

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua

UNAN-LEON

Área de Ciencias de la Educación y Humanidades

Área específica de Lengua Inglesa



Research Monograph to qualify for the degree  
of graduated in English Language

The influence of learning focuses on the personal development of English major  
students during the period 2022-2023.

Students' names:

Bra. Brenda Beatriz Balladares Rodríguez.

Bra. María Gabriela Delgado García.

Br. Paulino de Jesús Cáceres González.

Tutor: Nelson Isaac Quiroz Baca, Ph.D.

León, August 19th, 2024

2024:45/19 ¡La Patria, La Revolución!

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UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE NICARAGUA, LEÓN  
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ÁREA DE CONOCIMIENTO: CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN Y HUMANIDADES  
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## Letter Of Endorsement

March 20<sup>th</sup>. 2024

### **MSc. Francisco Parajon**

English language specific area director  
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua León

Subject: Research work endorsement letter

Msc. Parajon

Best regard.

Hereby I Nelson Isaac Quiroz Baca, PhD. identified as director of the research work. I allow myself to present to you the endorsement corresponding to the entitled work: ***The influence of learning focuses on the personal development of English major students' year in the period 2022-2023*** in the Research Work modality of the students listed below:

Student's name	Student ID	ID document	Major
Brenda Beatriz Balladares Rodríguez.	17-00443-0	081-060699-1001L	English language
María Gabriela Delgado García.	17-02363-0	081-090600-1004J	English language
Paulino de Jesús Cáceres González.	17-00069-0	281-290499-1006G	English language

This research work meets the quality in academic and the research rigor, the social and scientific relevance, as well as the scope expected for an undergraduate degree work which reflects the acquisition of abilities and skills in research knowledge during their academic training, considering the regulations established for the completion of studies in our university. Therefore, this work is ready to be presented and defended to qualify for the title of graduate in English Language.

Signatura \_\_\_\_\_  
ID: 281-081176-0002Q  
Nelson Isaac Quiroz Baca



## Carta Aval

León 20 de marzo del 2024.

### **MSc. Francisco Parajon**

Director del área específica de Lengua Inglesa  
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua, León

Asunto: Carta aval de monografía

Por medio de la presente, Yo Nelson Isaac Quiroz Baca, PhD. identificado como director de este trabajo de investigación. Me permito presentarle el aval correspondiente del trabajo titulado: ***La influencia de los enfoques de aprendizaje en el desarrollo personal de los estudiantes de la carrera de Inglés año en el periodo 2022-2023*** en la modalidad de Trabajo de Investigación de los estudiantes que se detallan a continuación:

Student's name	Student ID	ID document	Major
Brenda Beatriz Balladares Rodríguez.	17-00443-0	081-060699-1001L	English language
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Paulino de Jesús Cáceres González.	17-00069-0	281-290499-1006G	English language

El presente trabajo de investigación cumple con la calidad académica y el rigor investigativo, la relevancia social y científica, así como con los alcances esperados de un trabajo de pregrado que refleja la adquisición de destrezas, habilidades y conocimientos investigativos durante su formación, teniendo en cuenta las Normativas establecidas para la finalización de estudios en nuestra universidad. Por lo tanto, este trabajo está listo para ser presentado y defendido para optar al título de Licenciado en Lengua Inglesa.

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_

ID: 281-081176-0002Q

Nelson Isaac Quiroz Baca

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Our **fellow classmates and friends**, for the stimulating decisions, for the sleepless nights working together to meet deadlines, and for all the fun we have had over the last ten months.

And last but not least, **English major students** from 4th and 5th year 2023, for helping us in this research project, for providing their experiences in learning the English language, for their support in completing surveys, interviews, and observations, and for providing us with the valuable information that we needed.

**The authors**

## **Dedication**

To express our thanks to all those who contributed in many ways to the success of this study and made it an unforgettable experience for us, this research paper is sincerely dedicated to:

- ❖ To our Almighty God, who is always there when we are in need. Thank you for guiding us and giving us strength in our everyday lives. Thank you for always looking out for us and being there for us. Thank you for making all of this happen and ending it with a good outcome.
- ❖ To our dear parents, for giving us the support to reach our dreams, and for encouraging and inspiring us in conducting this research. They provided us with great enthusiasm and perseverance. Without their love and assistance, this research would not have been possible.
- ❖ To our tutor, MSC. Nelson Quiroz, for his guidance, time, support, and patience throughout this research paper, and for his comments, suggestions, and instructions received for the completion of this study.
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**The authors**

### **Abstract**

Learning a foreign language has become so common among individuals in our society, especially the English language, which is considered a lingua franca, as it is mentioned on the online website UCL Culture. Since the English language is spoken worldwide, it undoubtedly provides plenty of benefits and opportunities. Beyond the benefits and opportunities, learning English significantly influences the personal development of every individual who decides to study it and master it completely. Therefore, this research paper is focused on the influence of the English language on the personal development of English major students from 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year during the period 2022–2023 at the university. The purpose of this research is to characterize the influence of learning approaches on the personal development of students, which is noted during their learning process through acquiring new skills, improving abilities, and having better critical thinking when facing real-life situations. To carry out this research, it was necessary to use three instruments to reach the research objectives, such as the semi-structured interview, naturalistic observation, and a specialized questionnaire taken from a model that the author Biggs (2011) created. Besides, some technological programs were needed, such as SPSS software and ATLAS TI software. In this research project, findings showed that learning English does influence the personal development of students depending on the learning focus that students develop during their learning process, which is influenced by motivation, teaching strategies, and methodologies affecting the skills acquisition of students and influencing their personal development. The completion of this study demonstrated the crucial role of learning approaches in the personal development of English major students and the huge impact that learning English provides to individuals beyond external benefits and opportunities.

**KEYWORDS:** Learning focuses, Personal development, learning process, Motivation, teaching strategies, and methodologies.

## Introduction

Personal development is a process that allows for the acquisition of knowledge, new thoughts, attitudes, and actions. Moreover, it improves self-awareness and identity, allowing the development of good talents and potential. Human beings have wide potential, and learning a new language gives the possibility of improving cognitive abilities. Nowadays, proficiency in languages plays a fundamental role, especially in English, which is an international language spoken in many countries around the world.

Learning English as a foreign language is significant because it opens doors to numerous academic and job possibilities, expanding our study and work limits. However, it also has a huge impact on the personal development of each individual who decides to learn English.

When students start learning the English language, they develop and improve skills unconsciously during their learning process through several factors in their surroundings. These factors can affect the student's learning process both positively and negatively. The learning process of students depends on how motivated they are and the effectiveness of their teaching strategies and methodologies.

The motivation and effectiveness of the teaching strategies and methodologies play an important role in the learning process of students. Students need to be motivated to achieve their goals, both academic and personal. Also, the development of effective activities centered on the students by professors helps to build concrete knowledge and skills impacting the personal development of students. So, it is evident that learning English influences the personal development of students.

## Background

Different studies have been carried out referring to how students of English learn the language and the influence that it has on their development. All those studies have taken different factors individually as proof that the use of learning strategies is a component that influences the way people learn English. In the same way, research such as *Language Learning Strategies in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching* was carried out in 2000 by Murat Hismanoglu, it analyzed and defined a variety of language learning strategies based on studies of other researchers' concepts to highlight the importance of their usage to enhance the personal development of English learners.

Moreover, after the analysis of all the concepts and taxonomy of language learning strategies, Hismanoglu (2000) concluded that "language learning strategies, being specific actions, behaviors, tactics, or techniques, facilitate the learning of the target language by the language learner. All language learners, needless to say, use language learning strategies in the learning process. Since factors like age, gender, personality, motivation, self-concept, life experience, learning style, excitement, anxiety, etc. affect how language learners learn the target language, it is not reasonable to support the idea that all language learners use the same good language learning strategies or should be trained in using and developing the same strategies to become successful learners..." (p. 6)

So, this research project has been considered because the authors emphasized the relationship between the learning strategies, as cognitive, metacognitive, social, and communication strategies are the main mediators that play an important role in influencing the way students learn English.

Additionally, other factors have been studied to identify the process, success, and influence of language learning in the personal development of students such as teacher qualifications and expectations and the quality of instruction provided, as well as, student characteristics, such as their prior educational background, the economic status of their families, their motivation, and their cultural values. The two languages of bilinguals share a cognitive/conceptual foundation that can facilitate the acquisition and use of more than one language for communication, thinking, and problem-solving. It is the sophisticated and complex management of two linguistic systems that is thought to engender the development of superior cognitive skills in bilinguals relative to monolinguals. (Committee on Fostering School Success for English Learners [CFSSEL], 2017, p. 245)

According to Hann, Timmis, Alkhaldi, et al. (2014) self-perception referred to how individuals view themselves and understanding of oneself in terms of values, motivations, and is associated with the personal development of students. As interest in the affective domain of second language acquisition grew, literature in this area increasingly reported on the role of self-concept and related concepts.

However, this is usually in relation to the role of these in second language learning and the terms are used in the context of second language learning. For example, the role of a positive self-concept in improved learning, resulting in improved confidence to interact in the target language which in turn contributes to improved proficiency has been well documented (Gardner, 1985; Norton, 1995; Eldred, 2002; Eldred et al., 2006; Kramsch, 2008; Dörnyei, 2009). Similarly, self-concept in the sense of possible selves has recently been much discussed in relation to motivation as a driver for successful second language learning as well as increased and discerning use of language learning strategies to this end

(Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Ushioda, 2008; Ushioda and Dörnyei, 2009; Kormos et al., 2011). Mercer's (2011) book also addresses self-concept in the context of language learning. (p.4)

Hann, Timmis, Alkhaldi, et al. (2014) also mentioned that positive developments in the self with the use of English continued to emerge throughout the interviews English was associated with a sense of self-esteem and achievement at EFL as well as ESOL sites.

There is another study carried on 2019 by Wall Street English, one of the world's largest providers of English lessons for non-native speakers where they have established that learning English is linked with personal growth, as well as improved employment prospects.

As John Biggs and Catherine Tang established in the book, *Teaching For Quality Learning At University (2011) Fourth edition*, the learning process takes place through the active behavior of the student: it is what he does that he learns, not what the teacher does. This is based on the influence of students' learning focuses when completing university studies. In Chapter 2 of the current book, John and Catherine explained that some of the research on student learning uses effective (deep) and ineffective (surface) approaches to their learning.

Differences in learning are attributed to differences between students in ability, motivation, what sort of school they went to, A level results, cultural background, and so on. Ability is usually believed to be the most important factor in determining students' performance, assessment being the instrument for sorting the more able from the less able students after teaching is over (p.42).

"Learning activities that are too low a level to achieve the intended learning outcomes are referred to as comprising a 'surface' approach to learning, for example memorizing to give the impression of understanding.

Activities that are appropriate to achieving the outcomes are referred to as a 'deep' approach. At university, intended outcomes would be high-level, requiring students to reflect, hypothesize, apply, and so on. Surface and deep approaches to learning are not personality traits, as is sometimes thought, but are most usefully thought of as reactions to the teaching environment" (p.56)

## The Research Problem

### Delimitation Of The Problem

During the learning process of students in the 4th and 5<sup>th</sup> years of the English major, it has been realized that students who have previous training in English have had better personal development and improvement of their English during the major. They also have the advantage of understanding what the teachers say; they can communicate with coherence, clarity, and fluency.

Moreover, it is considered that there exists another important factor to consider, which is the learning focus of every student. This is a factor that most of the time is not considered, and it would be helpful to know more about it. In the same way, it is necessary to know how it might influence the personal development of English major students. Sometimes students have good performance in classes because they already have previous knowledge about the language, and it is considered that they have a deep learning focus because they try to understand and analyze the main ideas, and meaning of concepts rather than a student that has surface learning and just sees a task as something to provide a specific answer and does not analyze the answer; they just use the basic information of an established answer and do not go beyond their expectations as a deep learning student would do it. But students who have deep learning or previous knowledge do not always have better performances during class, which means they get a surface learning focus. This situation does not guarantee good personal development of the students.

Because of this evident issue that influences the process of learning a foreign language, such as English, it was decided to carry out this research further because there is an interest to know how the learning focus of English has influenced the personal development of students of the English major from the 4th and 5th year in the education area, considering the different variables that exist there in the period 2022-2023.

**Formulation Of The Problem**

As a result of this issue, the problem can be stated as: How does the learning focus of the English language influence the personal development of students from the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year of English major in the period 2022-2023?

## **Justification**

It has been decided to research how the learning focus of the English language influences the personal development of English major students at university. After establishing the main objectives of this investigation, it has been considered important because it will help to be concerned about the importance of knowing what type of learning focus students have and how that influences their personal development. Also, it will depend on several factors, such as motivation, which will have an impact on personal development. That information is necessary to analyze and characterize the main factors that influence their personal development as students in the English major, considering their learning focus through their learning process.

Moreover, the reason why this research was carried out is because it has been observed that there are students who develop stronger skills and perform better than other students in the English major. Considering that each student has a different motivation, and nobody makes the same effort to learn the language, it has been thought about the possible factors that influence this problem. As a result of this observation, this research begins.

This research project is achievable because the individuals involved in it, students are in the center of the place in which it will be reached, surrounded by the environment of the English major, considering that researchers are part of this as learners in the English major. In the same way, there are resources needed to perform the analysis, such as making polls for students in the fourth year of the English major and clarifying that the population requested would help during the process of polls and analysis. Also, it counts on accessible economic resources because this research will be carried out just with a specific group of people to avoid spending a lot of money on transportation.

This research will be meaningful for future teachers and students of English majors, and they will be the recipients because they will be aware of how the learning focus of English will influence their personal development during their studies at university. Likewise, it will be helpful for the English-specific knowledge area and they are going to be beneficial because they may take into account the different development of students in the English major and how their students would have a better development taking deep importance to the learning focus that every student has as well as the learning focus that professors have during the classes. As a result, this research will let them know if there is a need to make some changes in their teaching methodologies for better development from their students, or if students will need to have some requirements for starting the major. If we want to have better professional and better English learners and teachers is necessary to know how the learning focus of an English major student influences their personal development. Moreover, this research could be the basis for developing other research projects related to the topic in the future.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objective:**

To characterize how the learning focuses of English language influence the personal development of English major students from the 4th and 5<sup>th</sup> year in the educational area period 2022-2023.

### **Specific Objectives:**

- a. To analyze the factors that influence the personal development of students during the learning process.
- b. To identify which learning Focus is the most predominant focus in the educational development of students from the 4th year of the English major.

**General Question**

What learning focus of the English influence the personal development of English Major students from the 4th and 5th year in the educational area period 2022-2023?

**Research Questions:**

- a. What factors influence the personal development of students during the learning process?
- b. Which learning Focus is the most predominant focus in the educational development of students from the 4th year of the English major?

## Theoretical Framework

### **Personal Development.**

#### ***What is Personal Development?***

Personal development is the ongoing act of assessing people life goals and values and building their own skills and qualities to reach their potential. This can contribute to the maturity, success, and satisfaction. Many people strengthen its personal development skills throughout their own lives to better themselves and reach those goals. People can do this through education, advice from a mentor, self-help, and more. (Indeed, Editorial Team, 2021, p. 1), in other words, personal development is the process of learning through life experiences that helps to enhance existing skills as well as acquire new ones and adapt them to your abilities; get new and useful knowledge that will help you to achieve your goals and develop self-growth.

Moreover, personal development skills are qualities and abilities that help individuals grow both personally and professionally. In other words, those are skills that help you nurture their personal development. Understanding and improving these skills can help them maximize their potential.

