightly disagree*; *Strongly disagree* was marked by 2 teachers (18%). On balance, the negative answers outline the positive ones, demonstrating that the

majority of the surveyed teachers believe that students do not learn English because they have to. 10% of the informants did not respond to this item.

Item 20: Gli studenti imparano l'inglese per avere un bel voto / Students learn English in order to get a good mark

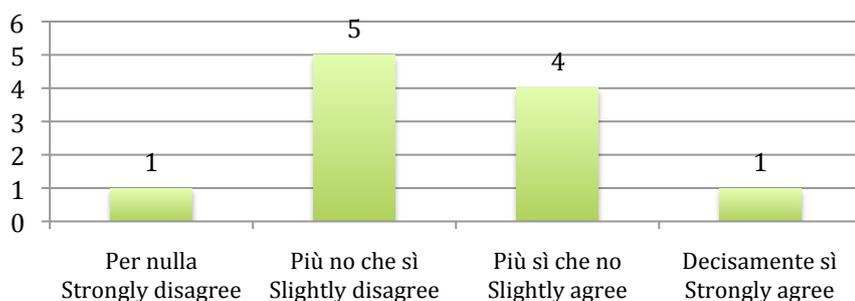


Figure 62

As the graph in fig. 62 above shows, in this case the views of the surveyed teachers are quite diversified. *Slightly disagree* obtained 5 preferences (46%), followed by *Slightly agree* (4, corresponding to 36%) and both *Strongly agree* and *Strongly Disagree* were chosen by 1 participant (9% each). All things considered, negative answers exceed positive ones, 55% versus 45%, respectively, supporting the idea that, overall, students do not learn English in order to get a good mark.

Item 21: Gli studenti imparano l'inglese per far piacere ai genitori / Students learn English in order to please their parents

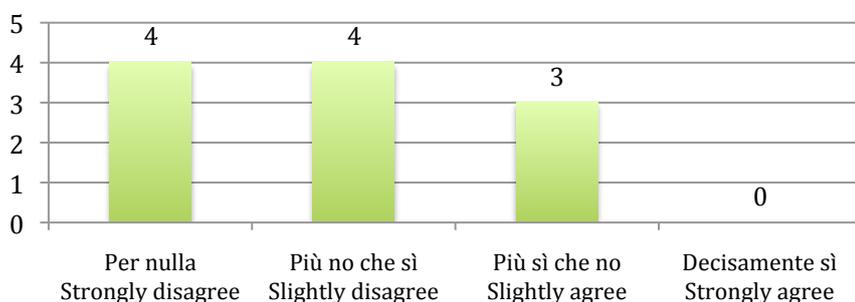


Figure 63

The responses that obtained more favour were *Strongly disagree* (4) and *Slightly disagree* (4) that together make up 72% of the total, displaying that the preponderant part

of the teachers believe that students do not learn English in order to please their parents. However, the residual 28% chose *Slightly agree* (3).

Item 22: Gli studenti sarebbero più motivati se i genitori li incoraggiassero di più all'apprendimento dell'inglese / Students would be more motivated if their parents encouraged them more to learn English

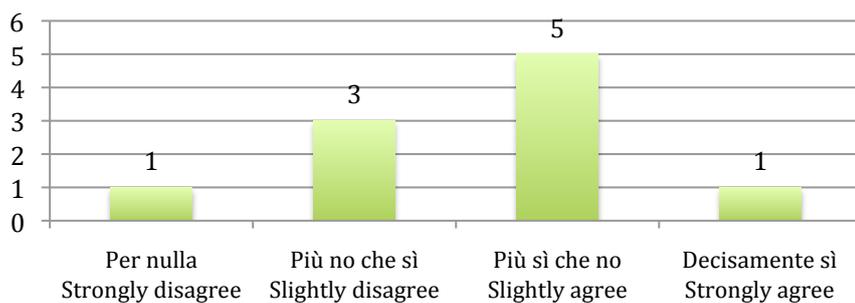


Figure 64

This item is concerned with parental support enhancing students' motivation in learning English. On balance, positive answers exceed negative ones: *Slightly agree* was marked by 5 teachers (55%), and *Strongly agree* by 1 participant (9%). Negative answers comprise 3 *Slightly disagree* (27%) and 1 *Strongly disagree* (9%).

Item 23: L'insegnante ha un ruolo molto importante nella motivazione degli studenti ad imparare l'inglese / The teacher plays an important role in motivating students to learn English

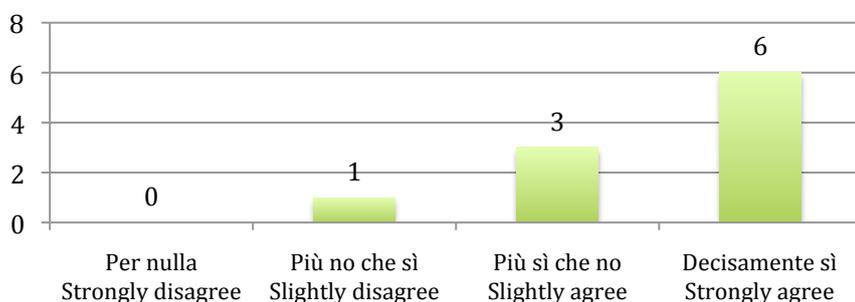


Figure 65

The vast majority of the informants, that is, 82%, gave a positive answer to this item, divided as such: 6 *Strongly agree* (55%) and 3 *Slightly agree* (27%). This share of the informants believes that the teacher has a considerable impact on students' motivation.

Nonetheless, 1 participant (9%) manifested her disagreement, marking *Slightly disagree*. The residual 9% did not respond to this item.

Item 24: Fare attività più coinvolgenti durante le lezioni motiverebbe di più gli studenti ad imparare l'inglese / Doing more engaging activities during the lessons would motivate students to learn English more

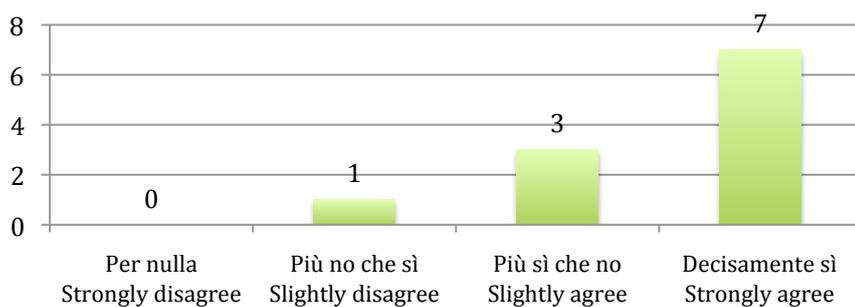


Figure 66

Considering the responses shown in fig. 66 above, the preponderance of the informants agrees with the statement about the enhancement of students' motivation through more engaging activities during EFL lessons. 7 teachers marked *Strongly agree* (64%) and 3 participants (27%) ticked *Slightly agree*. The remaining informant (9%) chose *Slightly disagree*.

Item 25: L'uso di materiali diversi durante le lezioni motiverebbe di più gli studenti ad imparare l'inglese / Using different materials during the lessons would motivate students to learn English more

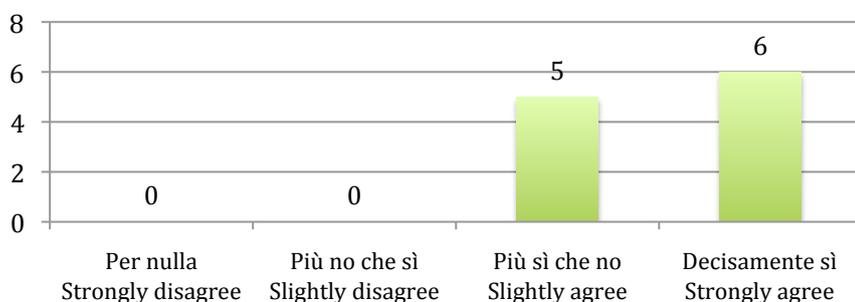


Figure 67

As shown in fig. 67 above, the totality of the surveyed teacher support the statement, believing that the use of varied materials would foster students' motivation in EFL

learning. 5 participants chose *Slightly agree*, while 6 of them marked *Strongly agree*, accounting for 45% and 55% respectively.

