THE INFLUENCE OF FAMILY IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

BY

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THESIS

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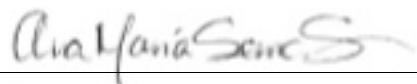
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AFFIDAVIT

I, Ana María Serna Sánchez, hereby declare that this master's thesis has not been previously presented as a degree requirement, either in the same style or with variations, in this or any other university (Article 92 Advanced Education Student Code, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana)

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Abstract

This qualitative study intended to understand the extent of the family influence in the learners' constructions of knowledge and identity in their decision of learning a second language, by identifying the socio-affective elements that influence the learners' constructions of knowledge and identity and the role of the family in the second language learning process, through the use of quantitative and qualitative data, such as questionnaires, interviews and personal narratives by the participants and the researcher. After the analysis of the data obtained, and based on the assumptions of the construction of knowledge and identity proposed by Berger and Luckmann (1966) among other key authors in SLA, Learning, Identity, Sociocultural studies and socio-affective factors in the learning process, this qualitative study evidenced the role of the family as significant for the learner in the own constructions of knowledge and identity, particularly in the decision-making process of learning a second language. This role, however, is not made of impositions: the family plays the role of a supportive social group in various forms: affectively, socially, financially and in the form of encouragement to pursue educational and personal projects directed to the personal development of the learner.

This work is dedicated to my parents Irma and Carlos, my sister Alejandra and my partner Santiago, who have been my bedrock and a constant source of encouragement through the challenges of this process.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Students do not come alone to the language classroom. They come with their lives, their experiences, their life projects and family and social circles' influences. As individuals the students develop under different effects, which condition, shape and permeate their knowledge and their identities. All this can't help but influence their decision-making throughout their lives, including the decisions made in the classroom such as the second language learning. However, these facts are often left behind the stage in the studies or policies regarding the curriculum transformation, motivation or even just the process of learning.

In the later stages of high school, students especially strongly feel the influence of their socio-affective environments when it comes to making decisions about their life projects and how to align them with what families, friends and peers expect them to be, combined with their aspirations, their own constructions of knowledge and their identities. It is here where learning English appears as a priority for many of them while others consider it something secondary, and it is where we teachers need to understand how students build knowledge and their identities throughout their lives and interactions with their socio-affective environments, to respond to their needs and motivations through our second language teaching practices oriented towards the development of students as individuals. Besides, encounters with English as well as other second languages do not happen only in the classroom, which turn it into a matter of overall social environment and not just another material in the classroom. Learning English as well as other disciplines at school is part of the learning process, of the process of knowledge construction and, so, a part of the life-long, complicated and complex process of the identity construction, of the construction and recognition of one´s own Self. Acknowledgement of the multiple factors

that come together with a seemingly similar and isolated process of the second language learning is an urgent matter for not only a curriculum transformation but for a social transformation that starts with Self-awareness (Freire, 2005).

By virtue of this phenomenon, this research project intends to understand the extent of the family influence in the learners' constructions of knowledge and identity, and how this process is reflected in the learners' decision-making process of learning a second language, by answering this central question: How is the role of the family in the second language learning process?

Departing from the premise that the family has an influential role in the students' decision-making process of learning a second language, and to answer this question that constitutes a contextualized, social phenomenon as the object of study, the type of research methodology chosen is the qualitative study with the elements of self-study as my personal experience and the role of my family in the my decision about studying second language inspired me to do this study; questionnaires of multiple choice and open questions offered to both parents and students; and qualitative interviews with several students of English as second language that extended and supported data. The data collected provides more personal perspective that helps to analyze social and contextualized phenomena through various sources that, integrated, help better understand the actual object of study (Yin, 2003).

In the next chapter I will make a review of the existing studies that develop connection between second language learning and family to understand how far the subject is studied and in what direction the studies develop. The following chapter will present the conceptual framework and establish connection between the following categories: family, second language learning, identity and knowledge. The choice of categories is justified by the problem and objectives of the

present study. The conceptual framework will be developed predominantly from the perspective of the social constructionism and sociology of knowledge and particularly the work by Berger and Luckmann (1966) who specifically focus on the development of identity in the broader socio-affective environment and knowledge produced in the process and pay significant attention to the role of language in the construction of the knowledge of the social reality. The chapter on methodology will explain more extensively the choice of the methods employed in this study. It will be followed by the data analysis and the discussion chapter that would present respectively data, findings and their possible implications.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter presents a review of the existing literature regarding the connection between the family and language learning as well as socio-effective connections and language learning as a continuation of the family ties. The search was done in various data base sources such as EbscoHost, Jstor, ProQuest, Springerlink, Google Scholar, with a number of approximately forty (40) different studies on the subject. The criterion to include these studies was predominantly the fact that they must show the direct relation between the above-mentioned concepts. With family as the core of the research, the criteria to choose the literature available included the concern of family studied from the point of a social phenomenon with a direct impact on individuals in the fields of identity, learning and education.