Similarly, there are traits and qualities that you already have or gain through education and training such as being able to communicate better by conveying your thoughts with clarity and confidence, developing interpersonal skills that help you build relationships and make an impression on others in social situations, acquire problem-solving skills that enable you to find the best solutions when you encounter an obstacle, adaptability skills that let you adjust to new things quickly and easily in addition to staying calm during unanticipated

situations, leadership skills that help you guide others; boost morale and builds confidence (Harrapa Diaries, 2020, para. 4)

The fact that the concept of personal development is not limited to a single area, for this research document the meanings are closed to personal development in the mental, social, and emotional areas so that it can be contextualized to the environment of the population (pupils) that will be analyzed in this research.

Personal development concept at the level of the individual:

Personal development is also known as self-development or personal growth. It involves the growth and enhancement of all aspects of the person, the feelings the person has about himself or herself, and their effectiveness in living. It includes the development of positive life skills and the development of realistic and healthy self-esteem (Berger,2005, p.1).

Mental growth focuses on the development of mental abilities, such as the way people learn and think. It also relates to how cognitive functions affect behavior. Improving mental aptitude can provide several benefits, such as helping to track goals, interpret data, and focus during meetings. Doing simple tasks, such as staying informed about updates and trends in people's industries can help them experience gradual mental growth, which can lead to increased productivity at work.

Emotional growth refers to the management and development of feelings and how to react to challenges. Although challenges such as anxiety and stress can cause burnout, emotional growth can help an individual overcome them. This can help people express their feelings effectively and discuss their own opinions with open-mindedness and patience.

Social growth focuses on the development of one's communication skills. To be socially successful, it's important to be able to communicate effectively with all kinds of people. Start talking to people students do not usually interact with and take advantage of exploring modes of communication that they do not normally use. Consider making new friends and meeting new people as often as possible as part of this process.

### **Motivation And Personal Development.**

Personal development is especially linked with motivation because it drives motivation and satisfaction. Personal development is empowering as it lets you take control of things. Since there is constant improvement, you feel more confident and motivated. Your productivity increases, and your performance gives you satisfaction. (Harrapa Diaries, 2020, para. 3.)

#### **What Is Motivation?**

According to Cherry (2020, para. 1), motivation is the process that initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. It is what causes one to act, whether it is getting a glass of water to reduce thirst or reading a book to gain knowledge. Motivation involves the biological, emotional, social, and cognitive forces that activate behavior. In everyday usage, the term "motivation" is frequently used to describe *why* a person does something. It is the driving force behind human action.

In short, motivation is what boosts people to do something and persist, and it is the main reason why people decide to carry out any project, work, or study. Without motivation, there is no possible personal development because to grow as a person or improve our skills and develop new ones, it is needed to have an incentive, and that is why motivation plays an important role because it motivates ourselves to acquire experience, abilities, skills, confidence, and knowledge that lead to personal development.

Also, motivation doesn't just refer to the factors that activate behaviors; it also involves the factors that direct and maintain these goal-directed actions (though such motives are rarely directly observable). As a result, we often have to infer the reasons why people do the things that they do based on observable behaviors. (Cherry, 2020, para. 3)

### **Different Types Of Motivation.**

According to Alizadeh (2016), "there are four types of motivation: Instrumental, integrative, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation". Therefore, this research is focused on the last two types of motivation due to the analysis of internal and external motivations to which students were exposed during language learning.

#### ***Intrinsic Motivation***

Intrinsic motivation refers to somebody's internal desire to perform a particular task itself or from the sense of satisfaction in completing or even working on a task. (Ollero, 2014, p. 4)

#### ***Extrinsic Motivation***

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation refers to the external factors that lead an individual to perform something. It is related to rewards such as money or grades, and these rewards provide satisfaction and pleasure that the task itself may not provide. However, intrinsic motivation does not mean that a person will not seek rewards. It just means that such external rewards are not enough to keep a person motivated. (Ollero, 2014, p. 4)

According to Edward Deci (1975, as cited in Mitra Alizadeh, 2016), intrinsic motivation is the one for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. People engage in the tasks for their own sake and not because they lead to an extrinsic reward. Intrinsic motivation is aimed at bringing about certain internally rewarding consequences, like feelings of competence and self-determination. Extrinsic motivation behaviors are done in anticipation of a reward

from outside and beyond the self. Behaviors initiated to avoid punishment are also extrinsically motivated, even though many intrinsic advantages can result from those who view punishment avoidance as a challenge that can make their sense of proficiency and self-determination. (p. 3)

### **Influence Of Motivation In Learning A Second Language**

Even though some people may think that motivation is not important, it is needed to successfully finish our goals and to keep a clear purpose. The same happens when people learn a second language, like English; motivation is needed.

Motivation is a key factor in explaining the success or failure of any difficult activity. We know that success in a task is because someone is motivated. It is easy in second language learning to state that a learner will be successful with the right motivation (Alizadeh, 2016, p.11)

In other words, if students have the right motivation, it will be better for them to keep learning a second language

According to Ollero (2014) “motivation plays an important role in the foreign language learning process because it provides the first push to initiate a successful language learning process” (p. 2). She also mentioned that “motivation plays an important role in Foreign Language learning success, and although it is not the main factor, in the classroom context, it may lead students to achieve their goal or not. Lack of motivation leads to a lack of effort and ultimately lack of success. Due to the great importance that motivation plays when learning a Foreign Language” (p.3)

Although both types of motivation are considered crucial factors for students' achievement in language learning, most research shows that intrinsically motivated students have been able to develop higher successes when learning a L2 than extrinsically motivated and without the inclusion of external rewards. Besides this, intrinsically motivated students have more advantages because there is evidence showing that intrinsic motivation can promote student learning and achievement better than extrinsic motivation (Ollero, 2014, p. 4)

Furthermore, without the desire to learn, it is very difficult for learners to gain effective learning. Huitt (2001 as cited in Mitra Alizadeh, 2016) stated that paying attention to the importance of language will help learners improve their motivation to learn, even if they do not have enough intrinsic motivation. It can be stated that teachers should be aware of the significance of motivation in learners' language learning, and through some changes, they can help learners increase their motivation.

Sometimes, students' lack of motivation and total passiveness in the classroom about the FL were mainly focused on their lack of interest in learning an FL because they were unable to see its usefulness and its connection with real life. However, everybody knows that keeping our students motivated is not an easy task and, apart from these factors, teachers' behavior, methodology, materials, the structure of the course, or even the informal interactions. The Influence of Motivation in the Foreign Language Learning Process between teacher-student also has a large effect on students' predisposition to learn a foreign language. (Ollero, 2014 p.699)

## **Learning Focus**

Students approach their learning in different ways, operating in response to a series of motivations, internal and external to themselves. Research into student learning indicates that any learning process involves a specific depth of study, and there are individual differences in terms of how students approach their learning. Learning is highly contextual, and at the core of every learning process lie two fundamental concepts: deep learning and surface learning.

### ***Deep Learning***

Biggs and Tang (2011) explained that “the deep approach arises from a felt need to engage in the task appropriately and meaningfully, so the student tries to use the most appropriate cognitive activities for handling it” (p.24). In other words, this refers to a higher cognitive level where students analyze and comprehend in deep knowledge, main ideas, themes through doing multiple tasks.

### ***Surface Learning***

The surface approach arises from an intention to get the task out of the way with minimum trouble while appearing to meet course requirements. Low cognitive level activities are therefore used when higher level activities are required to do the task properly. (Biggs and Tang, 2011, p.26)

## **Learning Strategies**

Learning strategies refer to methods that students use to learn. This ranges from techniques for improved memory to better studying or test-taking strategies. For example, the method of Loci is a classic memory improvement technique; it involves making associations between facts to be remembered and locations. In order to remember something, you simply visualize places and the associated facts. (Ball, 2018, p. 1). Learning can be seen as a process of changing behaviors through experience.

### ***Cognitive Learning***

Cognitive learning is a style of learning that focuses on more effective use of the brain. To understand the process of cognitive learning, it's important to know the meaning of cognition. Cognition is the mental process of gaining knowledge and understanding through the senses, experience, and thought. Cognitive learning theory merges cognition and learning to explain the different processes involved in learning effectively. (Herrity. J, 2021, para. 3)

### ***Metacognition Learning***

The term metacognition could be defined as the ability of individuals to know their cognitive functions, monitor them while they operate, and control and adjust them according to the needs of the learning process. (Flavell. H.1979 cited in Mitsea. E & Drigas. A, 2019, p.4). According to the Inclusive Schools Network (2015), metacognitive strategies refer to methods used to help students understand the way they learn; in other words, it means processes designed for students to 'think' about their 'thinking'. In the same way, these strategies are used to oversee, regulate, or self-direct language learning. They involve various processes such as planning, prioritizing, setting goals, and self-management. (Hismanoglu.M,2000, p. 2)

It was explained from those concepts that metacognitive learning strategies are used to make students think in the way they usually learn, and also the process is adequate for their self-understanding by adding the knowledge or content of information that is given throughout those learning strategies. It means that all those aspects are considered for students to be concerned about their learning process, and control those processes step by step, generating ideas and decisions to make from the beginning to the end to accomplish a task. Also, metacognitive learning strategies influence and allow students to use their skills and take a role

in every activity that teachers develop in the classroom to increase their abilities and knowledge, making students feel a sense of self-control, and independence in their learning.

Mitsea & Drigas in their research study A Journey into Metacognitive Learning Strategies, expressed that "metacognitive strategies enhance learners' academic achievement, self-confidence, and raise self-awareness. Moreover, it was revealed that there was a significant co-occurrence of metacognitive strategies and high-level cognitive functions such as reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving." But it was also concluded that metacognitive learning strategies have a fundamental effect on developing a major awareness that, as well as the students' skills are combined with those learning strategies both provide effective advancement and performance for learners.

Weden & Rubin also explained that social strategies are those activities learners engage in that afford them opportunities to be exposed to and practice their knowledge. Although these strategies provide exposure to the target language, they contribute indirectly to learning since they do not lead directly to the obtaining, storing, retrieving, and using of language.

Hismanoglu (2000) concluded that "language learning strategies, being specific actions, behaviors, tactics, or techniques, facilitate the learning of the target language by the language learner. All language learners, needless to say, use language learning strategies in the learning process. Since the factors like age, gender, personality, motivation, self-concept, life experience, learning style, excitement, anxiety, etc. affect the way in which language learners learn the target language, it is not reasonable to support the idea that all language learners use the same good language learning strategies or should be trained in using and developing the same strategies to become successful learners." (p. 6) So here it is highlighted that the use of a variety of language learning strategies appropriately for one student can be effective in another student for that reason students have to involve themselves in their learning to discover which

strategies match better with their skills but also which one helps them in what way understand quickly.

### **Learning Styles**

The term “learning style” comes from general psychology. Ellis (2005, as cited in Wen Xu, 2011) defined learning style as “the characteristic ways in which individuals orientate to problem-solving”. (p. 4) Ellis quotes Keefe’s (1979) “definition of learning style the characteristic cognitive, affective, and physiological behaviors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment.

Learning style is a consistent way of functioning, which reflects the underlying causes of behavior. Cornett defines learning style as the overall patterns that will give general direction to learning behavior while according to Dunn and Griggs, they define learning style as the biologically and developmentally imposed set of characteristics that make the same teaching method wonderful for some and terrible for others. (Xu, 2011, p.1). Depending on the way students learn, this influences their personal development.

### **Types Of Learning Styles**

Researchers from Norwich University (2022) suggested that there are approximately seven types of learning styles among those mentioned (linguistic, mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, visual, auditory and kinesthetic), only three are the most common in the education system: visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles.

#### ***Visual Learning Style***

Visual learning is one of the three different learning styles popularized by Neil D. Fleming in his VARK (visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic) model of learning. The visual learning style means that people need to see information to learn it, and this "seeing" takes many forms, including spatial awareness, photographic memory, color/tone, brightness/contrast, and other visual information. Naturally, a classroom is a very good place for

a visual learner to learn. Teachers use overheads, the chalkboard, pictures, graphs, maps, and many other visual items to entice a visual learner into knowledge. (Roell, 2019, para 2), it means that we learn by observing different visual aids.

### ***Auditory Learning Style***

Auditory learning is a style of learning in which an individual learns most efficiently through hearing and listening. Auditory learners retain information better when it is delivered through sound or speech rather than in written form. (Indeed, Editorial Team, 2020 para.3)

A person who is an auditory learner relies on speaking and listening as their primary way of learning. Many auditory learners may experience challenges when instructions or information are given in written form, but they can clearly understand them when the information is auditory. These individuals are typically good listeners and can easily remember information that has been spoken. For example, an auditory learner may remember everything that was said during a work meeting but have a hard time recalling the information that was outlined in a work report. (Indeed, Editorial Team, 2020 para.5,6)

### ***Kinesthetic Learning Style***

Kinesthetic learning is processing information through touch and movement. On-the-job training, building simulations, and performing experiments are all forms of kinesthetic learning, also called tactile learning or physical learning. In the same way, kinesthetic learners more effectively retain information when they can move their bodies and interact with their environments. They prefer to be active participants rather than passive observers, and they typically work problems out through trial and error rather than accepting information presented to them. They also often value practical information over theoretical concepts. (Indeed, Editorial Team, 2021 para.2). Kinesthetic learners are better at learning things by doing because they can retain knowledge through the process of doing things using their hands and physical

activities, which implies using the body because they have better control over their limbs, allowing them to control their limbs as they want.

### **Learning Styles And English Learning**

Every individual has a style of learning. Students have distinct learning styles, which is the reason for the diversity of how learners acquire a foreign language, such as English, seen in schools. Language learning strategies are learners' particular behaviors or methods that facilitate any portion of their language development. According to Oxford, ([20]: p. 42 as cited in Faisal R., 2019) language learners need to use familiar strategies linked to their styles to create the most of their comfortable style choices; again, they also need to extend beyond their "Stylistic Comfort Area" to use teaching strategies that may not feel correct at first Yufrizal & Holiday suggested that learning style is a significant factor in several fields, including the academic achievement of learners, how learners learn, and teachers teach, and communication between learners and educators. VARK encourages the concept that learners can learn in various ways, if teaching techniques are suitable to the preferences of the learners (Faisal, 2019, p. 307)

## **Methodological Design**

### **Type Of Research**

The presented research is qualitative, based on identifying and analyzing factors related to the characteristics, qualities, and behaviors of students during their learning process. From the perspective of the application, this research was applied to the observations, interactions, and performances of students who had been influenced by learning English. In the same way, this study attempted to describe systematically the influence that learning English has on students according to their skills, motivations, and goals.

### **Research Area And Research Line**

This research project was approached in the area of interest of the population, education, social inclusion, and interculturality from university, specifically in the line of research of the specific knowledge area of English. The research line that was adopted for this research was motivation and interest in the teaching and learning of English language, because the research was focused on the development that English as a foreign language could have in an individual during its learning process.

### **Aim Of The Research**

In this research project, the main objective was to point out which components really influence students' personal development in relation to their learning focus, including the examination of surface and deep learning that were related to performance and development during the learning process. Also, the influence of motivation, the learning styles they had, and the variety of teaching methods in which students had learned English. Besides, this study used the interview as one of the main methods to collect data in order to determine which were the main factors or components that impacted students' learning process, considering students' opinions or experiences during their learning English directly.

## **Population And Sample**

This study was conducted at a public university and for this project, it was necessary to consider some characteristics of the population that was conformed of fifty students in total. According to the topic of this research, it was necessary to take a sample of thirty English major students from the 4th and 5th years of the English Department in the period 2022-2023.