Item 26: L'uso della tecnologia durante le lezioni motiverebbe di più gli studenti ad imparare l'inglese / Using technology during the lessons would motivate students to learn English more

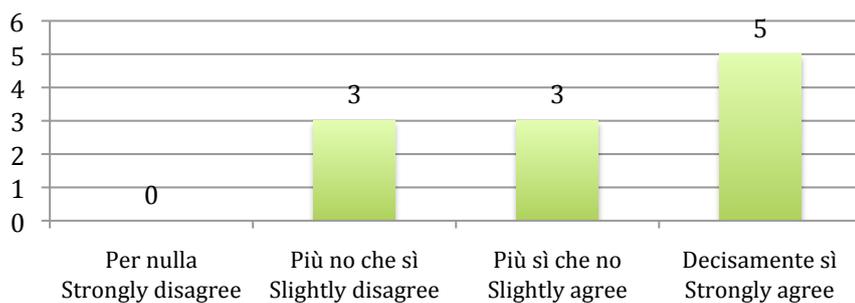


Figure 68

The majority of the surveyed teachers (73%) support the belief that the use of technology during EFL lessons would increase students' motivation. Indeed, 5 participants (46%) marked *Strongly agree*, and 3 informants (27%) chose *Slightly agree*. However, another consistent 27% selected *Slightly disagree*, manifesting their opposite opinions.

Item 27: La motivazione ad imparare l'inglese dipende solo dallo studente e nessuno può modificarla / Motivation in learning English depends just on the student and nobody can change it

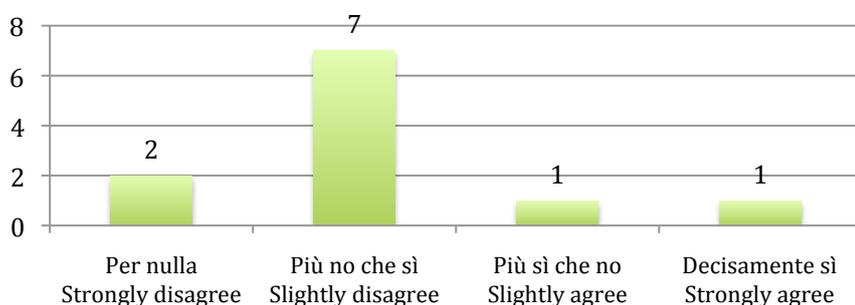


Figure 69

As fig. 69 illustrates, the views of the participants are quite varied. The responses comprise: 2 *Strongly disagree* (18%), 7 *Slightly disagree* (64%), 1 *Slightly agree* (9%) and 1 *Strongly agree* (9%). Overall, however, the majority of the informants (82%) disagree

with the statement, affirming their thought that students' motivation is not independent from external influences. 18% of the surveyed teachers, however, manifest their support for the statement.

Item 28: Gli studenti sono interessati a scoprire le diverse culture dei parlanti nativi d'inglese / Students are interested in discovering the different cultures of the native speakers of English

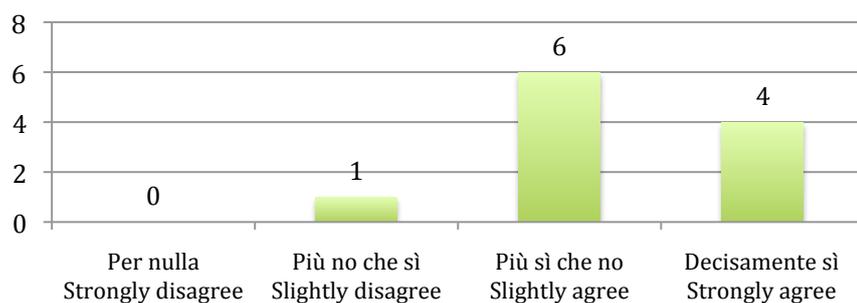


Figure 70

The vast majority of the participants agree with the statement and believes that students are interested in the discovery of native speakers' culture. Indeed, *Strongly agree* was marked by 4 teachers (36%) and *Slightly agree* was chosen by 6 informants (55%), accounting for 91% together. Nonetheless, 1 informant (9%) marked *Slightly disagree*.

Chapter 5

Discussion of the results

This chapter will be concerned with reporting the outcomes of both students' and teachers' questionnaires, with the objective to compare them and shed some light on the similarities and differences that emerge. Furthermore, the discussion will include the possible practical implications of our findings and some suggestions for viable solutions within the classroom context. In addition, various inputs for further research will be provided.

5.1 COMMENTS ON STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES

Let us commence reminding that 195 students took part in this research, aged from fourteen to twenty years old; they were preponderantly females. They attended diverse secondary schools in the region of Veneto, Italy.

Through the responses of the first item of the questionnaire, we soon discovered the answer to one of our main research questions (i.e. Are students motivated to learn English as a foreign language?). The vast majority of the student informants (94%) are motivated to learn English. Among the reasons that they adduced for being motivated to learn it as a FL (item 2), usefulness and importance of English certainly outlined all the other motivations mentioned. Although the utility of English comprised multiple and distinct aspects - ranging from general usefulness or importance not better specified to its practical utility for understanding song lyrics or films and videos - the most relevant according to the surveyed students appeared to be: (a) English status as a global lingua franca, (b) its usefulness in communicating with people all over the world, and (c) English practical utility in travelling. Notwithstanding, it is interesting to remark that 4% of the students claimed that they are not motivated to learn EFL. For more than a half of them, the reason regarded their relationship with the English teacher, which appeared to be problematic in various ways. Thanks to the responses to item 3 we understand that the majority of the students (63%) do not think that their EFL teacher tries to motivate them to learn the language. When questioned about what the teacher should do to motivate them (item 3.1 B), they gave differentiated opinions, but the preponderance of them thought that the teacher should involve them more in the EFL lessons and that he or she should explain

better and more. Other suggestions to enhance students' motivation that were mentioned by a consistent number of the surveyed learners were: proposing new activities, making the EFL lessons more interactive and proposing more speaking activities. Moreover, students stated that their motivation would be enhanced if the teacher proposed different topics that are more in line with their age and interests and if he / she tried to create and support their motivation to learn EFL, emphasising the importance of English and its practical applicability. However, a significant 35% think that their teacher tries to motivate them to learn English and when they were asked how he / she attained it (item 3.1 A), the response that was named the most was through speaking activities in class. Other teacher's behaviours that gained students' appreciation were: proposing interactive activities and providing help and encouragement, immediately followed by using films and videos as teaching/learning means and providing general motivation to learn English due to its importance and utility. Thus, we can notice that there are three factors that, overall, gained considerable consensus among students and that are present in both groups of answers, that is, (a) speaking activities, (b) interactive activities and (c) general motivation provided by the teacher referring to English usefulness and relevance. These results lead us to think that one of the main factors enhancing students' motivation in EFL learning is a dialogic and interactive learning environment, where they are asked to discuss among them and with the teacher, expressing their opinions about various topics and developing their oral skills, especially oral production.