As a technique for sampling, the no-probability sampling was used. The non-probability sampling technique uses non-randomized methods to draw the sample. The non-probability sampling method mostly involves judgment. Instead of randomization, participants were selected because they were easy to access according to the qualities and characteristics of the population. (Showkat N.,2017, p.7)

So, according to this nonprobability sample, the population was chosen according to the convenience of our topic because they perfectly matched the profile to get the specific information needed. To fulfill this research, some of the characteristics were:

1. Students had to be from the English major from 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> years who are able to communicate and answer the interviews using the English language.
2. Students had to be from the regular shift.
3. Students with previous knowledge of the English language and students without it to analyze the development of their learning process during the major.
4. Students with experiences and long process about learning the English language with the teaching strategies and methodologies implemented by the professors.

The non-probabilistic sampling was used because of the easy access of our classmates, who were our population for this study, so it was not necessary to look for another alternative method to implement our sampling technique.

As a specific method for this non-probability technique, a method called convenience sampling was applied. Showkat (2017) stated that, "Convenience Sampling: In this type of sampling, researchers prefer participants at their own convenience. The researcher selects the closest live persons as respondents. In convenience sampling, subjects who are readily accessible or available to the researcher are selected" (p.8).

### **Research Instruments**

The instruments used in this study implies the Interview and Observation, which were specifically for qualitative research, but also a quantitative instrument, which was a questionnaire, in order to have a better understanding of the issue under study, and so on a complement to the analysis of the data. Trigueros (2017) defined the "Interview as a qualitative research tool that involves asking questions and getting answers from the sample in a study". (p. 2) Moreover, Interviewing has a variety of forms including Individual, face-to-face interviews, face-to-face groups interviews, In-depth interviews, clinical interviews, history stories, and life stories (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2006 cited in Trigueros R., 2015, p.2).

#### ***The interview***

The semi-structured interview was applied because it is qualitative research that combines a pre-determined set of questions (questions that prompt discussion) with the opportunity for the interviewers to explore particular themes or responses further during the interview process. Moreover, it was easier to establish a relationship among this specific sample, who were students from the 4th and 5th years of the English major, the questionnaire

consisted of open questions where they expressed feelings, emotions, or opinions freely, to get the key information through their answers.

In the same way, this interview consisted of collecting qualitative data using an open-ended data instrument, exploring participant thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, and delving deeply into personal and sometimes sensitive issues they had in their learning in the classroom. Also, asking some open-ended questions to the selected sample allowed this research to identify and analyze factors and learning focuses that influenced personal development during their English learning process. It focused on the factor of motivation, analyzed what type of motivation they had, how significant their studies of English were before they began the university, and how this contributed to their learning process in the major.

### ***The observation***

According to McLeod. S (2015), "Naturalistic observation is a research method commonly used by psychologists and other social scientists. This technique involves observing and studying the spontaneous behavior of participants in natural surroundings" (para 26,27)

For applying this kind of instrument, it was needed to consider some important aspects such as learning strategies, activity focus, and the teacher's methodology, which were helpful in observing students' performance, behaviors, and characteristics during their learning process, as well as observing and identifying their learning focus. Using naturalistic observations, it could be known the level of the student's personal development obtained through this process.

### ***The questionnaire***

A specialized questionnaire was used to get more data related to the learning focus. the model of questionnaire was taken from a model that the author Biggs created (2011), who tried to evaluate throughout every item both focuses, the surface, and the deep learning, the

questionnaire for this research had made some modifications in their content to make it more suitable for this research.

This questionnaire model was taken from Biggs investigation (2011) which is structured by 20 items that at the same time are subdivided into 10 items directed specifically to evaluate the type of learning focus of each student in an alternative way. For example, item #1 was directed to evaluate a specific reason for the deep focus, item #2 specifically evaluated a strategy of the deep approach consecutively, items #3 and 4 were focused on evaluating a motive and strategy of the surface focus and on that sequence all the items were ordered adapting them to the students' context of the English major.

### **Analysis Of The Data**

The qualitative analysis of this research is based on the collection of data obtained from semi-structured interviews and observations. With the survey applied, different patterns were analyzed and described to identify predominant learning approaches that influence the personal development of students through their English learning process.

The methodology of analysis for this research was implemented through the following steps: First of all, the interviews and observations were systematically applied for two consecutive weeks, intercalating two planned days a week for interviewing and observing classes, as well as the analysis of different perspectives, ideas, and experiences obtained through oral expression and actions from the 4th and 5th year students of the English major. The restructuring of the scripts was carefully coded with specific verbal expressions that were linked to concepts previously mentioned in the theoretical framework. Comparison and confirmation of the research findings were made during this process, which are evidenced in the results and findings section through relationship schemes.

Likewise, in this research, a quantitative method was applied to delve into the results obtained in the analysis of learning approaches. It was carried out through the data obtained from the instruments applied in the surveys. In addition, a quantitative method such as SPSS software was used to deeply investigate what level of learning approach predominates in our respondents, therefore, this research method cannot be considered mixed research; it is just used to demonstrate the results obtained about the types of learning focuses in a descriptive way. Moreover, the ATLAS TI software was used for qualitative analysis.

The data collected through interviews and observations focused on answering the research questions and objectives. For example, the design of the interview questions served to identify and analyze the learning factors and approaches that influence the personal

development of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> English learners from their own perspectives and experiences during their English learning process. In addition, the reactions of the participants were an important key to the study since in their normal environment in the classroom, their abilities and skills were tested in different contexts and topics during the learning process, which helped this investigation to answer both of the research questions.

Finally, after this analysis process, it was possible to establish the influence that English learning approaches have on the personal development of 4th and 5th year students in the English major.

## Results

### Result Of The Analysis Of Interviews

The proposal for the interview formats was created by the researchers in this project, and then some changes were made considering some suggestions provided by the tutor. Each of the eleven students participated in an open in-depth interview lasting 5 to 20 minutes, in which seven questions were asked (See appendixes session - Interview format on page 79). The interviewers' reactions were active listening, empathetic reflection, and encouragement to give more comfort to each of the interviewees. In the initial interviews carried out on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, it was possible to interview 2 of the 4th year students during the period of time that the teacher gave us for the interview since these actions were carried out during class hours and consecutively, the transcriptions of the first interviews were made.

Then, with the objective of collecting more data, on June 14<sup>th</sup> of this year, 4 students from 4th year were encouraged to be interviewed since there were more interactions among them and the interviewers, showing them a physical copy of the interview where they were able to familiarize themselves with the questions so that they could feel confident in devising their possible answers. Thanks to this, they also took the opportunity to carry out the first observation of these students in the natural environment of the classroom to complete the data collection through the interview on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023. It was possible to talk and interact with 5th year English major students from whom we obtained 5 completed interviews, and these interviews were also transcribed.

All audio recordings were transcribed in a verbatim way by the researchers. The body of the data consisted of more than 26 pages of verbal transcriptions of the responses of the interviewed students. Once the recollection was completed, the analytical process was based on the search for repeated classifications (types) in the student's responses. The analysis began with open coding, which is where tiny sections of the text are made up of individual

words, phrases, and key substantive sentences to find motivation factors, language learning purposes, and developed/acquired skills. The researchers were able to be guided by the language of the interviewees to develop the labels assigned to the categories and their codes, which were identified with short or brief descriptors, known as live codes. Also, these codes were systematically compared and contrasted conceptually, producing the first 6-8 emerging categories that were reviewed by the tutor, and labels were used throughout the program for coding the data. The ATLAS TI software was used for qualitative analysis, and with that software program, it was faster to do the coding process. It also helped with the following step, which was reviewing and narrowing the codes. It was continued with re-coding and categorizing, and finally, the categories and codes that were needed for the analysis and interpretation of the data were obtained, facilitating the assignment and reassignment of codes within the categories.

All (24) codes were grouped into four categories that were classified, compared, reviewed weekly, and accepted by our tutor until the analysis stopped producing new codes and categories. So, the criteria to position the central category were:

- a) There are four total categories, each classified with its own respective group of codes.
- b) Narration of how each category and code supports/relates to what is proposed in this research document.
- c) Example and support of verbal notes of the opinions, ideas, and perspectives expressed by the interviewed students extracted from the verbatim audio transcriptions.
- d) Selection of the most important categories for the preparation of a relationship scheme for each category found in the annexes section.

The following tables contain a description of the complete analysis of the interview, including the categories, codes, comments, and citations taken directly from interviewee's words.

**Table 1***Category one: The influence of English*

Category	Subcategory	Code	Description	Example from transcripts
Influence of the English language	Personal development	Advantages of learning English  Economic growth  Growth as a professional	<p>-In general, just learning English provides plenty of opportunities and benefits, such as travelling, getting good jobs, studying abroad etc, but also has a great impact on the personal development of individuals. English major students have realized that just learning English provides new skills, abilities, and performances during the learning process.</p> <p>-Most English major students are focused on studying the language because, when students master the language, better job opportunities will be obtained. So, learning English really influences the students' economic growth. This is one of several reasons students decide to study English. Students want to get better incomes when they find jobs.</p> <p>-When learning the English language, students have learned to be proactive and develop skills linked to good professionals. The multiple tasks and activities learned during the learning process have made students face and solve real-life situations and not only like students instead of like professionals. Communication is one</p>	<p>"I realize that English today it's so important so because if you learn English and you can work now in all areas ok and in medicine you can learn English, you can travel, also you can be an employee of call centers so it's important."  <b>(2780:3014) - D 7: INTERVIEW#4</b>          "In my personal experience I consider that English help me to express myself, don't be afraid about personal thoughts and I consider that I feel more self-confident about."</p> <p><b>(3016:3187) - D 7: INTERVIEW#4</b>          "English influences in a way in something in your personal development, for example, let's say that once you were shy and you don't like to talk but when you start to learn English you know that we have to make presentation and for example to me it helps me to become."  <b>(2036:2303) - D 5: interview #3</b></p> <p>"When you are majoring English, you struggle a lot and I think that it helps me to overcome some difficulties as a ss and help me a lot because now I have found job and I think near future I will have new opportunity in the work field."  <b>(1648:1896) - D 2: interview 2</b></p>

		<p>improved skill that most students get when they are learning the English language.</p> <p>-The English major not only prepares students in a specific area, but it does also prepare students in the areas related to English such as Teaching, interpreting, translation, tourism, and others. Students have the choice to become a professional they like to or depending on what they are passionate about. This interest is according to students' passion and the students' skills they get during the learning process.</p> <p>Having taken an English course before studying English as a major helps students to have better performances during the learning process. Previous English courses provide students with basic knowledge and understanding of the language, so it won't be difficult for students to carry out the subjects in the English major.</p>	<p>"I am in fifth year and so that help me a lot eee actually next week I am going to start working on that so a great step." <b>(817:935) - D 2: interview 2</b></p> <p>"Students of the major are divided in between the one that only gets to become rich or get money and the one that wants to teach the English as a professor, so I think we are divided. The half..." <b>(3436:3630) - D 9: INTERVIEW#6</b></p> <p>"Learning English is important for us to develop better skills also we have to learn to communicate with other people so is important in our growth as a professional." <b>(3155:3322) - D 6: INTERVIEW #7</b></p> <p>"I will say that the course that I took influence in a way that I had not to pass to pass for that difficult adaptation because I already know and understand professor beside others ss I think that they have a really difficult time some of them did not continue with the course I was like a mess I did not understand anything but when I started the major I already know and it was not so difficult to me to adapt me to the university" <b>(1439:1891) - D 1: interview #1</b></p>
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*Note. This table was done by the authors. It represents the results of category one*

**Table 2**

Category two: Learning process

Learning process	Teaching strategies and methodologies	Students' centered activities	<p>-The several strategies and methodologies that provide the English major effectively have a great impact on the students' learning process which has helped students improve their critical thinking and reasoning in several tasks, preparing them for real-life situations. One of those strategies is students' centered on activities used by teachers during classes, where the teachers focus on students, the leadership in the classroom is shared, and students provide personal thoughts, opinions, reflections, and suggestions.</p> <p>-When the teacher uses a teaching strategy that motivates students and enhances their abilities and knowledge, that's when it's known that that is a good teaching strategy, that will help students in their learning process develop better skills and better personal development.</p>	<p>" this teacher have us work individually, he like in present and virtual and she put the she put a gap and them you have to do this and then will call you and say if you do it good or give you suggestions well for me it was good, but I don't know my others classmates, but it was really Good" <b>(6552:6842)</b></p> <p>"I think some of them work and some of them didn't, I won't mention the teachers but there was a year that it feel like half of the teachers like we were advancing in maybe some writing and speaking ,but there were others teachers like their methodology didn't we felt like we were stuck and we didn't know how to get out or how to talk to the teachers"(6080:6430)</p>
		Mentorship for personal development	<p>One important point during students' learning process is the mentorship they receive from a professor who helps them during their whole learning process. They receive support, advice, and encouragement to continue until they achieve their goals and improve their personal development.</p>	<p>"I put attention to the other classes, but also asking the teachers like what advice or what they think about if they agree with my like changing the education system or at least make a few changes" <b>(5367:5661)</b></p>

*Note.* This table was done by the authors. It represents the results of category two

**Table 3***Category three: Motivation*

Motivation	Intrinsic motivation	Encouragement	<p>-It starts when the professor pushes them to go beyond and learn more about English since high school. It's when the major professors make the class interesting that students start to get more interested and keep motivated.</p> <p>-When students have the desire to achieve their goals and wishes related to their professional interests and development, that enhances their motivation because they want to achieve those goals.</p>	<p>- "I wanted to work in something that will help to change the education system because I've been taught like kids know and learning English but is not good because they've been teaching the general staff and they only focus on mm how do you say is... forget to speak." (4273:4539)</p> <p>"I decided to start the major and then I involved myself in teaching because teaching ... I love teaching and that's now is my motivation ok being an English professor."</p> <p><b>(2179:2347) - D 7: INTERVIEW#4</b></p>
	Extrinsic motivation	Parent's decisions	<p>-It refers to when parents have some influence on the decisions of students to start learning English. Students feel that they were influenced by their parents' opinions about what they should study, that's why their motivation to start the major was extrinsic because it was not their decision.</p>	<p>"my mother was part of my motivation firs" <b>(552:591)</b></p> <p>"now I think that get a job is my motivation" <b>(594:639)</b></p>
		Economic growth	<p>-They start learning English because they can work and get income faster than other majors. As a result, they follow that idea because they want to get a job as soon as they graduate and earn money, so they start the major with the motivation of getting a job faster or to earning a lot of money in mind.</p>	<p>"I am in fifth year and so that help me a lot eee actually next week I am going to start working and that so a great step" <b>(817:935)</b></p>

*Note.* This table was done by the authors. It represents the results of category three

**Table 4***Category four: Skills acquisition*

Skills acquisition	Skills acquired during the major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Develop communication skills</li> <li>-Develop listening skills</li> <li>-Develop reading and writing skills</li> <li>-Develop speaking skills</li> </ul>	<p>The new skills gained during the English learning process help their personal development when students face real-life situations. Listening allows you to imitate sounds as you listen and therefore improve accuracy when speaking. Speaking is added as monologues are present in our daily lives in the form of presentations for our university's tasks. Reading allows a written text to be understood so that a user of English can function in a wide variety of contexts and adapt to situations. Writing has the objective of making the student able to write a text that optimally communicates their ideas. All these getting are getting on the same path since as the level of the classes increases, the knowledge and complexity increase, but all of this is what gives them the ability to analyze, understand and communicate effectively in English.</p>	<p>"I think I have two skills speaking and writing because before I enter the major I didn't know how to write in English and I did know a little bit about speaking"(3460:3621)</p> <p>"I think that it was my reading skill because...ah. in the first year... ah. I was very ... the class of reading comprehension was very difficult to me because... it has a lot of texts that i don't understand and.. in fourth year I developed better...than in the first year"(371:642)</p> <p>"it would be writing because I don't think I was really good at writing before I began, began to studying the major. And I think that I overcome... overcame that, so I would say that I I really got better at writing" (912:1127)</p>
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	Skills improved during the major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Improve communication skills</li> <li>-Improve confidence in students</li> </ul>	<p>Self-confidence and communication in the classroom of any kind are essential for greater understanding and development of the topics to be addressed since they are linked to each other, and even more so if the classes are to learn a language like English. That is why in the major, students little by little become more confident when participating in class and expressing their ideas, giving rise to cooperative learning in English.</p>	<p>" I become a little bit more confident now" <b>(1279:1320)</b></p> <p>"English influences in a way in something in your personal development, for example, let's say that once you were shy and you don't like to talk but when you start to learn English you know that we have to make presentation and for example to me it helps me to become"<b>(2036:2303)</b></p> <p>"each methodology or teaching strategy have helped me in some ways, eee I think that these strategies I learned how to communicate better, how to aaa have more coherence when speaking or having more fluency"<b>(2075:2280)</b></p>
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*Note. This table was done by the authors. It represents the results of category four*

## Result Of The Analysis Of The Observation

During the application of the observation, it was used a naturalistic observation method that involved observing and studying the spontaneous behaviors of participants in their natural surroundings because it was easy for the researchers to observe the population as they were in the same university and major. A model for observation criteria was made and approved by the tutor. This model included areas of observation, like students' and teachers' performance, that helped with the collection of data. Those areas helped to get information about teaching strategies and methodologies, as well as information about students' behaviors and performance in a natural environment. With that information, it was possible to understand more about students' learning processes and some aspects that influence their motivation.

The observations were applied in three different classes: on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in sociolinguistics; on June 14<sup>th</sup>, in teaching techniques in TEFL; and finally, on August 10<sup>th</sup>, in scientific presentation in English class. It can be found examples of the observation model conducted. After collecting the data through the observation process, a narrative was made about the observation using the information collected. (See appendixes session – Observation format on page 80). In the following chart can be observe the transcriptions of the observations.

**Table 5**

*Observation students' performance and teacher performance*

	Areas of observation	Description of the observation
Students' performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Behaviors</li> <li>➤ General mood</li> <li>➤ Motivation</li> <li>➤ Communication skills</li> </ul>	<p>During two lessons, it was observed that students' behavior resulted in collaborative participation in the performance of the groups organized in semicircles. Also, the commitment of the teacher made students from the audience comfortably give suggestions for the groups that were presented, which means there was an excellent general mood or environment in the class. Motivation and initiative were also highlighted due to the SS felt comfortable answering/asking relevant questions aloud about scientific papers. It could be mentioned that the accuracy and proficiency of students' communication skills were present during</p>

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<p>Teachers' performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Behaviours</li> <li>➤ Active learning strategies</li> <li>➤ Focus on students</li> <li>➤ Time management</li> </ul>	<p>the performance of activities. Most students listed some scientific papers and their characteristics. In another stage of this class, the commitment and student interest in the topic as well as activities and presentations were present because SS carefully organized comments and ideas about the presentations to take notes for self-learning. In one of the observations, there was not enough time for observing, because students had evaluations, but in the short time spent in the class, it was observed that most students were bored and did not seem interested in the class.</p> <p>During two lessons, it was observed that according to the parameter to evaluate teachers' performance, it had seen positive points in each area of observation. Among the areas of observation for teachers' performance, behavior engagement was stated as positive because the teacher provided a motivational introduction to the topic through a warm-up that was based on randomly asking questions related to how to give oral presentations. Also, the teacher prioritized the use of refreshing memory activities, including the explanation of concepts in front of the class, making SS give suggestions for the group that was presenting in front of the classroom, so it clearly showed strong evidence emphasizing the areas of observation such as the use of active learning strategies and the focus in students, where students seemed to enjoy the class, and had active participation. Finally, there was a little bit lack of management of the time, giving a certain period of time for each stage of the class. In order to be well developed, they needed more. In one specific class, it was observed that the teacher used students center strategy because the teacher always included students in every activity, making students more active and interesting, because they had the opportunity to give their opinions during the lesson.</p>
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**Note.** This table was done by the authors. It represents the results of observations.

The analysis of the observation was made together with the interview analysis; it was necessary to establish the relationship and codification properly and adequately to find the best results.

## **Result Of The Analysis Of The Questionnaire**

For the analysis of this instrument, some steps were carried out. First, this questionnaire model was taken from Biggs's investigation (2011), which is structured by twenty items. Some of the items were modified to adapt them for students of the English major to identify what type of learning focus students had. Following the same process made by John Biggs in his study, the twenty items were subdivided into ten items directed specifically to evaluate the type of learning focus of each student in an interleaved way, that is to say, item #1 is directed to evaluate a specific reason for the deep focus, and item #2 will specifically evaluate a strategy of the deep approach consecutively. Items 3 and 4 focus on evaluating the motive and strategy of the surface focus, and so on. In that sequence, all the items are ordered, of course, adapting them to their context as students of the English course. (See appendixes session - Questionnaire format on pages 81 to 82)

Before applying this questionnaire to avoid bias in the answers, it was designed with the help of Google Forms so that it could be shared through a link in the WhatsApp group and obtain a better acquisition of the response data. Thus, on September 7, 2023, the online questionnaire was shared with the 3rd and 4th-year English students through their WhatsApp group; in total, 31 participants from the selected population answered this questionnaire.

Consecutively, on September 15, 2023, the data from the responses of the 31 students was entered into a base Excel document, the same data that was entered and evaluated in the SPSS software. With the help of the tutor, an analysis was made of all the responses obtained in the 20 items of the questionnaire, using the SPSS software, to determine which approach predominated more in the English students, the 10 items corresponding to evaluating the surface approach, and the 10 items that evaluate the deep approach was subjected to evaluation on a reliable and descriptive analysis scale in the Cronbach's alpha model; it was 7.

The results of this evaluation showed that among the 10 items of the deep approach among the ones that evaluated a deep motivation and a deep strategy, the deep motivation had the highest frequency of the evaluated values over the deep strategy, which obtained a lower frequency of the values in the rotated factor matrix. In the case of the analysis of the surface approach, among the 10 items showed the opposite, the surface strategy obtained the highest frequency of values, all of them on a scale from 5 to 9, where values under 5 or less were eliminated.

**Table 6**

*Description of the items.*

Variables	Conceptual definition	Operational definition	Indicators	Items
Deep learning	Felt the need to approach the task appropriately to try to use the most appropriate cognitive activities Intention to free oneself from the task with minimal effort, giving the sensation of satisfying the requirements	Adequate way to understand the contents of the class.	Students' motivation Personality	1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18)
Surface learning		Inappropriate way of understanding the contents of a class	Students' motivation Personality	3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 20)

Note. This table was taken from Hernández Pina et al (2010). This table represents the description of the items.

In this table can be observed the items that were taken specifically for evaluating each variable, as it is mentioned before, in order to determinate students' learning focus.

**Table 7***Variables of learning focus.*

Categories	Subcategories	Sum of the items	Sum of subcategories	Score difference of the approaches	Focus type	Focus intensity
Deep focus (items 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18)	Deep motivation (items 1, 5, 9, 13, 17)	Total score for this subcategory	Total score for focus deep	Total score of focus deep)-	If the total of the Difference of the approaches are (+) focus	Values that range between 0 and $\pm 7$ su intensity is weak, values between $\pm 7$ and $\pm 14$ intensity is moderate and values above of $\pm 14$ intensity is strong
	Deep strategy (items 2, 6, 10, 14, 18)	Total score for this subcategory				
	Superficial motivation (items 3, 7, 11, 15, 19)	Total score for this subcategory	Total score for focus	(Total score of focus Superficial	It's deep, Yes it's him focus is Superficial	intensity is moderate and values above of $\pm 14$ intensity is strong
	Surface strategy (items 4, 8, 12, 16, 20)	Total score for this subcategory				

Note. This table was taken from Hernández Pina et al (2010). This table presents the variable from the learning focus.

In this table can be observed the items are used divided into categories and subcategories, the categories are the ones in table 6, and in the subcategories are the items used to determine if students have deep motivation or deep strategies, similarly in surface motivation and surface strategy.

**Table 8***Deep learning table.*

This table goes Rotated Factor Matrix to	Factor	
	1MP	2EP
01. I find that at times studying gives me a feeling of deep personal satisfaction.	.486	
02. I find that I have to do enough work on a topic so that I can form my own conclusions before I am satisfied.		.614
05. I feel that virtually any topic can be highly interesting once I get into it.		.699
06. I find most new topics interesting and often spend extra time trying to obtain more information about them.		.638
09. I find that studying academic topics can at times be as exciting as a good novel or movie.	.455	
10. I test myself on important topics until I understand them completely.	.450	
13. I work hard at my studies because I find the material interesting.	.885	

14. I spend a lot of my free time finding out more about interesting topics which have been discussed in different classes.	.813
17. I come to most classes with questions in mind that I want answering.	.597
18. I make a point of looking at most of the suggested readings that go with the lectures.	.417

Extraction method: principal axis factorization.

Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser normalization.

to. The rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Note. *This table was taken from the SPSS analysis done by the authors.*

In this table, it is observed the analysis of the items presenting the total score of the deep motivation and deep strategy, and determines which factor was predominant in the deep learning focus of students, to obtain this result some factors were eliminated because they did not reach the requirements that Biggs established in his study, this was that they need to have more than point five in its factorization, at the end were decided to change that point five to a point four to have a better analysis of data for the items, then all those factors above point 4 were eliminated because they did not fulfill the expectations, that is why there are some spaces in blank in the factors' information. All this was necessary to determine the items that were more relevant for this study, and to know which subcategory was predominant in both categories.

**Table 9**

*Surface learning table*

This table goes Rotated Factor Matrix	Factor	
	1MS	2 IS
12. I generally restrict my study to what is specifically set as I think it is unnecessary to do anything extra.	.948	
07. I do not find my classes very interesting so I keep my work to the minimum.	.613	
04. I only study seriously what's given out in class or in the course outlines.	.503	
08. I learn some things by rote, going over and over them until I know them by heart even if I do not understand them.		
16. I believe that lecturers shouldn't expect students to spend significant amounts of time studying material everyone knows won't be examined.		
15. I find it is not helpful to study topics in depth. It confuses and wastes time, when all you need is a passing acquaintance with topics.		
20. I find the best way to pass examinations is to try to remember answers to likely questions.	.403	.755

19. I see no point in learning material which is not likely to be in the examination.	.678
11. I find I can get by in most assessments by memorizing key sections rather than trying to understand them.	.538
<u>03. My aim is to pass the classes while doing as little work as possible.</u>	<u>.425</u>

Extraction method: principal axis factorization

Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser normalization.

To. The rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Note. *This table was taken from the SPSS analysis done by the authors.*

In this table, it is observed the analysis of the items used to analyze the total score of the surface motivation and deep strategy and determine which factor was predominant in the surface learning focus of students. To obtain this result, the same process was carried out as explained in Table eight.

### **Result Of The Data Analysis Triangulation**

The data triangulation was necessary to establish the relationship among the instruments of data used in this research. In the data triangulation, the instruments used were the interview, observation, and questionnaire, which were necessary for the data collection and for being able to do the analysis using the data triangulation.

When all the necessary data was collected, the analysis of the data started in order to get the findings. To understand the relationship among the findings, data triangulation was necessary. After analyzing all the data through programs like Atlas TI, and SPSS, the findings were established in three diagrams (concept maps) using the categories and codes established to get the relationship among all the findings for each instrument, and in tables obtained from the analysis of the questionnaire in the SPSS program. Learning process, influence of English, and motivation were the themes that had more influence on students' personal development.

The first semantic mapping represents the relationship between two categories the ones which are more relevant in the findings in relation to personal development and learning focuses. It can be observed that motivation is divided into two types, intrinsic and extrinsic

motivation. Those are the motivations that were found in the results of the instruments' analysis. Students' motivation in the English major can be divided into intrinsic motivation, which is when an action is performed for pleasure or personal desires and enjoyment, while extrinsic motivation comes from external factors. The external factors found in the students' extrinsic motivation, for example, parents' decisions, where students were influenced by their parents to study the English major, for instance, one student in the interview said, "*My mother was part of my motivation first*" (552:591).

Moreover, economic growth is related to extrinsic motivation, because as extrinsic motivation is when you do something in order to gain an external reward and that is what keeps students motivated, an example of this can be what one student expressed about his motivation, the student said "*now I think that get a job is my motivation*" (594:639), it means that students are motivated because of starting to get incomes.

Talking about economic growth, in the semantic mapping can be observed that it is also connected to students' interests which are examples of the intrinsic motivations found in the data collection, there is a connection because students also have the desire to improve in their way of living, intrinsic motivation also includes encouragement, where student receive encouragement from their professors to continue learning English, this motivation also involves the professional interest of students, for example, one student said -"*I wanted to work in something that will help to change the education system because I've been taught like kids know and learning English, but is not good because they've been teaching the general staff and they only focus on mm how do you say is..forget to speak.*" (4273:4539) while another student explained, "*I decided to start the major, and then I involved myself in teaching because teaching ... I love teaching, and that's now my motivation, ok, being an English professor.*" (2179:2347) - **D 7: INTERVIEW#4**, considering students' words can be established their types of motivation.

On the other hand, in the diagram can be observed some important aspects that influence the learning process of students, such as teaching strategies and methodologies used by the professors at the university. To illustrate this, it can be mentioned the student-centered activities observed during the application of the observation instrument, where the teacher gave students the opportunity to get involved in the class by letting students give suggestions to each other. In addition, it is needed to take into account that good teaching strategies motivate students to continue with the major, and there exists a connection with the types of motivation mentioned before. Here, the encouragement is mentioned because teachers are the ones who encourage students, and most of the time they do it through their teaching strategies. At the same time, they provide mentorship for personal development, which is linked to motivation and the way teachers motivate their students during their learning process because, as can be observed in the diagram, the learning process has a big impact on motivation because depending on the way students learn, they will become more motivated or they can also lose their motivation to continue learning English. (See Appendixes session- Graphic #1, page 83)

In the second semantic map, it can be observed the relationship between the other two categories: the influence of English and skill acquisition. First of all, take a look at the influence of English on students' personal development. It begins with mentorship for personal development and the desire to grow as a professional, which is similar to personal interest, and those two have a relation with economic growth, which is part of students' motivation. Then we have the advantage of learning English, which is something well known that English provides better advantages for those who learn the language.

It has been found that English influences skills acquisition, because students started to develop abilities and those abilities became skills, that implicates that the skill improved during the major, where students had taken previous courses of English before they start the major, allowing them to have a better development in their learning process during the major,

improving skills like communication, the one is hardly linked with improving their confidence, because English is a language that demands students to communicate efficiently, and at the university there is an special class just for developing speaking skills, and that helps students to become more confidence with themselves because of the methodologies used, for instance during the data collection one students explained that, *"Each methodology or teaching strategy have helped me in some ways, ehhh I think that these strategies I learned how to communicate better, how to ahhh have more coherence when speaking or having more fluency"*(2075:2280).

On the other hand, skills acquisition also implicates skills acquired during the major, which is when students start the major sometimes without having previous knowledge they start to develop skills like listening, reading, and speaking skills, students explain, for example, *"I think that it was my reading skill because ..ah. in the first year... ah. I was very ... the class of reading comprehension was very difficult to me because. it has a lot of texts that I don't understand, and... in fourth year I developed better...than in the first year"*(371:642). Related to the acquisition of the language as well as communication skills, as mentioned before the one who allows students to communicate effectively, and not just in the classroom but also in real-life situations, because it was found that English also influences the way students express themselves, where they develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, being those two characteristics of communication skill.