Item 4 regards students' emotional states and feelings during EFL lessons and asked students whether, in their opinion, the teacher tries to increase their self-esteem and autonomy and to diminish possible anxiety. As for self-esteem, the majority of the informants (63%) believe that the teacher does not try to enhance it during the English lessons. However, when it comes to autonomy the preponderance of the surveyed students (67%) think that the teacher actually attempts to incentive and support it. As far as anxiety is concerned, the shares of positive and negative answers are quite similar; indeed, 51% of the students believe that the teacher tries to lessen possible anxiety emerging during the EFL lesson, while 48% hold the opposite opinion. Even if the responses to these items were quite differentiated, those given to the following item (4.1) were more compact, displaying a clearly defined majority of the surveyed students (82%) stating that they would be more motivated if the teacher encouraged and supported them more with respect to their self-esteem and autonomy, diminishing possible anxiety experienced during EFL lessons.

The questionnaire proceeded enquiring about students' involvement in the decision of classroom activities (item 5); the majority of the informants (65%) responded that the teacher does not include them in such issue. Considering this outcome, we believe that the responses to item 6 are in line with our expectations, displaying 83% of the students that believe that their motivation to learn English would be enhanced if they were (more) involved in the decision of classroom activities.

This following part is concerned with the frequency with which the teacher proposes activities featuring certain qualities and with the corresponding enhancement of students' motivational level if such activities were proposed more often. As anticipated in chapter two (cf. 2.3.1.1), this part is mainly based on the *Stimulus Appraisal Theory*, taking into consideration almost all the aspects it indicates as salient for the appraisal process.

When asked how often the teacher proposed pleasant activities (item7), a considerable 59% answered either *Never* or *Hardly ever*. Therefore, the succeeding item (8) enquired about which classroom activities students found more pleasant and motivating. The most popular responses to this item were: (a) Watching films or videos in English and then doing activities connected to them, (b) doing group work and (c) listening to songs in English and then working on them. Other types of activities that obtained a high number of preferences were: doing exercises in pairs, reading an authentic text in English and doing oral exercises and presentations. Even in these responses, it is noticeable that there is a general preference for oral activities, be they receptive or productive activities. In addition, another variable emerged in this context, that is, the "social" factor: exercises in groups and pairs seemed to be appreciated by a wide share of the informants. This propensity for collaborative activities with peers may be exploited by the teacher; this could, in turn, lead to a general benefit for the whole class group, fostering the supportive atmosphere of the lessons. Not surprisingly, given that pleasure is one of the key motivational factors according to Balboni and attractiveness one of the traits considered in stimulus appraisal, the vast majority of the surveyed students (94%) agreed on the fact that if pleasant activities were proposed more often their motivation would be fostered (item 9). Continuing with the summary of students' responses, we get to item 10. The preponderance of our student informants (68%) replied that the teacher never or hardly ever proposes new activities, therefore as we may expect, a considerable 90% of them answered that they would be more motivated if novel activities were proposed more often (item 11). As for the feasibility of the tasks and activities proposed by the teacher (item 12), the vast majority of the students (86%) stated that such activities were proposed often,

almost always or always by their teacher. In any case students overall (80%) claimed, that they would be more motivated if the teacher proposed feasible activities more often (item 13). Regarding the proposal of activities that do not put students' self and social image at risk (item 14), students' opinions are more diversified. Indeed, the whole range of options of frequency from *Never* to *Always* received a similar amount of preferences, around 20% each. However, students' views appear to be distinctly on the same side in item 15, where 80% of the informants claimed that they would be more motivated to learn EFL if the teacher proposed activities that do not undermine their image more often. As far as what the teacher should do to motivate students more (item 16) is concerned, the responses that received the higher number of preferences were: (a) *Propose films and videos in English and activities connected to them more often*, (b) *Propose the listening of songs in English and activities connected to them more often*, and (c) *Change the activities proposed in class more often*. These options were immediately followed by *Propose more activities in which I can speak English* and *Propose group work more often*. Thus, students' answers reaffirmed what emerged before, that is, their predilection for oral activities both receptive and productive ones and their inclination for group work, even if in this case this option was not present within the three most relevant answers. Moreover, a variable that was not mentioned before was the desire for novelty and change in the activities proposed during the EFL lesson.

Let us now observe the results of the second section of the questionnaire, which will shed some light on the surveyed students' degree of agreement with the statements presented. The responses to the first three items (17, 18, 19) display a general agreement among the informants who stated that they learn English because they like it (91%), they learn it because it is useful (98%) and they do not learn it because they have to (74%). These answers are in line with one another, showing that, overall, the learning of English is based on pleasure, need and utility and not on duty. Notwithstanding, it is not to be disregarded that a considerable 25% of the students claimed that they learn English because they have to. As Caon (2006) suggests, maybe a viable option with this latter share of learners could be trying to work on the omnipresent *duty* and turn it into *sense of duty*, which presumes a degree of internalisation and self-responsibility on the part of the students, who will thus become more involved in their own learning.

As to item 20, students' views are quite divergent: on the one hand, there is a consistent 62% of the informants that claim that they do not learn English in order to get a good

mark; on the other hand, a significant 37% hold the opposite opinion and therefore, declare the importance they attribute to learning English in order to obtain a good grade.

Continuing with our recapitulation, we get to some items concerning the influence of significant others - students' parents and the EFL teacher - on the learner's motivation. The preponderance of the informants (90%) marked responses of disagreement with the statement "I learn English in order to please my parents" (item 21), and another 71% claimed that they would not be more motivated if their parents encouraged them more to learn English (item 22). However, 28% of the surveyed students hold the opposite view and stated that, on the contrary, their motivation to learn English would be enhanced through parental support in such activity. Item 23 is concerned with the importance of the role of the teacher in motivating students to learn English. In this case there is no clear-cut opposition between negative and positive answers, like in the previous items; indeed, 57% of the students believe that the teacher's role is actually essential in motivating them, whereas 42% do not agree with this view. Indeed, when they were required to respond to item 27, "Motivation in learning English depends just on me and nobody can change it", the majority (70%) of the students selected answers displaying their agreement with the statement. Nonetheless 29% of the informant showed their disagreement, instead, manifesting their belief that motivation can also be influenced by external factors, such as the EFL teacher.

As far as classroom activities is concerned, 92% of the informants believe that they would be more motivated if more engaging activities were proposed during the EFL classroom (item 24). Moreover, 88% of them maintained that the usage of different materials during the lessons would enhance their motivation (item 25), and finally, 82% of the students claimed that using technology during the English lessons would motivate them to learn EFL more (item 26).

The last items of the questionnaire regarded the student's ideas and attitudes toward the language and the culture of its native speakers. Indeed, 89% of the informants maintain that learning English is one of their personal objectives (item 28), and 76% of them see themselves as speakers of English in the future (item 29). In addition, 77% of the students stated that they are interested in discovering the various cultures of the native speakers of English (item 30). On balance, students' positive attitude outlines the negative one. However, it is to be considered that 22% of the informants do not imagine themselves as

English speakers in the future and are not curious or interested in learning about native speakers' cultures.

5.2 COMMENTS ON TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES

It is to be recalled that 11 EFL teachers took part in this research. All of them were females and were teaching in the secondary schools that agreed to be involved in this study.

Let us begin commenting on the first items of the questionnaire. The majority of the teachers (91%) believe that, overall, their students are motivated to learn English (item 1). When asked if they included students' motivation in their teaching goals (item 2), the preponderance of the informants (82%) answered positively, because they believed that motivation underpins learning and because of the current and future importance and usefulness of the English language (item 3 A). Nonetheless, the remaining 18% claimed that students' motivation is not part of their teaching objectives. One of them did not believe that motivation could come from external factors, the other teacher, instead, adduced the following reason: since she teaches English in a "*Liceo linguistico*" where languages are the core subjects within the curriculum, students already possess motivation to learn EFL given that they had chosen such a school (item 3 B).