It can be established that English influences the skills that students develop because those skills are not just that they learn to write in English during the major, they also learn excellent writing skills talking about essays, emails, and letters, and sometimes they do not know how to do it even in Spanish. The same happens with speaking, where in some classes they learn to give speeches or small talks, and some students mention they are better doing those things in English rather than in Spanish because they feel more confident expressing themselves in English. Finally, it was found that the influence that English has on students is

part of their personal development because, as can be observed in the diagram, skill acquisition is a way of representing the personal development that students have because of the English influence. To illustrate, one student during the interview said, *"English influences in a way in something your personal development, for example, let's say that once you were shy and you don't like to talk but when you start to learn English you know that we have to make a presentation, and for example, to me it helps me to become"* (2036:2303). Highlighting what the student said, gives more credibility to the findings. (See Appendixes session - Graphic #2, page 84)

Considering the triangulation analysis, diagram number three has a wide view of the findings because it shows the relationship among all categories and what was found during the analysis of the data. This semantic map represents the success of this research since it represents how learning focuses have influenced the personal development of English major students at a public university.

To provide more support to the findings, a diagram made by John Biggs in his research about learning focus was included to provide a better explanation of the relation between learning focuses and personal development using diagram number 3 page. First of all, Biggs in his diagram explains that depending on what type of motivation students have, the teaching strategies applied by teachers and the strategy used by students to learn will determine the type of learning focus of each student the ones that can be deep or surface learning focus, for determining the type of learning focus that students from the English major have, a questionnaire taken from the model of Biggs' instrument, was apply, analyzing the data obtained from the questionnaires in SPSS and as was interpreted from table 8 it was found that students who have deep learning focus have a predominant factor that is deep motivation, this was inferred because according to Biggs if more than five values are predominant above the other factor and in the case that they have the same number of values the one who is higher than the other is the predominant one.

To illustrate this, in the surface learning table, item number 20, the factors from surface motivation and surface strategy fulfill the requirements to stay as a factor, but in the situation explained before, there were the same number of values, and item 20 had one value for each factor, so what was done was that the higher value was the one who stays and the one with a lower value was eliminated, and at the end, surface strategy was predominant above surface motivation because it had more values. In short, it was found that in the deep learning focus, the predominant factor is deep motivation, because it has more values than deep strategy. For instance, in the deep learning focus, motivation has more influence; on the other hand, in the surface learning focus the value or factor more remarkable was surface strategy, because it has more values, therefore it can be established that students have a surface strategy.

After making all this analysis of each approach (deep and surface learning focus) and its variables (strategy and motivation), it was found that students learning focus level is almost in a balance of 50 percent between deep and surface learning focus, but with a small variant where there is a higher percent of students with deep learning focus than students with surface learning focus, but this difference is minimum. Moreover, motivation and strategy are the main factors taken from this result and are highly connected to the categories that were found in the other instruments, where motivation stays as a category and strategy is related to the learning process category because strategy is part of the learning process of each student.

According to the concept map, it was found that the main factors that interfere on how learning focuses influences personal development are motivation which is a main factor in determining the learning focus of a student, as can be observed in the diagram there are two types of motivations that has a big impact in students, learning process, the one is linked to the second main factor to determine students learning focus, which are teaching strategies as can be illustrated in the diagram taken from Biggs study that the cognitive strategies are just focused on memorization, repetition that at the end they lead to a surface learning. In contrast, the

metacognitive strategies are focused on developing an understanding of their way of learning that involves planning, reasoning, setting goals, and self-management processes that make them become more independent with their own learning developing a deep learning focus.

In the same way, the learning process affects students' skill acquisition and influence of English in students' personal development, affecting this their learning focus. Because students have been influenced by English through their skills, the ones that are influenced by their learning process and motivation. It was found that learning focuses can influence personal development depending on the strategies used by teachers and how those strategies influence their motivation, becoming a cycle in which motivation influences the learning focuses, and this one is part of the learning process, and the influence of English that involves motivation is part of personal development, and this one is represented as skills acquisition that is affected by the learning process and at the same time is related to the learning focus and personal development of students. (See appendixes session - Graphic #3 and # 4 p.85 to 86)

## **Findings**

The aim of this study was to characterize how the learning focus of English has influenced the personal development of English Major students from the 4th and 5th year in the educational area period 2022-2023. Afterward, all research questions, specific objectives, and general objective of this study will be clarified and addressed in the following section according to the findings.

### **General Objective**

To characterize how the learning focus of English has influenced the personal development of English Major students from the 4th and 5th year in the educational area period 2022-2023.

According to the findings of this study about the influence of learning focus on students' personal development at university, in the English major, it has been characterized how learning focus of English has influenced the personal development of English major students as follows:

After analyzing and understanding better the learning focus of students in the English major, it was found that it does influence the personal development of students through one main factor of learning focus, learning and teaching strategies, the ones depending on their effectiveness can affect students' learning process because if students have deep learning strategies, they will have a better performance, and for instance, it will influence in their personal development.

During their learning process, students start to enhance and develop their skills, like effective communication, and self-confidence which is an attitude you improve and develop for several reasons during your learning process. Self-confidence is also attached to communication, and this is a way in which the learning focus influences your personal development because having good communication skills helps students to develop better self-

confidence when speaking in public, get their own critical thinking in different contexts, prepare themselves in order to face real-life situations, get better jobs and occupations, and some of them even started their own projects like creating their own business, becoming a freelancer. In contrast, if students have surface strategies, such as memorization, note taking, and highlighting, it will negatively impact their personal development because they are not going to learn properly how to get their own conclusions, ideas, and meanings of the complex concepts that are included in their oral expression; they are not focusing as they should in the major but only on the outward appearance of gathering real knowledge. Finally, they will just focus on passing to the next level and not care if they learn through the process as it should be, and they will not adopt the aptitudes and skills that allow them to have personal development.

Motivation is another way in which the learning process influences students' personal development. Motivation is a key factor in determining students' learning focus, having deep learning means students have strong reasons that keep them motivated (enthusiastic) about how they can learn better and go beyond what they know or what else can be learned, and as a result, they have better personal development than students who have surface learning because they become the protagonist and independent of their way of learning.

In short, it can be established that the learning process influences personal development in such a way that, depending on students' learning focus and considering the variables, deep motivation, deep strategy, or surface motivation and surface strategy, the ones that determine the type of learning focus students have, it can be known if the students will have good or bad personal development during the learning process.

### **General Research Questions.**

What learning focus of English has influenced the personal development of English

Major students in the educational area period 2022-2023?

In this study, it was found that the learning focus that has influenced the personal development of English major students is deep motivation, which is a factor derived from deep learning focus, while the other percentage presents a surface strategy, derived from surface learning focus. Those two are the factors that influence more in students' learning focus and personal development, this is because as represented in tables eight and nine on pages 56, 57 and 58, there is a small difference between the number of students with a deep and surface number, the deep learning being the one that has higher percentage but the difference is minimum, and students who have deep learning focus, are more influence for its motivation rather of its strategy use to learn English.

It means that students who have deep learning, have a stronger motivation to learn English, while students who present a surface focus, have a surface learning strategy, and that is why they have a surface learning focus. In other words, students do not have an effective learning strategy for learning, and most of the time, students do not use any strategy that could help them improve their English. So, the information they obtain is momentary, and the knowledge they manage to acquire is rather basic, and this makes them stop having personal development as it should be.

### **Specific Objective And Specific Research Question 1**

What factors influence the personal development of students during the learning process?

To analyze the factors that influence the personal development of students during the learning process.

During this study, it was found that two main factors influence the personal development of students during the learning process. Firstly, the strategies and methodologies used by teachers influence students' learning process. The reason is that it can be mutable and modified, and depending on the learning strategies used by students, they can be motivated to learn more about the language, as long as, the professor uses a strategy that does not help

students that much, to become more interested in it, it can lead to a lack of motivation. That is why the way of teaching influences, negatively or positively the student's learning process.

During the two observations carried out, it was found that some teachers used strategies and activities that kept students motivated. For instance, one of the teachers used centered-student activities where students had the opportunity to provide their personal opinions about an activity where they had a group presentation, and they needed to provide suggestions to their partner. It was noticeable that students liked the class because, in that way, they felt like their opinions were important and took part in their own understanding of the topic addressed.

Another factor is mentorship for personal development, where teachers play an important role because that is the best way to influence students' learning process. Teachers provide students with the necessary tools for their improvement, like the different ways they can improve their skills, such as in listening, the teacher suggests watching as many videos in English as they can, speaking in front of the mirror to be more confident when they speak and this is one alternative in how teacher supporting them, also being enthusiastic and motivating always. As an example, in another observation, it was observed that students at the beginning of the class were bored, but then the teacher took some minutes for having relax and started to motivate students to participate in each activity, and it worked. Something important to mention is that the motivation factor has a big impact on students' learning process. As it was mentioned previously, motivation plays an important role in the other two factors because, depending on students' motivation, it will affect their learning process.

## **Specific Objective And Research Question 2**

To identify which learning Focus is the most predominant focus in the educational development of students of the English major.

Which learning Focus is the most predominant focus in the educational development of students from the 4th year of the English major?

After analyzing the questionnaire, the instrument used for identifying students learning focus, it was found that surface and deep learning focus have a minimum difference among the levels.

To answer this research question, the SPSS program was utilized to analyze the questionnaire R-SPQ-2S (the revised study process questionnaire), taken from Biggs' model, but some changes were made, in order to make the findings more accurate for this study, that questionnaire was important to find the types of learning focus of students, and during this study, it was found that the learning focuses have a minimum difference between them, it means not one of them predominate that much over the other. It is important to mention that this was an unexpected result because this question was created with the thought in mind that one learning focus was going to be totally predominant, but this was the result at the end of the analysis. Also, there was a difference in the variables that determine students learning focus, it was that students who show deep learning focus is because they feel deeply motivated, and students who have surface learning focus have surface strategy, so it can be interpreted that both surface and deep learning focus have been influenced by different factors, the ones that can vary depending on students' motivation to learn or the strategy they use to learn the language.

## Discussion

The main purpose of this study entitled The Influence of Learning focuses on the personal development of English major students in the period 2022-2023, was to achieve the objectives and find concrete answers for each of the objectives and research questions. After this study, it was found that learning focus deserves more importance than the one it has at the university because it is not just about thinking of focus that a student has, or that most of the time even students do not know about learning focuses and how it can influence their personal development, because they do not know what learning focus means, and sometimes even professors are not aware of this. Without knowing about this, they are not conscious of the main factors influencing the learning focus of students, the ones that end up affecting students' personal development.

During this study, it was found that the main factors that need to be considered in knowing students' learning focus are teaching, learning strategies, and motivation. Teaching strategies such as the metacognitive strategy that professors use like asking students to create a plan of action that helps students to improve by setting short-term goals, where they can establish specific days and hours to read, listening songs, watch movies, or practice speaking by recording themselves and all this in English of course. Also, activities like role plays, oral presentations like speeches, short talks, debates, and writing essays.

Those teaching strategies influence a lot in students' learning processes depending on how the teacher provides information and knowledge to students, the students show more interest or not in learning, and similarly happens with students' learning strategies, specifically the strategies students use for learning the language like creating mind maps, for organizing an oral presentation, reading and writing summaries, it was found that students have surface learning because they have or use surface strategies to learn, in some cases it can also be inferred that some students even do not use any strategy for helping themselves to learn English, and this is because they do not have enough interest in learning the language, and

here is when motivation takes place, just as Murat Hismanoglu concluded in his study about *Language learning strategies in foreign language learning and teaching* carried out in 2000, about the importance of learning strategies, which are part of learning process, and mentioned some factors like motivation and self-concept, live experience, and learning styles, the ones that influence the learning strategies and learning process of students. Those factors are the ones that determine if the student will be a successful learner.

Similar to what was found in this study about the influence of learning focus on personal development, it was established that motivation is another factor that influences learning focus because, depending on students' motivation, they will have deep or surface learning. It was found that students from the English major have different types of motivation, the ones that change for external and internal factors. Moreover, it was found that students who have deep learning focus are the ones who have as main factor deep motivation, but they also have surface learning strategies, similar to what John Biggs and Catherine Tang established in the book, *Teaching For Quality Learning At University (2011), Fourth Edition*.

As mentioned in the background, where his study explains that students have surface learning when they just learn and memorize the information, without analyzing or understanding in depth the information, they provide the example of one student that uses just the memorizing strategy to learn and this student does this just to memorize the information one of two days before their evaluations, leading this to a lack of analysis or understanding, because students think that they have done a good job memorizing when it has not been a good job, similarly to what was found in this student using the items to analyze students learning focus, unpacifically item 20, that says "*I find the best way to pass examinations is to try to remember answers to likely questions.*" or item 11 "*I find I can get by in most assessments by memorizing key sections rather than trying to understand them*", in those two items, students answer that they do what item 20 says, "*The best way to pass the exams of the English classes is to memorize the answers to the most likely questions*", and most students said that they do this often, as

illustrated in the appendix session – Graphics pages 87, 88 and 89 , and this a main factor why students have surface strategies, similarly to what Biggs and Tang mentioned in their study.

Learning strategies that students use are highly important to determine students' learning focus; this depends on how they use a strategy to learn and how well this strategy can be known if students have deep learning because of motivation or because of the type of learning strategy they use. This can be verified in table 7, the one that was created by John Biggs.

It is important to mention that during the application of instruments, the population had some modifications. At the beginning of this study, the population was just 4th year, but during the data collection process, the authors decided to include 5th year for the interviews. This was made to have a wide view and information about the students' learning process and personal development.

Moreover, in this study, there were some unexpected results because, before the instruments were applied, it was thought that one learning focus was going to be predominant over the other, but after the data collection and analysis of the questionnaire, the instrument that was going to help establish students learning focus, it was found that there is a minimum difference between the learning focus; it was like if 45% of students have surface learning and the other 55% have deep learning.

It was unexpected to have these results because, the authors expected to have a higher difference between the focuses, and with those results, it was confirmed that the questionnaire worked successfully to know the learning focus of students and for answering some research questions and objectives, as well as the interview, that helped to know students' types of motivation, and f the influence of English in their personal development. In the same way, the

observations helped in a significant way to learn more about the types of strategies used by professors during their class such as increasing students' interaction, comprehension, and critical thinking so that they have the opportunity to express themselves and provide their personal opinion about a specific topic, as one of the professors did during the observations where students were making presentations in groups and when one group was presenting other students were taking notes and paying attention because after the presentation they provide feedback for the students who were presenting. It is important to mention that the researchers as students from the English major, were also exposed to that environment, making it easier to understand the strategies used by professors.

It is also important to mention that the relationship found between surface and deep learning was that both depend on motivation and the learning process, and depending on the type of motivation and learning strategies can determine the type of learning focus, also both influence personal development because depending on the type of learning focus students have, it will determine if their personal development is optimized or not, because if a student has surface leaning, they will not have good personal development, on the contrary, if the student has deep learning, they will excel in their personal development.

After all the processes that had been made, this study could demonstrate that the deep learning approach guaranteed excellent personal development to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year students of the English major thanks to the metacognitive strategies that students had brought under the learning process that optimized their abilities and skills through the learning by experience, asking self-questions about specific topics, and organizing their thoughts in building their own meaning and understanding of concepts. Similarly, to the case of one of the observations where the professor made students ask questions themselves about what things can be done in an oral presentation to make it right, and then with the encouragement of the professor, the students had to give feedback to the partners that were presenting in front of the class, so it led

to students creating their own meaning and understanding of the concepts that involved oral presentations and other complex concepts. At the same time, the professor's support also provided a sense of independence in their learning.