Item 4 is concerned with the teachers' perception of the classroom atmosphere and environment, especially referring to their attitude towards students' emotional states. 82% of the informants think that they try to enhance students' self-esteem during their lessons, both through the activities proposed and the feedbacks given to the students. Furthermore, 91% of the teachers believe that they attempt to improve students' autonomy and the totality of them think that they try to diminish possible anxiety emerging in students during the EFL lessons. Indeed, the vast majority of them (91%) agreed with the idea that such incentives boost students' motivation to learn English (item 4.1).

As for students' involvement in the decision of classroom activities (item 5), teachers' behaviours diverge: 55% of them actually involve students in this process, whereas the remaining 45% do not. However, when asked whether more involvement in the decision of classroom activities would enhance students' motivation or not (item 6), 64% of them responded positively. 36%, instead, maintained that students' motivation would not be improved through their involvement in the decision of classroom practices.

The following part deals with the frequency with which the teachers propose various activities in class and students' motivation fluctuations according to that. When asked about how often they propose pleasant activities (item 7), teachers answered either *Often* or *Almost always* accounting for 64% and 36% respectively. Then, item 8 enquired about which activities the surveyed teachers deemed more pleasant and motivating for students. The responses that obtained the highest number of preferences were: (a) *Watching film or videos in English that are not connected with the textbook and then doing activities connected to them*, (b) *Listening songs in English and then working on the lyrics*, and (c) *Doing group work*. Other activities that immediately followed the most rated options were: doing exercises in pairs and doing oral exercises and presentations. It is noticeable that the options that received more preferences are connected with oral skills, mainly receptive, but also productive and, furthermore, the preferred activities are not individual, but those to be performed in groups or in pairs. The majority of the teachers (73%) believe that students would be more motivated to learn English if they proposed pleasant activities more often (item 9). As for the novelty of the activities proposed in class (item 10), the majority of the informants (82%) claimed that they propose new activities often or almost always. However, just 64% of the surveyed teachers think that if they proposed new activities more often students' motivation would improve (item 11), whilst almost a fifth of the sample believes the opposite. Regarding the feasibility of the activities and tasks proposed in the EFL lesson (item 12), the majority of the participants 91% stated that they propose feasible activities and tasks either often, almost always or always. As to item 13, the majority of the teachers – though not overwhelming like the previous one - (55%) stated that a more frequent proposal of feasible activities would enhance students' motivation, but a consistent 36% did not respond to this item. As far as the proposal of “psychologically and socially safe” activities is concerned (item 14), the majority of the surveyed teachers (74%) answered that they propose activities that do not undermine students' self and social images often, almost always or always. However, just 37% of the informants thought that the more frequent proposal of such activities would foster students' motivation (item 15), whereas 27% of them held the opposite opinion and the remaining share of the sample did not answer. The last item of the first section, item 16, enquired about which activities teachers should perform to motivate their students more and the responses that obtained more preferences were: (a) *Propose group work more often* and (b) *Propose materials that are different from the textbook more often*.

As far as the second section of the questionnaire is concerned, we will recapitulate the extent to which the surveyed teachers agree with the statements that were presented.

The vast majority of the teachers (91%) manifested their agreement with the statement in item 17, that is, “Students learn English because they like it”, as well as to that presented in item 18, “Students learn English because it is useful” that received the appreciation of 82% of the surveyed teachers. Their opinions appeared more diversified in item 19, stating that students learn English because they have to; 52% manifested their disagreement choosing either *Strongly disagree* or *Slightly disagree* whilst a considerable 36% selected *Slightly agree*. As for item 20, which is about students’ learning English in order to get a good mark, teachers’ views appeared to be diversified as well. Indeed, 9% of the informants selected *Strongly agree* and *Strongly disagree*, with *Slightly disagree* reflecting 46% of the total and *Slightly agree* corresponding to 36%. Overall, negative answers outline positive ones accounting for 55% and 45% respectively, displaying no distinct general propensity for a common opinion on such a topic.

As to the impact of significant others in student’s motivation to learn English, item 21 displayed the idea of students’ learning English in order to please their parents. The majority of the surveyed teachers (72%) disagreed with the statement; on the contrary the remaining 28% manifested the opposite opinion, marking *Slightly agree*. Nonetheless, the responses to the statement “Students would be more motivated if their parents encouraged them more to learn English” (item 22) showed a preponderant agreement (64%) on the part of the teachers. As for the importance of the teachers’ role in motivating students to learn English (item 23), the vast majority (82%) of the informants accord significant relevance to the their role in motivating students. Responses to item 27, were therefore in line with this general view; indeed, 82% manifested their disagreement with the statement “Motivation in learning English depends just on the students and nobody can change it”. Nonetheless, 18% of the informants were in agreement with it.

The following part regards some variables within the EFL lesson that may be considered as incentives for students’ motivation. 91% of the surveyed teachers, indeed, believe that doing more engaging activities during EFL lessons would motivate students to learn English more (item 24). As for the motivation improvement obtained through the use of different materials during the English lesson (item 25), the totality of the teachers agrees with the statement. The informants opinions vary a little more when it comes to the use of

technology during the EFL lesson as a motivational factor (item 26); the majority of the teachers agrees with the statement (73%), however 27% of them hold the opposite opinion.

Regarding the teachers' perception of the students' attitude towards the cultures of the native speakers of English (item 28), the vast majority of the informants (91%) selected a response displaying accordance with the statement, claiming therefore that in their opinions students are interested in learning about the different cultures of the mother tongue speakers of English.

5.3 COMPARISON OF THE OUTCOMES

This paragraph will deal with the comparative relation between the results of the students' and the teachers' questionnaires. We will juxtapose the responses to related items in order to discover whether they match or collide. The outcome of such a comparison will be displayed and discussed below.

5.3.1 SIMILARITIES

One thing we can immediately notice is that both students and teachers indicated that, overall, students are motivated to learn English as a foreign language. This has been affirmed by 94% of the student informants and reconfirmed by the perceptions of 91% of the surveyed teachers (item 1).

Another similarity regards the teacher's attempts to improve student's autonomy during the EFL classroom that has been perceived both by the preponderance of students and of the teachers. In addition, the two groups agreed on the fact that students' motivation would be enhanced if the teacher encouraged pupils more with respect to self-esteem and autonomy and tried to decrease students' anxiety (item 4.1). Moreover, concordance is displayed in item 6, where the majority of students and teachers believe that students' involvement in the decision of classroom activities would foster their motivation to learn English (item 6).

Interestingly, the responses to item 8, questioning which activities were deemed more pleasant and motivating for students, are almost identical: the activities that students rated as most pleasant were: watching films and videos in English and then working on them, doing group work and listening to songs and then doing connected activities, immediately

followed by doing exercises in pairs, reading authentic texts in English, and doing oral exercises and presentations. And indeed, teachers' answers only gave a different order of the same activities, that is, their most rated response was watching films and videos and then doing activities connected to them, listening to songs and working on the lyrics and doing group work. These options were followed by doing exercises in pairs and oral exercises and presentation; the only option that was not among teachers' preferences was reading an authentic text in English, but, overall, the choices of both groups display a remarkable similarity, identifying the same activities as the most pleasant and motivating for EFL students. Pupils and teacher are in accordance with the fact that proposing pleasant activities more often would enhance students' motivation to learn English (item 9).

Other aspects on which students and teachers agree are the following: proposing new activities more often would foster students' motivation (item 11); the teachers propose feasible activities and tasks either often, almost always or always (item 12) and a more frequent proposal of practicable activities and tasks would motivate students to learn English more (item 13). In addition, the majority of the responses both of student and of teacher informants to item 14 showed that teachers propose activities that do not put students' self and social image at risk either often, almost always or always.

As far as the second section of the questionnaire is concerned, similarities between students' and teachers' answers are noticeable for the majority of the items. Indeed, the preponderance of students' and teachers' responses agree with the facts that students learn English because they like it (item 17), because it is useful (item 18) and, overall, they do not learn EFL because they have to (item 19). In addition, both students and teachers believe that, generally, learners do not study English in order to get a good mark (item 20), nor to please their parents (item 21). They also agree on the relevance of the teachers' role in motivating students to learn English (item 23).

As for the activities that could render the teaching / learning context more motivating, the majority of students and teachers maintained that more engaging activities (item 24), the use of different materials (item 25) and the exploitation of technology during the EFL lessons (item 26) would enhance students' motivation to learn English.

Furthermore, the preponderant shares of student and teacher informants agree with the statement asserting that students are interested in discovering the different cultures of the

native speakers of English (students' questionnaire, item 30, corresponding to teachers' questionnaire, item 28).

5.3.2 DISCREPANCIES

Regarding the attempt of the teacher to motivate students to learn EFL (students' questionnaire, item 3), the preponderance of the learners perceived that the teacher does not try to motivate them. Notwithstanding, the vast majority of the surveyed teachers claimed that students' motivation is part of their teaching goals (teachers' questionnaire, item 2).

As to the emotional states students experience during the EFL lesson (item 4), students' and teachers' opinions are quite divergent. Indeed, the majority of the surveyed students do not believe that the teacher tries to improve their self-esteem, whilst the vast majority of the teacher informants state that they actually attempt to foster students' self-esteem during their lessons, in their feedbacks and in the activities they propose. Furthermore, as far as anxiety is concerned, all the surveyed teachers claimed that they try to diminish possible anxiety on the part of the students during their lessons; this, however, has been agreed with by 51% of the students, whereas the other 48% of the learners held the opposite opinion, and did not think that the teacher attempts to lessen their anxiety during the EFL lesson.

As for students' involvement in the decision of classroom activities (item 5), the preponderance of the students claimed that the teacher does not involve them in this process, whereas the majority of the teachers stated that they actually engage students in such issue.

Regarding the frequency with which pleasant activities are proposed in EFL class (item 7), the majority of the students answered with *Never* or *Hardly ever*, thus contrasting with teachers' responses; the totality of the surveyed teachers maintained that they propose pleasant activities either *Often* or *Almost always*. The outcome of this item is quite surprising, especially considering the agreement of students' and teachers' responses in identifying the same activities as pleasant and motivating for learners. Maybe such a result could be explained through teachers' perceiving as pleasant even other types of activities that are not the same as those proposed in the following item. Otherwise, if the pleasant activities proposed were those mentioned in item 8, which both teachers and students

selected, we would have obtained different outcomes from this item in students' questionnaire.

Another inconsistency that emerged regard the frequency with which new activities are proposed in class (item 10), with the majority of the students asserting that such activities are proposed either *Never* or *Hardly ever*, whereas in teachers' opinions they are proposed either *Often* or *Almost always*. Moreover, the vast majority of the students believe that they would be more motivated if activities that do not undermine their self and social image were proposed more often (item 15) whilst just 37% of the teachers agree with that.

Last but not least, students' responses to item 16, asking for what the teacher should do to motivate them more, overall reconfirmed what they rated as the most pleasant activities in item 8 above, answering that the teacher should propose more films and videos and songs with connected activities and change the activities proposed more often. The teachers' most rated responses to this item, instead, concerned proposing group work more often and using materials that are different from the textbook more often. Nonetheless, the third position of teachers' responses comprised various options: changing activities proposed in class more often, propose more game activities, propose films and videos and songs with connected activities more often. These activities reflect those that were chosen by the preponderance of the students, however, teacher did not rate them as high as students.

Let us now focus on the second section of the questionnaire. This part displayed a general agreement between the students' and teachers' viewpoints, nonetheless, some discrepancies actually emerged. This is the case of item 22, asserting that students would be more motivated if their parents encouraged them to learn English more. The preponderance of the students disagrees with the statement, while the majority of the teachers hold the opposite opinion, agreeing with it instead. It is to be noted that, indeed, 28% of the students manifested their agreement with this item. In addition, students' and teachers' opinions differ on item 27, with the majority of the students claiming that motivation to learn English depends just on them and nobody can change it, whereas teachers generally disagree. In line with their views, a remarkable 29% of the student informants are in disagreement with the statement as well.

5.4 DISCUSSION ON LIKELY PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF OUR FINDINGS

While comparing students' and teachers' responses to the questionnaire items, some issues emerged.

Firstly, the responses to some items seemed to be remarkably inconsistent with one another, such as those concerning teachers' attempts to motivate students, to enhance learners' self-esteem and to decrease possible anxiety during the EFL lesson. It is true that we are considering two opposite points of view and therefore it may be common that their perceptions are contrasting; nonetheless, it might be the case that teachers attempts are not enough as to be felt and understood by their students. Indeed, the attempts of the teachers to improve students' autonomy were clearly perceived by students. Thus, maybe the teachers' behaviours and efforts aimed at fostering such aspects within the EFL lessons should be more transparent and explicit in conveying their intentions. An open and clearer communication could be a fruitful action to be performed in order to ensure that the messages are comprehended by learners, who should perceive the supportive intentions of the teacher.

Similarly, a more dialogic classroom atmosphere could include students' participation in the decision of classroom activities, tasks or topics of discussion, given that

“l'interesse è maggiore per gli argomenti scelti personalmente, rispetto a quelli imposti, in quanto questi danno un senso di controllo personale che consente di mantenerlo attivo” (De Beni e Moè, 2000:161-162).

Secondly, surprising discrepancies emerged in items 7 and 10, concerned with the proposal of pleasant and new activities respectively on the part of the teacher. In both cases students believe that these types of activities were proposed either never or rarely, whereas teachers maintained that they proposed them often or almost always. As argued above what appeared most remarkable is that students and teachers overall agree on which activities are the most pleasant and motivating for learners, since they individuated the same ones, however, the frequency with which they are proposed display greatly contrasting results. The possible explanation for this divergence is that probably teachers deem pleasant also other activities that are not the same considered motivating and attractive by students. In this respect, a possible solution to overcome any doubts could be ask students' opinion on which activities they believe would be pleasant, attractive and motivating. Of course, the ones that emerged to be motivating and pleasant from our questionnaire results, that is, watching film or videos and listening to songs, doing

connected activities afterwards, and group work, would certainly require consistent organisational work on the part of the teacher that should plan the lessons and the tasks very carefully, in terms of time, contents, objectives, adaptation of the material to students' level and so on. This process may reveal quite demanding and probably many teachers would rather stick to other activities, tasks and types of lessons with which they feel more comfortable. Indeed, as a teacher states referring to what she learnt in a course for teachers' professional development:

“... I'm so enthusiastic that if they asked me to do something, I would do it. But as soon as the door closes and I'm at home, it's gone. I think that maybe I'm not enthusiastic enough, maybe I'm not convinced about it. They work using those methods and they are successful, but maybe I'm not that convinced about it so I don't go for it. And maybe it's the same with [this teacher development course]. Yes, this is true, we should do it this way, but then you return home and you say to yourself: It's much more comfortable to do it the old way” (Kubanyiova in Kubanyiova, 2014: 72-73).

Therefore, this idea of finding comfort in “the old way”, may have a deterrent effect on the impulse of doing different or new things within the EFL learning context. Notwithstanding, “la ripetitività delle modalità di lavoro e delle tecniche didattiche genera solitamente uno stato di noia” (Caon, 2008:15), which is surely not beneficial for students nor for their motivation to learn English. Thus, all things considered, maybe a viable suggestion for teachers could be, apart from establishing a classroom environment based on teacher-students communication (already suggested above), trying to face the challenge and insert some pleasurable and new activities from time to time, testing their effectiveness on the students' motivation and learning; it may reveal a positive change.