## Conclusion

This study began for the purpose of knowing how the learning focus of English has influenced the personal development of English Major students in their 4th and 5th years at university. Through this study, it was necessary to apply three instruments to focus more on students, rather than teachers, because in order to achieve the main objectives of this research, it was necessary to know about students' learning process, and the ones that were found as main factors that take place in students learning process include learning strategies and motivation. Although, it was most focused on students during observation, teachers were also evaluated to know a little bit more about teachers' strategies, the reason why is that understanding more about teaching strategies used by professors was significant to finding the expected results.

A clear and deep learning focus plays a crucial role in the personal development of English major students for reasons like, it provides direction, enhances motivation, and promotes self-awareness. All those aspects are essential for the personal development of English major students. Teachers, with their teaching strategies and techniques, are also part of students' learning focus and personal development, and they play a principal role in helping students cultivate discipline, set specific goals, stay motivated, and seek support, so they can unlock their full potential and thrive academically and personally, as well as the strategies used by students through their learning process, the ones that can help them succeed their goals if they know to use them correctly.

In conclusion, when students have a deep learning focus, they become more motivated to achieve their academic and personal goals. In the same way, metacognitive learning and teaching strategies provided by teachers enable students to build their knowledge and skills, leading to greater self-confidence. This influences their personal development, and depending on how motivated the English major students are and the strategies used by the students to

learn, it will lead to a type of learning focus that will influence their personal development in a good or bad way, depending on the results.

## Recommendations

After this whole process of research, data collection, rigorous and meticulous analysis of the obtained data, and considering the findings achieved and conclusions of this study, here are some recommendations that the researchers would like to share with the English Department at University and expect them to take this into account for helping future students to be aware of learning focus and how this can affect their personal development:

- Teachers make use of student-centered activities in vocabulary classes that provoke students to learn the vocabulary through discussions because these can help to make a better understanding of the vocabulary and contexts, instead of memorization strategies that could provoke them to be less motivated as a result they would get surface learning.
- Teachers should learn more about students' learning focus in case they do not know about this important issue because this would help to understand more about how students are learning.
- It is well known that a lot of students struggle with the inability to understand English in the first and second year of their English major, affecting their learning process and personal development. When they finish the major, and in the worst cases, they end up quitting the major for feeling frustration. For that reason, the researchers would like to suggest to the English department to include a pre-requirement to be accepted in the major, knowing a little bit more than the bases in English, or taking a previous course before starting the major, because this will help to avoid depression and unsatisfaction in students. On the contrary, it will help them to be more confident and motivated during their learning process, resulting in better personal development.
- It is recommended for the English Department to apply a test for new English students' candidates to evaluate their basic knowledge of the language, with the objective of avoiding the students' frustration when starting the English major and professors start to

speak just in English. This issue affects the students learning process and gives a sense of complicatedness. This recommendation will help students avoid quitting the major and having low performances in most activities that are developed in the major where at least basic knowledge is required.

- Teachers should try to include activities that will motivate students to continue learning the language, like sharing their achievements in their own learning process, including how far they have gone in learning English and the way it has impacted their personal development, or creating conferences in English having English learners share the way English has changed their personal development.
- Let students know about learning focus because students may not know even that this exists and how it can affect them to have surface learning, and hopefully in that way, they will be more aware of the way they are learning and the different strategies for learning that exist and how this can help them to achieve deep learning and improve their personal development.
- To be successful in learning English, students need to become self-taught person, because they need to learn that to be successful, they will have to look for extra information, and new knowledge and not just use or be satisfied with what professors provide.
- It would be excellent if students identify their type of learning focus because this will help them to know if they are learning properly or if they need to change their way of learning.

## Appendices

### Interview's Format

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's name: \_\_\_\_\_

---

We are students in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the English major, we are working on research about the learning focus of English influence on the personal development of students from the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the English major.

Objective:

We want to characterize how learning Focus of English has influenced the personal development of English Major students from 4th year in the educational area, additionally analyze the factors that influence the personal development of students during the learning process and finally identify which learning Focus is the most predominant focus in the personal development of students from the 4th year of the English major.

### Interview Questions

1. Did you take an English course before you start the English major?
2. How has it influenced in your leaning process during the major?
3. What skills have you enhanced, and which one have you developed during your process of learning English and Why do you think so?
4. What factors were part of your motivation at the beginning of the major and which ones are now?
5. How have they helped you in your personal development?
6. What do you think about the different methodologies that you have been experiencing during the major?
7. How do you consider that it has influence in your learning process?
8. What do you think about English having an influence in the personal development of an individual?

### Observation's Format

School's Name:	
Teacher's Name:	
Subject:	
Time:	Date:

The observation model in class will include some elements: the methodology used by the teacher in the classroom including strategies, students' behaviors.

Teachers' Methodology	
Type of teaching method	
Learning strategies	
Activity focus	
Students' Performance	
Students' behaviors	
Students' skills	
Students' interest	

## Questionnaire Format

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear student you are asked to mark only one answer, the one you think is the most appropriate for each statement. It's not necessary that you spend a long time on each statement. On the other hand, it could be possible you feel that you have already answered to a previous statement, in that case do not go back and check the statements as you are expected to make an independent assessment of each one. Read them carefully and answer them with your first impression. Please do not leave any statement unanswered and be as honest as you can.

Choose for each statement the option that best adjusts your way of studying the English classes you receive in this major. The following scale shows the possible options for each statement.

1. **Disagree**
2. **Strongly Disagree**
3. **Agree**
4. **Strongly Agree**

Thank you for your collaboration!

		Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
01	I have moments when studying for English classes give me great satisfaction.	1	2	3	4
02	I have to study the English classes a lot to be able to understand it and so be satisfied.	1	2	3	4
03	My goal is to pass the English classes doing the least amount of work possible.	1	2	3	4
04	I just study what teachers teach me during the classes.	1	2	3	4
05	I find interesting the topics of the English classes.	1	2	3	4
06	Most of the topics of the English classes seem interesting to me and I often spend extra time for getting more information about them.	1	2	3	4
07	I dedicate a minimum effort to studying the topics of the English classes that are not interesting to me.	1	2	3	4
08	I learn some things of the English classes mechanically, reaping them over and over until I learn them by heart even if I don't understand them.	1	2	3	4
09	It seems to me that studying some topics of the English classes can be as interesting as reading a novel or watching a good movie.	1	2	3	4
10	When I study important topics of the English classes, I inform as much as	1	2	3	4

	necessary until I fully understand them.			
11	I can pass most of the English exams by memorizing key parts of the lesson without trying to understand them.	1	2	3
12	I usually limit myself of studying only what is asked to do of the English classes because I think it's unnecessary to do extra things.	1	2	3
13	I work hard in the English classes when I think the material, or the topic is interesting.	1	2	3
14	I dedicate a lot of my free time looking for more information about interesting topics that were exposed in the English classes.	1	2	3
15	I think that is not convenient to study the topics of the English classes in depth. It causes me confusion and waste of time when the only thing that is needed is to know the topics superficially to be able to pass them.	1	2	3
16	I think that teachers should not expect students to spend a lot of time studying the contents that are no going to be evaluated in the exams of the English classes.	1	2	3
17	I go to most English classes with questions in mind that I want to be answered or clarified by the teacher.	1	2	3
18	I make an effort to read most of the materials that are given recommended to me of the English classes.	1	2	3
19	I don't understand why I have to learn contents that are not required in the English exams.	1	2	3
20	The best way to pass the exams of the English classes is to memorize the answers to the most likely questions.	1	2	3

**Please answer these questions after you have finished the questionnaire.**

What statements did you find difficult to understand? \_\_\_\_\_

What words did you find difficult to understand? \_\_\_\_\_

What other aspects do not seem clear to you in the questionnaire?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

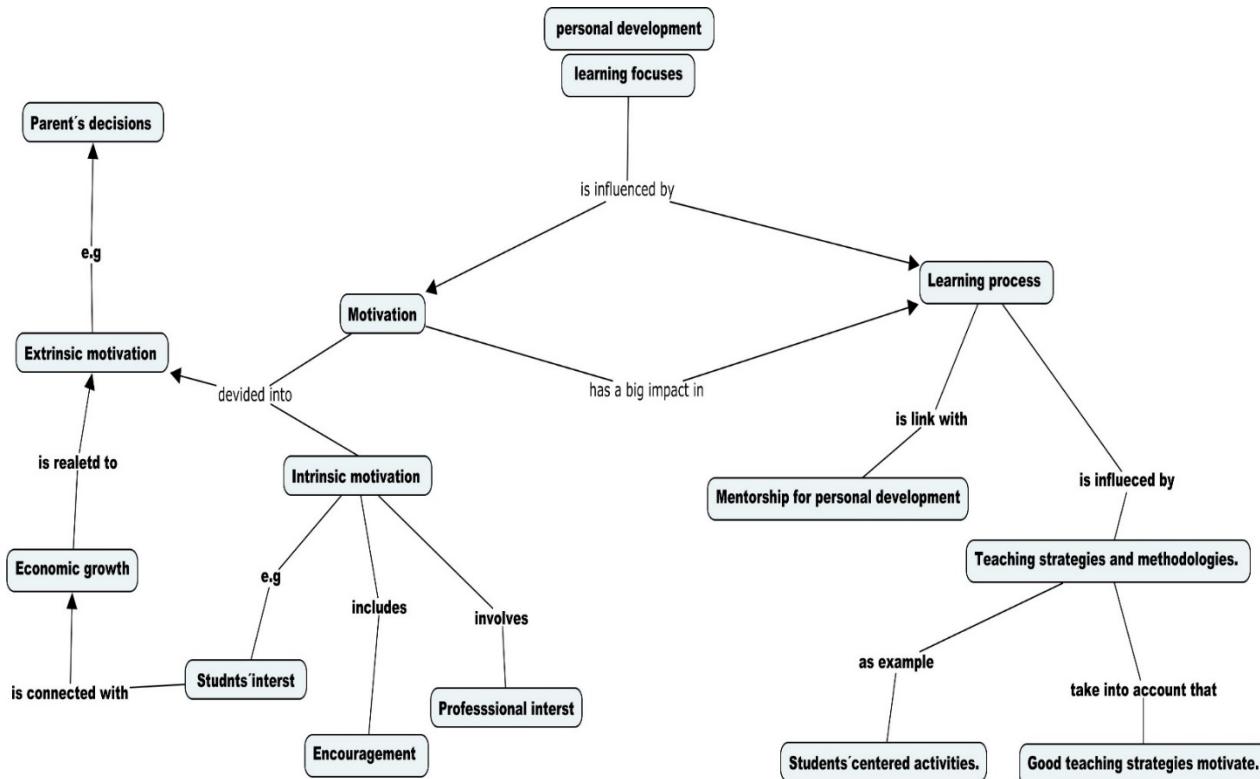
\_\_\_\_\_

## Data Triangulation Analysis Concept Maps.

Relation between two categories and its codes.

**Figure 1**

## *Personal development*



*Note. Created by the authors.* This semantic network represents the relationship between two codes. (Graphic #)

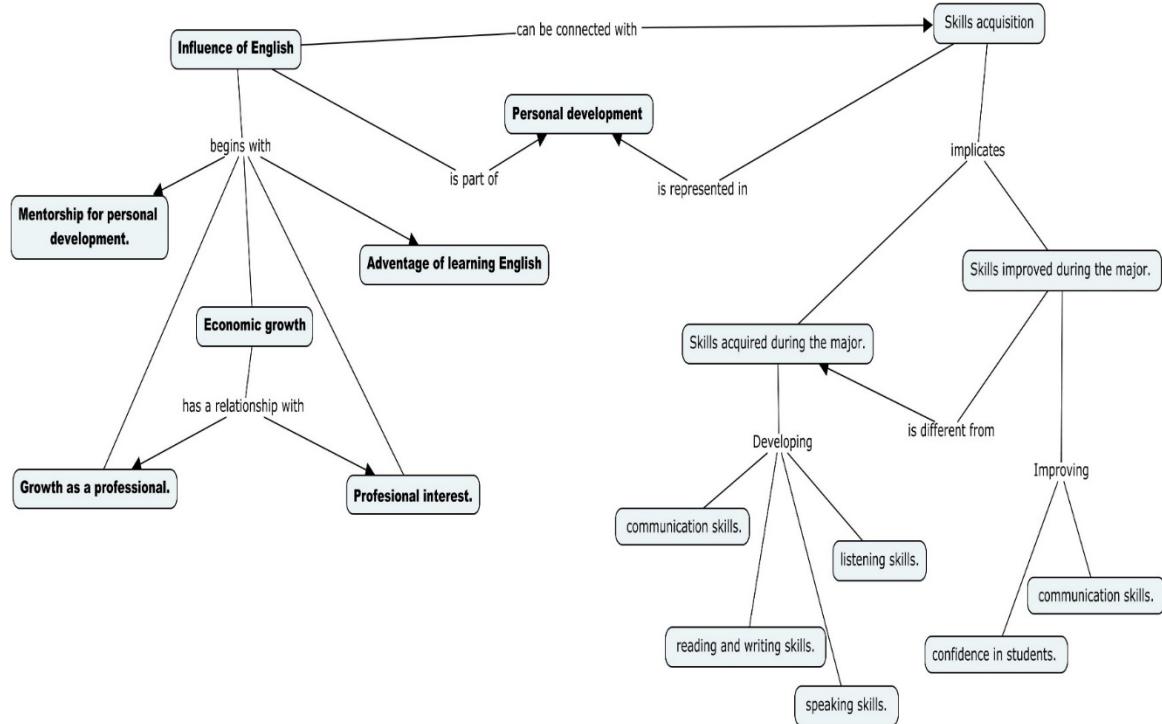
### **(Graphic #1)**

The following diagram represents the closed relationship that exists between the different types of motivation and the learning process of students.

Relation between two categories and its codes.