Moreover, although the majority of teachers and students agreed on the fact that teachers overall propose activities that do not put students' self and social image at risk, a consistent third of the student informants held a divergent opinion. This view emerged also in the succeeding response, confirming that learners would be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed “psychologically and socially safe” activities more often. Indeed, to say it in Dörnyei's words:

“Language learning is one of the most face-threatening school subjects because of the pressure of having to operate using a rather limited language code. [...] The solution, according to the general consensus amongst motivation researchers, is

straightforward: We need to create a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere.”
(Dörnyei, 2001:40).

Regarding learners’ studying English because they are obliged to, a considerable fourth of the surveyed students manifested their agreement with the statement and so did 36% of the teachers. As anticipated above, a viable solution to this issue, could be Caon’s proposal (2006) of trying to transform duty into “sense of duty”. The starting point of his argument is the “omnipresence” of duty within the school context; this aspect, if worked upon by the teacher may become “sense of duty” for students, being therefore highly motivating. To achieve such a goal, the teacher should, first of all, establish a meaningful relationship with the students, and afterward, create and maintain an environment that is favourable for learning. In order to attain it, according to Caon, the teacher should undertake a path comprising the following steps: first of all, the teacher should find a compromise between curriculum requirements and directives and students’ needs and interests, integrating them in a unique and complete teaching proposal. Moreover, the teacher should try to create a stimulating and varied learning context, exploiting different methodologies and techniques and emphasise and make explicit the relation between EFL knowledge and real-life situations. In addition, he or she should frequently propose cognitive challenges to students through for instance problem-solving activities, and, in turn, accept students’ challenges, establishing thus an interactive and dialogical learning environment. Finally, the teacher should make students interested in learning and studying the EFL through explicit and transparent actions and behaviours (Caon, 2006: 27-30). Within such a context, students’ autonomy and personal involvement would certainly thrive, so that learners would to some extent internalise the former externally imposed duty that would become a more self-determined and motivating type of duty, namely “sense of duty”, which comprises the students’ responsibility and agency for their own learning.

As for the responses to the second section of the questionnaire, one of the differences noted above was the role of parental encouragement in positively influencing students’ motivation to learn English. Although the majority of the student informants disagreed with that statement, almost a third of them, instead, considered it an enhancing motivational factor. This idea was supported by the preponderance of the teachers as well. Reasonably, parents’ opinions are relevant for the majority of children, therefore the teacher should try to “enlist the parents as allies” (Dörnyei, 2001:39) in his / her efforts to foster students’ motivation to learn EFL.

The other discrepancy highlighted concerned the statement asserting that students' motivation depended just on themselves and nobody could change it. This belief seemed to be quite rooted among the majority of the students, and it contrasted with teachers' views on the topic. In fact, it is undeniable that motivation is influenced by external factors and, particularly "the personal example of the teacher is a fundamental motivating factor" (Caon, 2006:31); moreover, "it has been increasingly recognised that the teacher's level of enthusiasm and commitment is one of the most important factors that can affect learner's motivation to learn" (Dörnyei and Kubanyiova, 2014:25). Nonetheless, if the preponderance of the students perceive that they are the masters of their own motivation, probably they like self-determined behaviours and being in control with their personal (learning) situation. In this case, teachers could try to foster learner agency "that is, learner's proactive investment in the learning process" (Dörnyei and Kubanyiova, 2014:35). This aspect could be improved through various approaches whose objective is making students aware that they are in charge with their own learning, enhancing the perception that motivation comes from within rather than from external factors.

To conclude, an innovative means through which the teacher could work on the students' motivation to learn English is through the creation, maintenance and development of learners' "vision". Starting from his *L2 Motivational Self System* (cf. 1.3.4), Dörnyei developed his theory further, focussing on the relevance of vision applied to the language-learning context. Indeed, the scholar deems vision "to be one of the highest-order motivational forces, one that is particularly fitting to explain the long-term, and often lifelong, process of mastering a second language" (Dörnyei and Kubanyiova, 2014:4). It would be enormously interesting to put this theory into practice in order to appreciate its motivational power on EFL students.

In sum, most of the suggestions given above may be recapitulated in the importance of taking care of the teacher-students relationship, making this rapport as dialogic, supportive and empathic as possible. Furthermore, another key condition is the creation of a classroom environment which is suitable and favourable for EFL learning and where students are regarded as

“ ‘people’ rather than simply as ‘language learners’; to the extent that we encourage and create opportunities for them to ‘speak as themselves’ and engage and express their own preferred meanings, interests and identities through the medium of the target language; the more likely that students will feel involved and motivated to

communicate and thus to engage themselves in the process of learning and using the language” (Ushioda, 2011:17).

5.5 POSSIBLE BIASES OF THIS STUDY

Given that this research was conducted using questionnaires as means for collecting data, there are some possible limitations to be co considered, such as the adequacy of the instrument with respect to our objective and

“ nella desiderabilità sociale. Chi compila lo strumento in genere tende a pensare a quale sarebbe la risposta auspicabile e a esprimere le convinzioni socialmente più accettabili e desiderabili.” (De Beni e Moè, 2000:192).

Moreover, it is to be considered that the results obtained from our sample of students and teachers may not be readily generalised to all students of the same age range or to all EFL teachers in the region of Veneto, since the schools that took part in this research were secondary schools whose curriculum was chiefly based on foreign languages. Therefore students’ and teachers’ attitude towards them may not be similar to those of other students and teachers learning and working in other types of secondary schools, although in the same geographical area.

5.6 INPUTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As far as future research is concerned, trying to put into practice the solutions presented above, could be an interesting suggestion for further research in the field of motivation.

Possibly, a longitudinal study could be conducted, structured as follows: firstly, a measurement of motivational levels of EFL learners could be carried out through an initial questionnaire; secondly, the strategies and techniques proposed above could be performed with a group of students over a period of time of some months and finally, when the agreed period is over, another measurement of students’ motivation could be carried out. The results of this latter measurement could be compared to the ones obtained with the first questionnaire in order to find out possible improvements or enhancements of students’ motivation in EFL learning.

This same idea could be maintained and further developed adding a control group that would not be taught applying the above strategies, techniques and methodologies, but that

would be administered an initial and final questionnaire measuring motivation as well, in order to compare the results with those obtained from the first group. Moreover, the final questionnaire outcomes could be compared with the results of the first questionnaire in order to understand if the motivational level of the control group was maintained or if it underwent significant changes, either positive or negative.

In addition, a more qualitative type of research could be carried out through the keeping of a diary where students report their learning experiences over a period of time in order to understand which classroom practices and activities are most appreciated and motivating. The same proposal could be made to teachers as well, so that the opinions of the two sides could be compared in order to discover the best way to practically negotiate and compromise between the two views and perceptions in the classroom practice.

Conclusions

Motivation in foreign language learning and its multifaceted nature was the core of this research, however many other related aspects were taken into account in order to provide a comprehensive picture of this fundamental component underpinning learning.

We started this research with the intention of discovering the responses to some questions, namely; whether students are generally motivated to learn English as a foreign language, what type of motivation theirs is and which is the teacher's role in creating and sustaining learner's motivation. All things considered, we may state that we were able to supply a response to them all. Firstly, we found out that EFL learners are motivated to learn English. Secondly, their motivation appear to be both intrinsic and extrinsic, nonetheless, generally this latter type revealed to be more present and widespread, considering for instance the preponderance of the students learning English because of its instrumental utility. Finally, the relevance of teachers' role in motivating students was overall confirmed. However, some potentially problematic aspects concerning it were highlighted and we tried to provide pertinent and plausible solutions and practical actions to be performed within the EFL learning context.

The comparative focus of this research allowed us to discover diverse aspects of students' and teachers' beliefs and viewpoints about foreign language learning in general and about motivation connected to it in particular.