**Figure 2**

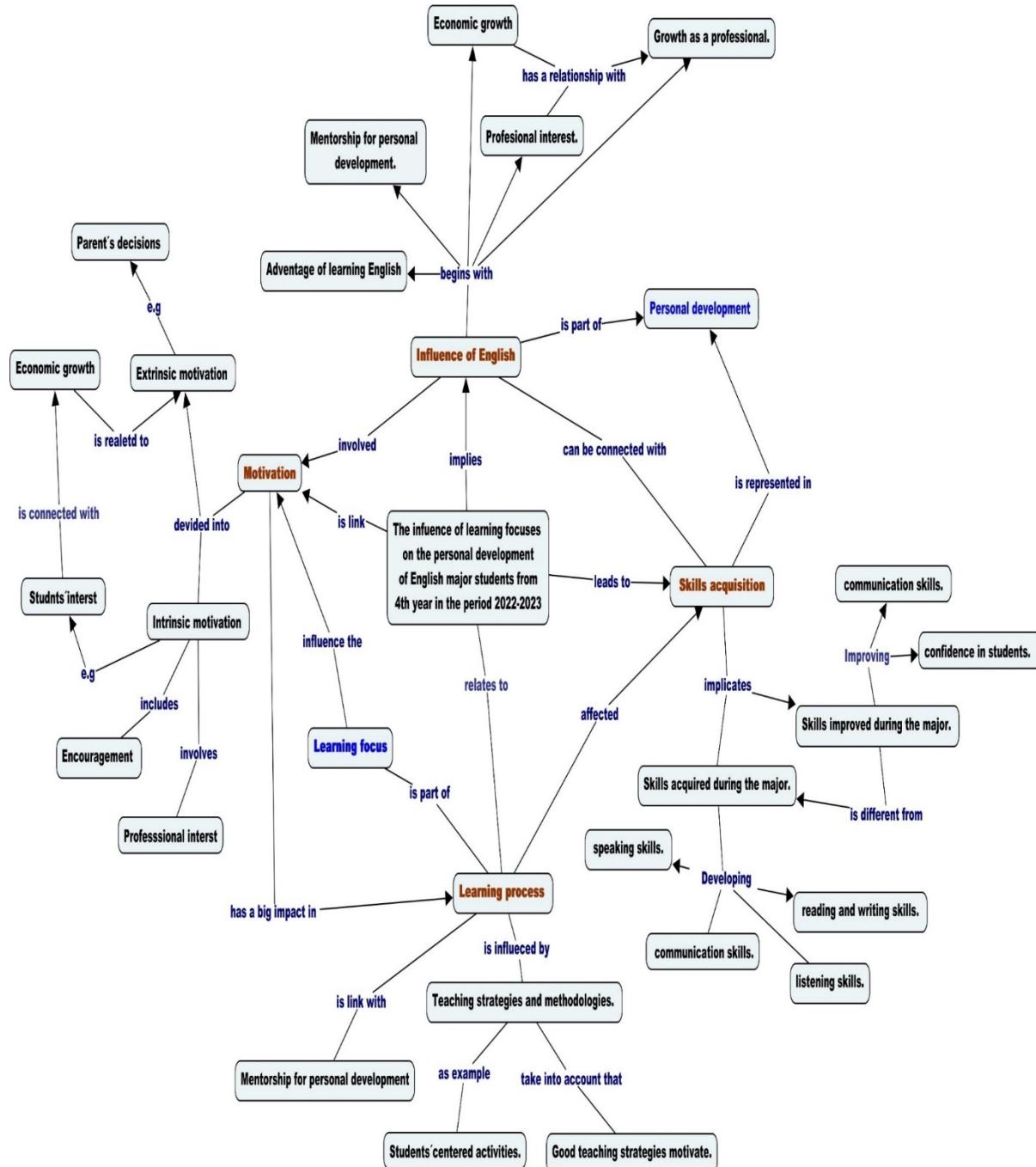
*Influence of English*



*Note. Own authorship.* This semantic network represents the relationship between two codes.

**(Graphic #2)**

This figure shows that the influence of learning English emphasized the advantages of learning English, economic growth at the same time is connected to skill acquisition and that both become part of personal development.

**Figure 3***Categories relationship*

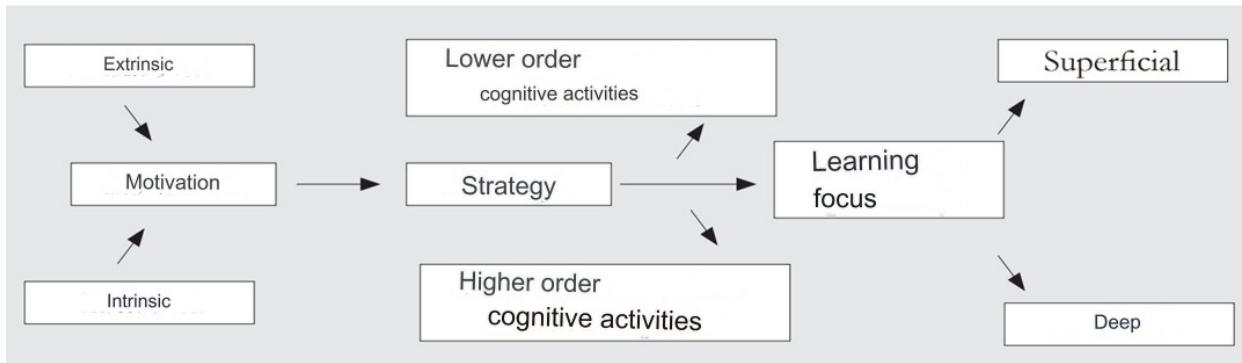
*Note. Own authorship.* This semantic network represents the relationship between all codes.

**(Graphic #3)**

This figure shows the relationship among all the categories that were found during the data collection, in all the categories there are connections and at the end all of them are related to the main purpose of this research, in this figure can be observe a wide view of the previous figure and the connection that each of them share.

**Figure 4**

*Learning focuses*

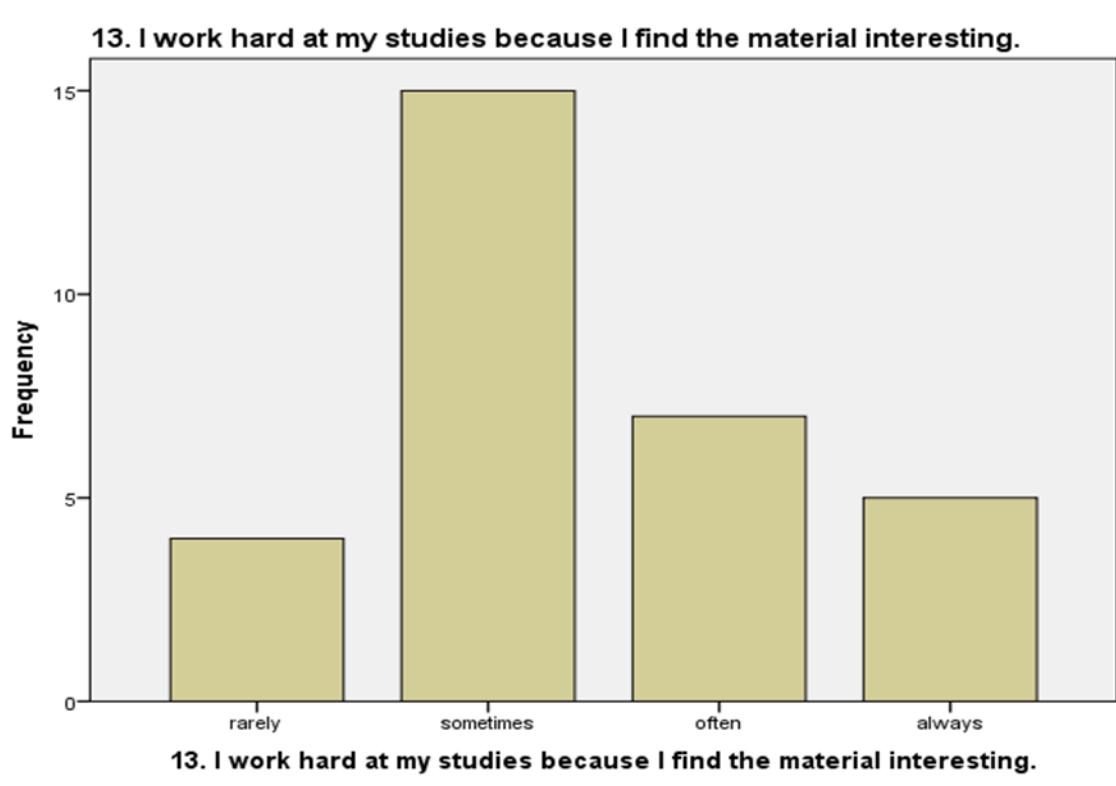


*Note. This figure was taken from the learning focus at University (John Biggs) This figure represents how learning focus works, the different types of learning focus and how it determinate the type of learning focus that a student will have.*

**(Graphic #4)**

**Figure 5**

*Frequency of Answers from item 13.*



*Note. This bar graph was taken from the SPSS analysis done by the authors.*

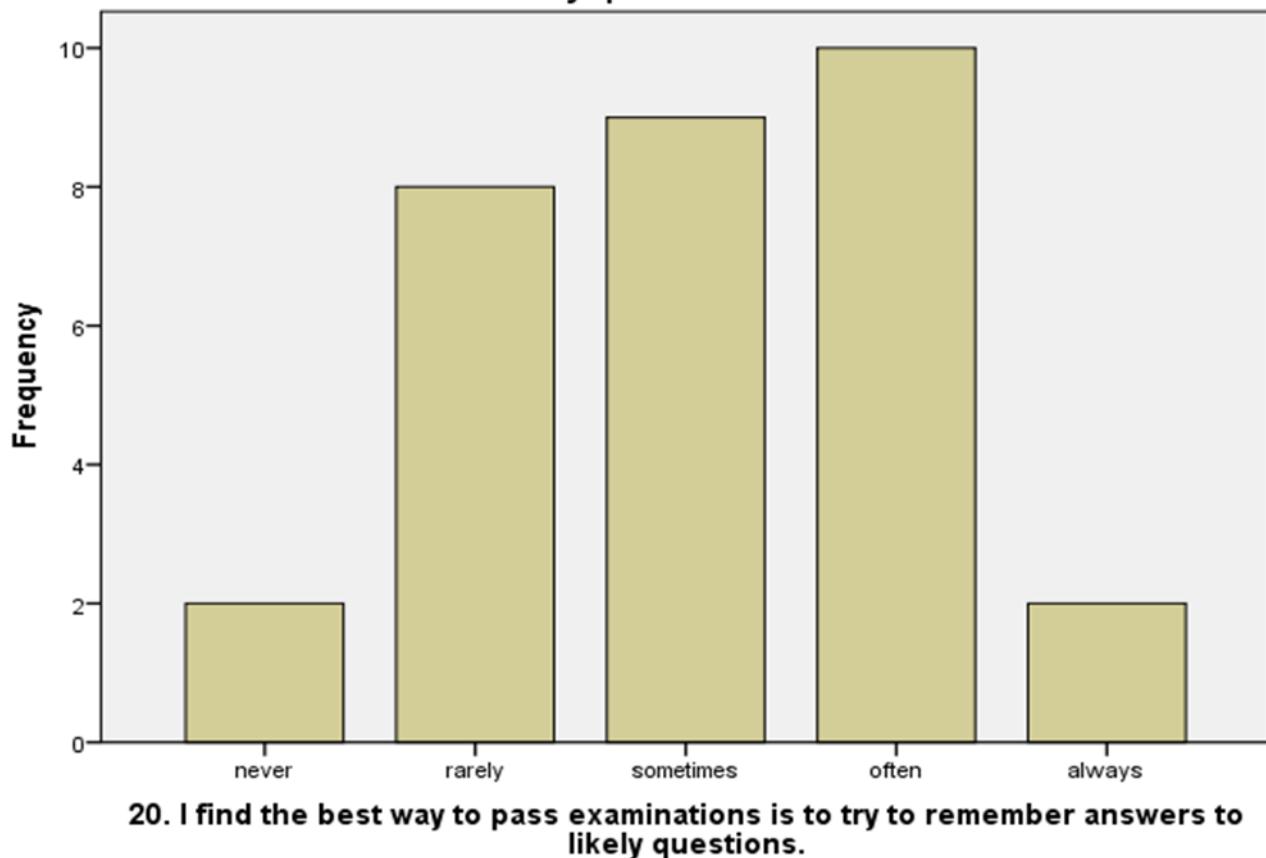
**(Graphic #5)**

In this bar graph can be observed the frequency of the answers that students provided during the interview from item 13.

**Figure 6**

*Frequency of Answers from item 20.*

**20. I find the best way to pass examinations is to try to remember answers to likely questions.**



*Note. This bar graph was taken from the SPSS analysis done by the authors.*

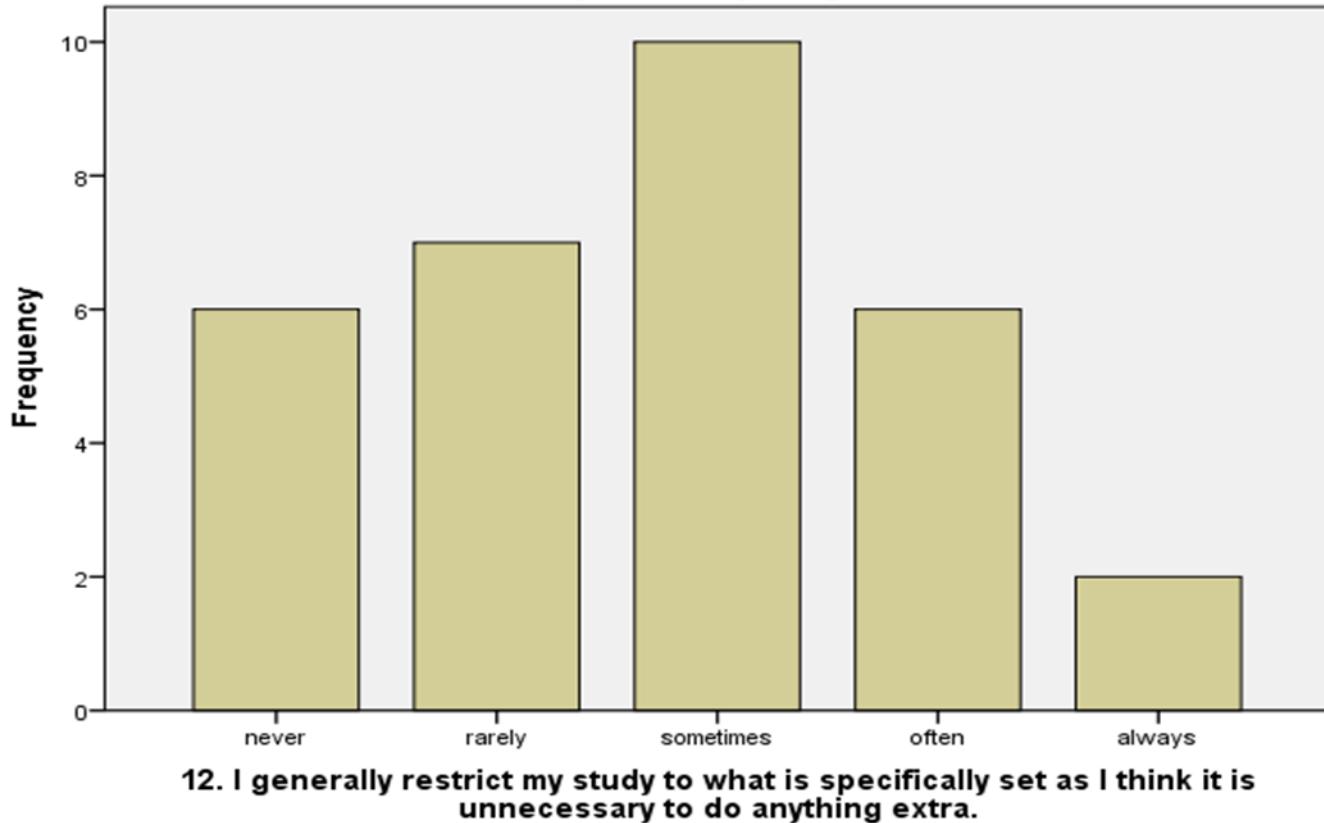
**(Graphic #6)**

In this bar graph can be observed the frequency of the answers that students provided during the interview from item 20.

**Figure 7**

*Frequency of Answers from item 20.*

**12. I generally restrict my study to what is specifically set as I think it is unnecessary to do anything extra.**



*Note. This bar graph was taken from the SPSS analysis done by the authors.*

**(Graphic #7)**

In this bar graph can be observed the frequency of the answers that students provided during the interview from item 12.