Surely, this research does not answer all the open questions about motivation in EFL learning, however it has shed some light on the classroom practices that are regarded as most appreciated and motivating for learners, which appear to be mainly connected with oral skills.

In sum, the most recurring and effective suggestion in order to guarantee the creation and enhancement of students' motivation within the EFL learning context was fostering a supportive, dialogical and stimulating classroom environment on the part of the teacher.

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Appendix A: Questionnaires in Italian

QUESTIONARIO STUDENTE

Età : _____ Sesso: M F

1_ Sei motivato ad imparare l'inglese? Sì No

2_ Perché?

3_ Pensi che l'insegnante d'inglese cerchi di motivarti ad imparare la lingua?

Sì (rispondi alla 3.1 A)

No (rispondi alla 3.1 B)

3.1_ A – **Se sì, come?** / B- **Se no, che cosa dovrebbe fare per motivarti?**

4_ Pensi chi l'insegnante d'inglese cerchi di ...

... aumentare la tua **autostima**? Sì No

... aumentare la tua **autonomia**? Sì No

... diminuire l'eventuale **ansia** durante la lezione d'inglese? Sì No

4.1 (Se hai risposto con **ALMENO UN NO** alla domanda 4)

Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante ti incoraggiasse di più nei punti indicati alla domanda n°4? Sì No

5_ L'insegnante ti coinvolge nella **decisione** delle attività da svolgere in classe? Sì No

6_ Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante ti coinvolgesse di più nella decisione delle attività da svolgere in classe? Sì No

7_ L'insegnante propone attività piacevoli:

Sempre Quasi sempre Spesso Quasi mai Mai

8_ Le attività proposte in classe che più mi piacciono sono:

(è possibile dare più preferenze, fino ad un massimo di 5; se si sceglie "Altro" specificare l'attività)

- Leggere i dialoghi e i testi del libro
- Leggere un testo autentico in lingua inglese (es. articolo di giornale, testo letterario, etc.)
- Fare gli esercizi presenti nel libro cartaceo
- Fare gli esercizi interattivi proposti dal libro (es. LIM, espansione esercizi on-line, etc)
- Fare esercizi di ascolto (solo con CD audio)
- Ascoltare canzoni in lingua straniera e poi lavorare sul testo
- Vedere i video dei dialoghi o degli approfondimenti del libro e poi fare attività connesse ad essi
- Vedere film o video in lingua inglese non collegati al libro e poi fare attività connesse ad essi
- Fare cruciverba in inglese
- Fare esercizi strutturali
- Fare attività ludiche (= di gioco) in lingua inglese
- Fare esercizi a coppie
- Fare lavori di gruppo
- Fare esercizi e presentazioni orali
- Fare traduzioni e/o riassunti di testi in inglese
- Altro: _____

9_ Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività piacevoli? Sì No

10_ L'insegnante propone attività nuove :

Sempre Quasi sempre Spesso Quasi mai Mai

11_ Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività nuove? Sì No

12_ L'insegnante propone attività e compiti che ritieni realizzabili :

Sempre Quasi sempre Spesso Quasi mai Mai

13_ Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività realizzabili? Sì No

14_ L'insegnante propone attività che **non** mettono a rischio la tua autostima e la tua immagine di fronte ai compagni:

Sempre Quasi sempre Spesso Quasi mai Mai

15_ Saresti più motivato ad imparare l'inglese se l'insegnante proponesse più spesso attività che **non** mettono a rischio la tua autostima e la tua immagine di fronte ai compagni? Sì No

16_ Per motivarmi di più l'insegnante dovrebbe:

(è possibile dare più preferenze, fino ad un massimo di 3; se si sceglie "Altro" specificare l'attività)

- cambiare più spesso le attività proposte in classe
- proporre più attività ludiche (= di gioco)
- proporre più spesso lavori di gruppo
- proporre più attività individuali di approfondimento su argomenti che mi piacciono
- proporre più spesso la visione di video o film in lingua originale e successive attività sul video o film
- proporre più attività in cui posso parlare in lingua inglese
- proporre più spesso l'ascolto di canzoni in lingua inglese e successive attività connesse
- proporre più spesso materiali diversi dal libro
- Altro: _____

Esprimi quanto sei d'accordo con le seguenti affermazioni:

17_ Imparo l'inglese perché mi piace

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

18_ Imparo l'inglese perché è utile

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

19_ Imparo l'inglese perché devo

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

20_ Imparo l'inglese per avere un bel voto

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

21_ Imparo l'inglese per far piacere ai miei genitori

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

22_ Sarei più motivato se i miei genitori mi incoraggiassero di più all'apprendimento dell'inglese

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

23_ L'insegnante ha un ruolo molto importante nel motivarmi ad imparare l'inglese

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

24_ Fare attività più coinvolgenti durante le lezioni mi motiverebbe di più ad imparare l'inglese

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

25_ L'uso di materiali diversi durante le lezioni mi motiverebbe di più ad imparare l'inglese

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

26_ L'uso della tecnologia durante le lezioni mi motiverebbe di più ad imparare l'inglese

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

27_ La motivazione ad imparare l'inglese dipende solo da me e nessuno può modificarla

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

28_ Imparare bene l'inglese è uno dei miei obiettivi personali

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

29_ Mi immagino come parlante di inglese in futuro

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

30_ Sono interessato a scoprire le diverse culture dei parlanti nativi d'inglese

Per nulla Più no che sì Più sì che no Decisamente sì

QUESTIONARIO INSEGNANTE

1_ Secondo lei, la maggioranza dei suoi studenti è motivata ad imparare l'inglese? Sì No

2_ Tra i suoi obiettivi didattici rientra anche la motivazione degli studenti all'apprendimento dell'inglese?

Sì (vada alla **3 A**)

No (vada alla **3 B**)

3 A_ Se sì, perché?

3 B_ Se no, perché?

4_ Durante le sue lezioni, nelle attività proposte e nei feedback agli studenti, cerca di:

... aumentare l' autostima degli studenti	Sì	No
... aumentare l' autonomia degli studenti	Sì	No
... diminuire l'eventuale ansia degli studenti durante la lezione di inglese	Sì	No

4.1 Crede che tali incentivi (domanda 4) favoriscano la motivazione degli studenti? Sì No

5_ Coinvolge gli studenti nella **decisione** delle attività da svolgere in classe? Sì No

6_ Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se li coinvolgesse di più nella decisione delle attività da svolgere? Sì No

7_ Propone attività piacevoli:

Sempre	Quasi sempre	Spesso	Quasi mai	Mai
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8_ Le attività proposte in classe che ritiene più motivanti e piacevoli per gli studenti sono:

(è possibile dare più preferenze, fino ad un massimo di 5; se si sceglie "Altro" specificare l'attività)

- Leggere i dialoghi e i testi del libro
- Leggere un testo autentico in lingua inglese (es. articolo di giornale, testo letterario, etc.)
- Fare gli esercizi presenti nel libro cartaceo
- Fare gli esercizi interattivi proposti dal libro (es. LIM, espansione esercizi on-line, etc)
- Fare esercizi di ascolto (solo con CD audio)
- Ascoltare canzoni in lingua straniera e poi lavorare sul testo
- Vedere i video dei dialoghi o degli approfondimenti del libro e poi fare attività connesse ad essi
- Vedere film o video in lingua inglese non collegati al libro e poi fare attività connesse ad essi
- Fare cruciverba in inglese
- Fare esercizi strutturali
- Fare attività ludiche (= di gioco) in lingua inglese
- Fare esercizi a coppie
- Fare lavori di gruppo
- Fare esercizi e presentazioni orali
- Fare traduzioni e/o riassunti di testi in inglese
- Altro: _____

9_ Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se proponesse più spesso attività piacevoli? Sì No

10_ Propone attività nuove :

Sempre	Quasi sempre	Spesso	Quasi mai	Mai
--------	--------------	--------	-----------	-----

11_ Crede che gli studenti sarebbero più motivati ad imparare l'inglese se proponesse più spesso attività nuove? Sì No

12_ Propone attività e compiti che gli studenti ritengono realizzabili :

Sempre	Quasi sempre	Spesso	Quasi mai	Mai
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Appendix B: Questionnaires in English

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Age : _____ Gender: M F

1_ Are you motivated to learn English? Yes No

2_ Why?

3_ Do you think that the teacher tries to motivate you to learn English?

Yes (answer 3.1 A)

No (answer 3.1 B)

3.1_ A – ***If yes, how?*** / B- ***If not, what should the teacher do to motivate you?***

4_ Do you think that the English teacher tries to ...

... increase your **self-esteem**? Yes No

... enhance your **autonomy**? Yes No

... diminish possible **anxiety** during English lessons? Yes No

4.1 (*If you have answered question 4 with AT LEAST one NO*)

Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher encouraged you more in the aspects indicated in question n°4? Yes No

5_ Does the teacher involve you in the decision of the classroom activities? Yes No

6_ Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher involved you more in the decision of classroom activities? Yes No

7_ The teacher proposes pleasant activities:

Always Almost always Often Rarely Never

8_ The activities proposed in class that I like the most are:

(it is possible to choose more than one option, up to max 5 options; if you choose "Other" please specify the activity)

- Reading the dialogues and texts in the textbook
- Reading an authentic text in English (e.g. newspaper article, literary text, etc.)
- Doing the exercises in the textbook
- Doing the interactive exercises that the book proposes (e.g. LIM, on-line exercises expansion, etc.)
- Doing listening exercises (with audio CD)
- Listening to songs in English and then working on the lyrics
- Watching the videos of the dialogues or of the supplementary activities proposed in the textbook and then doing activities connected to them
- Watching films or videos in English that are not connected with the textbook and then doing activities connected to them
- Doing crosswords in English
- Doing structural exercises
- Doing game activities in English
- Doing exercises in pairs
- Doing exercises in groups
- Doing oral exercises or presentations
- Doing translations and/or summaries of texts in English
- Other: _____

9_ Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed pleasant activities more often?

Yes No

10_ The teacher proposes new activities:

Always Almost always Often Rarely Never

11_ Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed new activities more often? Yes No

12_ The teacher proposes activities and tasks that you deem feasible:

Always Almost always Often Rarely Never

13_ Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed feasible activities more often? Yes No

14_ The teacher proposes activities that don't undermine your self-esteem and your image in front of your classmates:

Always Almost always Often Rarely Never

15_ Would you be more motivated to learn English if the teacher proposed activities that **don't** undermine your self-esteem and your image in front of your classmates more often? Yes No

16_ To motivate me more, the teacher should:

(it is possible to choose more than one option, up to max 3 options; if you choose "Other" please specify the activity)

- change the activities proposed in class more often
- propose more game activities
- propose group work more often
- propose more individual activities to deepen topics that I like
- propose films and videos in English and activities connected to them more often
- propose more activities in which I can speak English
- propose the listening of songs in English and activities connected to them more often
- propose materials that are different from the textbook more often
- Other: _____

Decide to what extent you agree with the following statements:

17_ I learn English because I like it

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

18_ I learn English because it is useful

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

19_ I learn English because I have to

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

20_ I learn English in order to get a good mark

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

21_ I learn English in order to please my parents

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

22_ I would be more motivated if my parents encouraged me more to learn English

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

23_ The teacher plays an important role in motivating me to learn English

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree

24_ Doing more engaging activities during the lessons would motivate me to learn English more

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

25_ Using different materials during the lessons would motivate me to learn English more

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

26_ Using technology during the lessons would motivate me to learn English more

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

27_ Motivation in learning English depends just on me and nobody can change it

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

28_ Learning English well is one of my personal objectives

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

29_ I see myself as a speaker of English in the future

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

30_ I am interested in discovering the different cultures of the native speakers of English

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRES

1_ In your opinion, is the majority of your students motivated to learn English? Yes No

2_ Do you include students' motivation to learn English in your teaching objectives?

Yes (answer **3.1 A**)

No (answer **3.1 B**)

3.1 A _ If yes, why?

3.1 B _ If not, why?

4_ During your lessons, in the activities you propose and in your feedback to the students, do you try to:

... improve their self-esteem ?		Yes	No
... improve their autonomy ?		Yes	No
... diminish the potential anxiety during the English lesson?	Yes	No	

4.1 Do you think that these incentives (question n° 4) improve students' motivation? Yes No

5_ Do you involve students in the decision of the class activities? Yes No

6_ Do you think students would you be more motivated to learn English if you involved them more in the decision of class activities? Yes No

7_ You propose pleasant activities:

Always	Almost always	Often	Rarely	Never
--------	---------------	-------	--------	-------

8_ The class activities that you deem more motivatind and pleasant for the students are:

(it is possible to choose more than one option, up to max 5 options ; if you choose "Other" please specify the activity)

- Reading the dialogues and texts in the textbook
- Reading an authentic text in English (e.g. newspaper article, literary text, etc.)
- Doing the exercises in the textbook
- Doing the interactive exercises that the book proposes (e.g. LIM, on-line exercises expansion, etc.)
- Doing listening exercises (with audio CD)
- Listening to songs in English and then working on the lyrics
- Watching the videos of the dialogues or of the supplementary activities proposed in the textbook and then doing activities connected to them
- Watching films or videos in English that are not connected with the textbook and then doing activities connected to them
- Doing crosswords in English
- Doing structural exercises
- Doing game activities in English
- Doing exercises in pairs
- Doing exercises in groups
- Doing oral exercises or presentations
- Doing translations and/or summaries of texts in English
- Other: _____

9_ Do you think students would you be more motivated to learn English if you proposed pleasant activities more often? Yes No

10_ You propose new activities:

Always	Almost always	Often	Rarely	Never
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11_ Do you think students would you be more motivated to learn English if you proposed new activities more often? Yes No

12_ You propose activities and tasks that students deem feasible:

Always Almost always Often Rarely Never

13_ Do you think students would you be more motivated to learn English if you proposed activities that they deem feasible more often? Yes No

14_ You propose activities that don't undermine students' self-esteem and their image in front of their classmates:

Always Almost always Often Rarely Never

15_ Do you think students would you be more motivated to learn English if you proposed activities that don't undermine their self-esteem and their image in front of their classmates more often? Yes No

16_ To support students' motivation you should:

(it is possible to choose more than one option, up to max 3 options ; if you choose "Other" please specify the activity)

- change the activities proposed in class more often
- propose more game activities
- propose group work more often
- propose more individual activities to deepen topics that students like
- propose films and videos in English and activities connected to them more often
- propose more activities in which students can speak English
- propose the listening of songs in English and activities connected to them more often
- propose materials that are different from the textbook more often
- Other: _____

Decide to what extent you agree with the following statements:

17_ Students learn English because they like it

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

18_ Students learn English because it is useful

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

19_ Students learn English because they have to

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

20_ Students learn English in order to get a good mark

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

21_ Students learn English to please their parents

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

22_ Students would be more motivated if their parents supported them more in learning English

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

23_ The teacher plays an important role in motivating students to learn English

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

24_ Doing more engaging activities during the lessons would motivate students to learn English more

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

25_ Using different materials during the lessons would motivate students to learn English more

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

26_ Using technology during the lessons would motivate students to learn English more

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

27_ Motivation in learning English depends just on students and nobody can change it

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree

28_ Students are interested in discovering the different cultures of English native speakers

Strongly disagree Slightly disagree Slightly agree Strongly agree