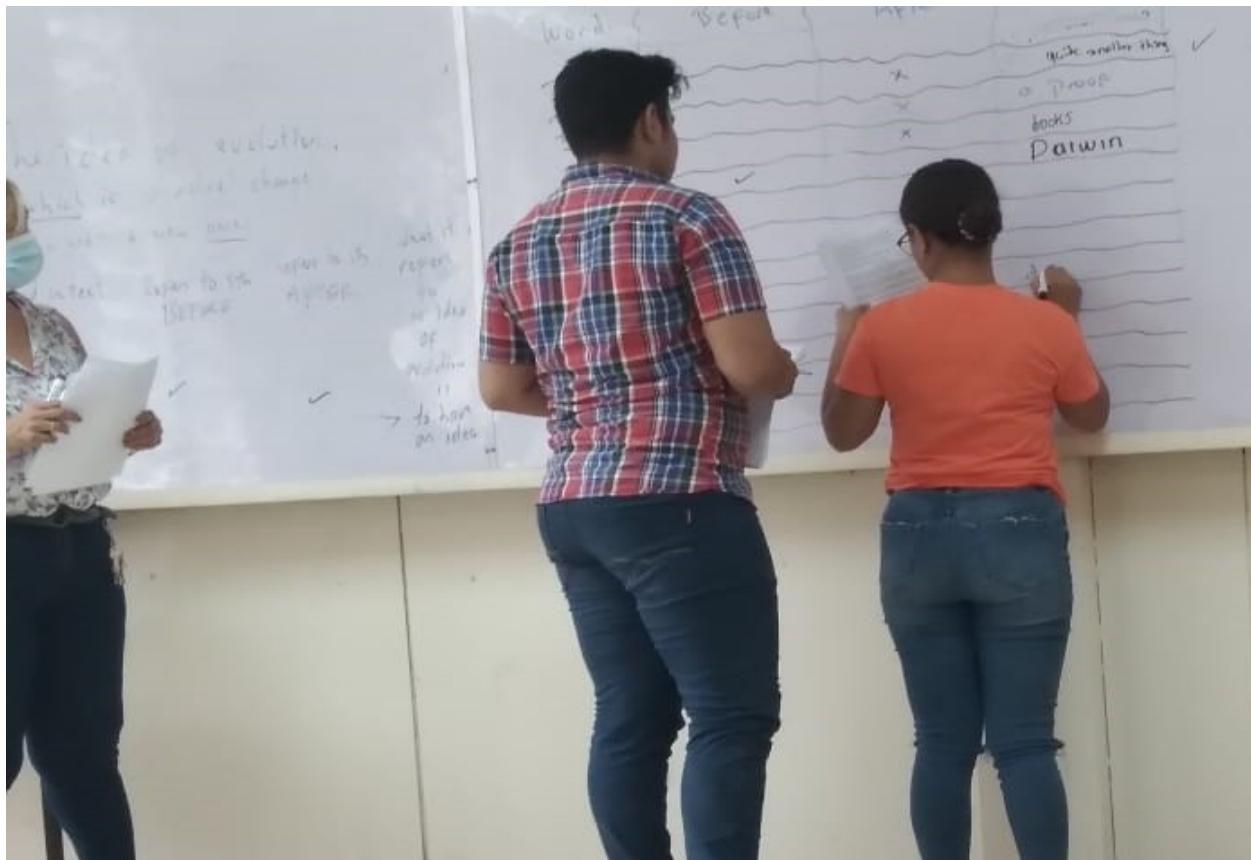
**Survey application (as it was applied online with the use of google forms in the following pictures you will observe students using their cellphones when they answered the survey.)**

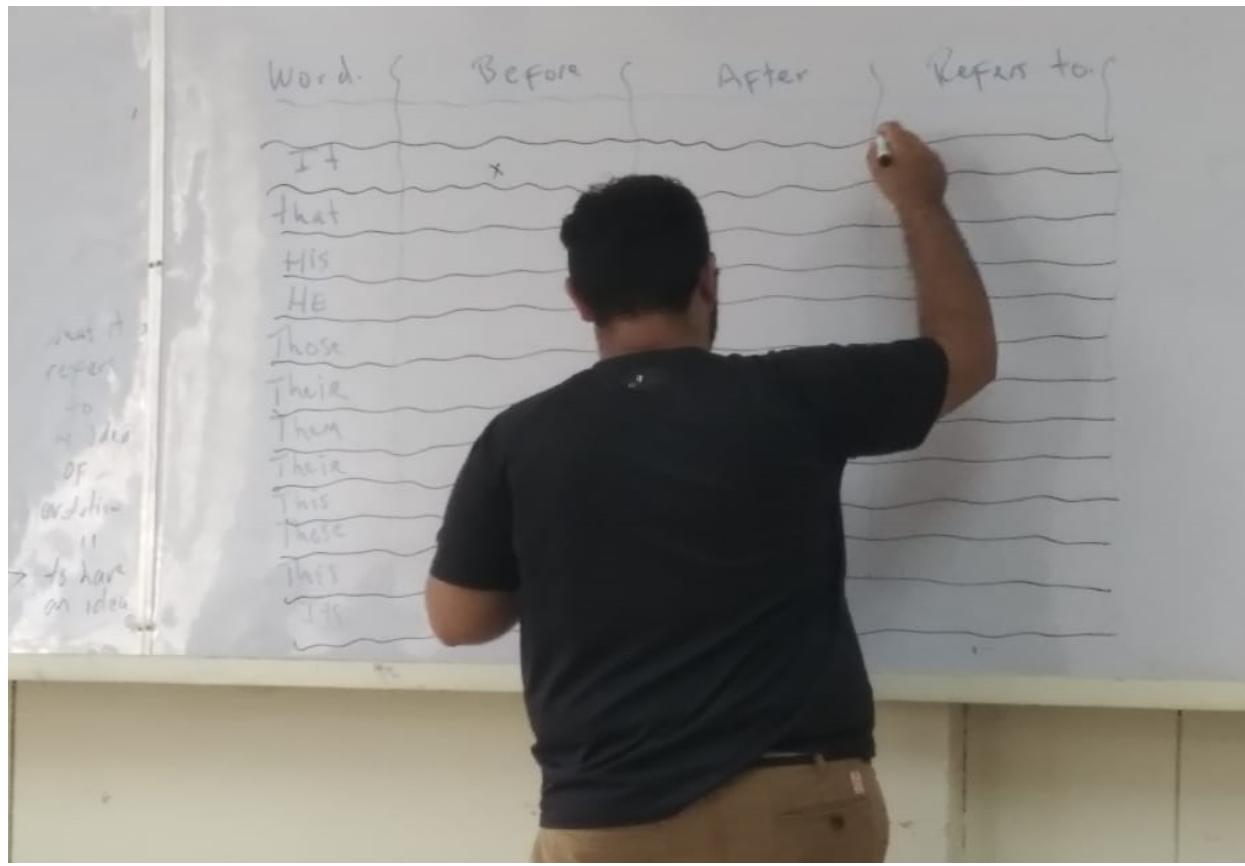
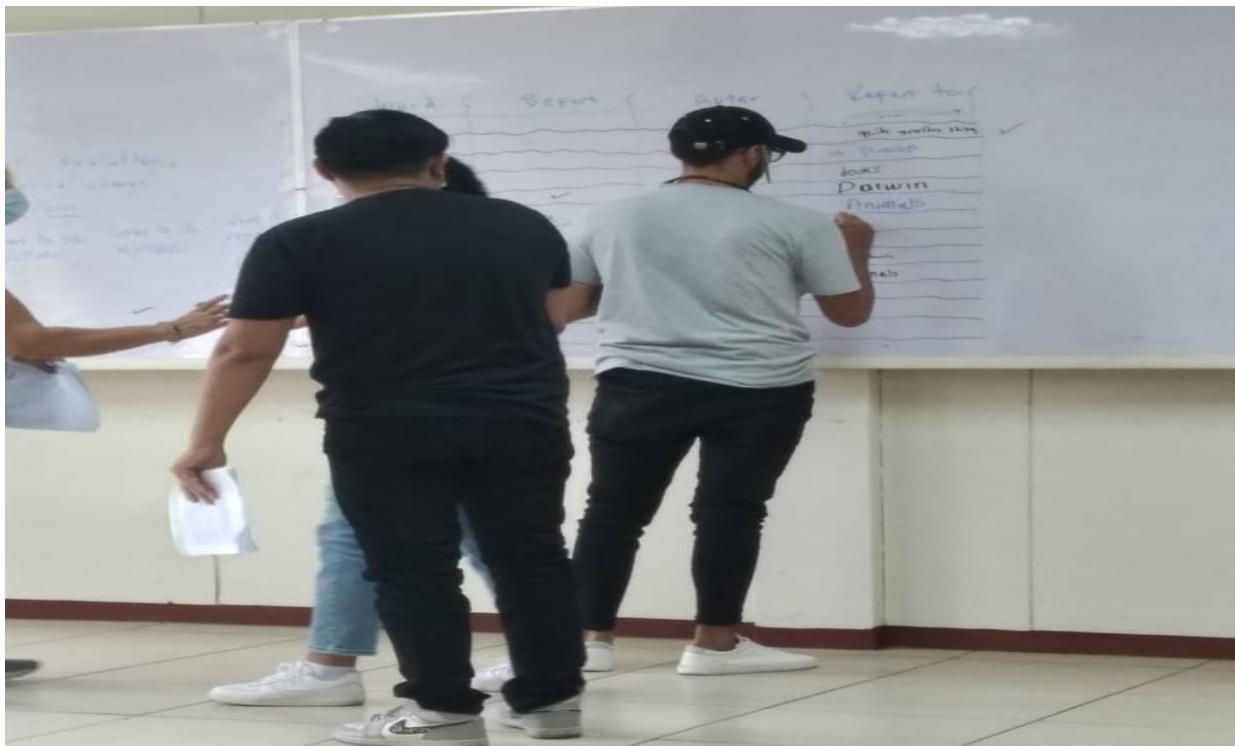




**Observation application (here you will observe some pictures of students during their class, the ones we observed and also the format of the observation model completed by the researchers.)**







## Observation Model for Research Issue

The following observation model carry out in the classroom include some areas of observation which help this research to collect qualitative data.

## General Information

School's Name:		
Teacher's Name:		
Subject: <i>Presentación Científica en Inglés.</i>		
Time: 9:00 - 10:00	Date: 10/08/2023	

## Teacher Performances- Performance Commitment

Areas of Observation	Few Evidence	Some Evidence	Strong Evidence	Comments
Behaviors engagement			Professor include SS.	SS seem to enjoy the lesson prof.
Time management			Professor manage the time effect.	
Active learning strategies			✓	Include SS in the whole class.
Focus on students			Professor include SS in the class.	Professor try to encourage SS a lot.

## Students Performances- Behavior engagement, Attitudes

Areas of Observation	Few Evidence	Some Evidence	Strong Evidence	Comments
Behaviors ( Participate actively in class)			SS participate, answer quest.	most SS participate giving comments, ans. quest.
General mood ( Comfortable within the class)			✓	SS seem to feel comfortable in the class and enjoy.
Motivation-Initiative (Making relevant questions)				SS answer in quest. activity.
Communication Skills ( Accuracy and proficiency)		✓		
Commitment		✓		
Student's interests			✓	SS seem really interested in the class.

## Observation Model for Research Issue

The following observation model carry out in the classroom include some areas of observation which help this research to collect qualitative data.

## General Information

School's Name:	
Teacher's Name:	
Subject:	Teaching Techniques in EGP
Time:	7:00 am

Date: June 14th, 2023

what does \_\_\_\_\_ stand for?

Dialogue/ talk

Teacher Performances- Performance Commitment				
Areas of Observation	Few Evidence	Some Evidence	Strong Evidence	Comments
Behaviors engagement		Some ss		Prof. provide good info./ clearly.
Time management			made essential act.	Prof. try to manage act.
Active learning strategies		ask, ss		
Focus on students		ss made act.		during the lesson prof. ask ss.

Students Performances- Behavior engagement, Attitudes				
Areas of Observation	Few Evidence	Some Evidence	Strong Evidence	Comments
Behaviors (Participate actively in class)		ss speaks when prof. ask.		ss participate + answering ques..
General mood (Comfortable within the class)			ss feel comp. with prof.	
Motivation-Initiative (Making relevant questions)				
Communication Skills (Accuracy and proficiency)				Some ss were able to do it
Commitment	the topic was about em act. (pre-what- good stay).	stage for making it long		
Student's interests				ss participated in a discussion

refine in a sentence/ prefer explain clearly

at the end SS participate activities.  
 SS made some presentations when they perform some activities. making the open - whole - part writing.

1RE I didn't take any course.

2= Since I didn't take any course I used the knowledge I got in high school

3F I think that I have improved my listening skill and I believe also improve my comprehension skill cause I can understand when I am listening audios.

4= My motivation was acquire the language. To learn how to communicate correctly in English. Now, I hope to improve my speaking skill cause I have some problems with it. I want to get fluency.

5= I feel more confident cause I can understand other language and I think it is very useful.

6= I have learn different methodologies the teachers use to teach students to teach and I can say that each of them are very useful

7= They are very important cause they helped to acquire the language through techniques that facilitate the learning process. They help to, to develop the different english skills.

8= As I said before; be able to communicate in other language make you feel confidence and proud. You have the chance to create relationship with other people around the world and learn about other cultures..

## Interview application.

### Interview's format

Date: 27.10.6.2023

Interviewer's name:

We are students of the English major; we are working on research about the learning focus of English influence on the personal development of students from the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the English major.

Objective:

We want to characterize how learning Focus of English has influenced the personal development of English Major students from 4th year in the educational area, additionally analyze the factors that influence the personal development of students during the learning process and finally identify which learning Focus is the most predominant focus in the personal development of students from the 4th year of the English major.

### Interview Questions

1. Did you take an English course before you start the English major?

No, I'm self-taught person

2. How has it influenced in your leaning process during the major?

I is important to be self-taught since I always, I receive the information that the teacher is teaching.

3. What skills have you enhanced, and which one have you developed during your

process of learning English and Why do you think so? I think my skill is speaking. I love to speak in English all time, and I do

4. What factors were part of your motivation at the beginning of the major and which ones are now? my major motivation is the music

I really wanted to understand exactly what is the

5. How have they helped you in your personal development?

I learn too much during my major

I developed my listening and reading skills

6. What do you think about the different methodologies that you have been

experiencing during the major? I think it help to figure out which method you can use for a solution problems

7. How do you consider that it has an influence in your learning process?

that help me do be organize in my homeworks

8. What do you think about English having an influence in the personal development

of an individual? Yes, that english learning help me

in my social life. I can to communicate with people in english.

## Interview's format

Date: 27/06/23

Interviewer's name:

We are students of the English major; we are working on research about the learning focus of English influence on the personal development of students from the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the English major.

Objective:

We want to characterize how learning Focus of English has influenced the personal development of English Major students from 4th year in the educational area, additionally analyze the factors that influence the personal development of students during the learning process and finally identify which learning Focus is the most predominant focus in the personal development of students from the 4th year of the English major.

## Interview Questions

1. Did you take an English course before you start the English major?

NO I didn't

2. How has it influenced in your leaning process during the major?

If the beginning was so difficult because my only experience was in high school, so I have to work about it

3. What skills have you enhanced, and which one have you developed during your process of learning English and Why do you think so?

One of the first I developed was my confidence

4. What factors were part of your motivation at the beginning of the major and which ones are now?

One of them was that I want travel around the world, so I know that English will be

5. How have they helped you in your personal development? The motivation is a main, due to my love to explore my major, so that helped me a lot

6. What do you think about the different methodologies that you have been experiencing during the major?

These methodologies helped me a lot, and now I have more confidence

7. How do you consider that it has an influence in your learning process?

These methodologies influenced me in grammatical area and in my confidence

8. What do you think about English having an influence in the personal development of an individual?

I think English has an important role in our life, now I have true motivations

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