The found studies discuss family´s links to social interactions and its contribution to socialization, as well as the affective influence of the family in the individual, how learning and education have been permeated by the concept of family from the perspectives of the sociology of knowledge and education. Finally, the influence of family in education, and more particularly in second language acquisition will be analyzed in the light of diverse studies made to understand the perspectives of family when learning a second language and the concept of parental involvement in education. The family is seen as the source of social interactions, a social phenomenon and a complex social organism (Schwartz, Luyckx, & Vignoles, 2011) that contributes to the process of socialization and constructions of knowledge and identity of individuals embedded in a society (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

In regards to the influence of the family in the learning process, discussions head to the importance of the family as having the "most direct and lasting impact on children's learning and

the development of social competence" (Adams & Baronberg, 2005, p. 15-16). Family is given the power of impacting both in positive and negative forms the development of the child and their own learning process. Similarly, the family is entitled the role of the perpetuator of certain behaviors to be transmitted to future generations, and the provider of positive and negative attitudes and behaviors towards learning (Adams & Baronberg, 2005, p. 15-16). Parental involvement, parental support and family education have a significant role in learner's achievements, as stated by Desforges and Abouchaar (2003, p. 4). In their work, the authors stated that the family is in charge of the provision of a "secure and stable environment, intellectual stimulation, parental-child discussion, good models of constructive social and educational values and high aspirations relating to personal fulfillment and good citizenship, as well as the participation in school life" (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). In this sense, research has constructed the idea of understanding family practices as the "mediators of educational achievement" (De Garmo et al., 1999, p. 1233 in Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). In other words, this resumes the idea that if the family is actively involved and participating in the learning process, both from the academic and the social-emotional perspective, it will result in developing positive links to learning.

In terms of education and the acquisition of a first language, family is conceived as the first social group where the learner encounters the first social interactions and constructions of knowledge. Family is seen first of all as the provider of certain attitudes and even motivation through the learning process, more specifically at the first socialization stage (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Other authors as Fernández, Lúquez and Leal (2010) discussed the socio-affective aspects related to learning and how values are applied in the educational field. They claim that family is in charge of the individual's development of "confidence, self-control and

motivation by achievement" (Fernández, Lúquez & Leal, 2010, p. 76). Still, these authors devote the role of the family to the first socialization stage, not taking into consideration that in some contexts the role of the family is of a considerable importance even in the second and upper stages of socialization of the individual.

Discussions involving family and learning also include various case studies about immigration and ethnicity issues: how language acquisition happens in immigrant families and the use children give to L2 over L1 in these families (Chiswick, Lee & Miller, 2005; Wright Fogle, 2013): These cases focus on the construction and preservation of the cultural identity of immigrants over the new constructions of identity that children start to develop in the new social environments they interact as immigrants. These identity struggles also refer to feelings of belonging to the place of origin and the efforts families do to preserve their original identities (Burck, 2011; Rivera, 2008; Wright, 2013). In this matter, Girbau and Gubern (2013) refer to the construction of identity through writing in English, particularly how "people's identities are networked across the activities in which they participate and are on a trajectory over time… One of the outcomes of any social activity is a reconfiguration of participants subjectivities, both individually and in relation to one another" (p. 63).

Further references about family include the conception of the family group as a learning system. Chowdry, Crawford and Goodman (2010) claimed that "parents who provide more educational interactions at home," such as, for instance, helping with homework, are more likely to expect their child to pursue higher education, which creates the idea of a family as learning system where attitudes and behaviors are learned (p. 34). The authors also discuss the likelihood of an individual to pursue higher education if one of the members of the family (be the father or mother) also holds a university degree (p. 35). Similarly, Ho and Willms (1996) suggest that

"parental involvement in school contributes positively to student's academic achievement" (in Tam, 2009, p. 86), even though the motivation from parents to be involved is less in "poor socioeconomic and disadvantaged communities" (p. 86). These perceptions may be partially understood by the fact that many parents in these conditions might not feel capable of academically support their children, however existing evidence shows that regardless of socioeconomic condition, the affective foundation of the family is a key element for the development of children in the formation of values (Fernández, Lúquez & Leal, 2010).

Thereby, the conception of the role of the family still remains as the first socialization group (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Fernández, Lúquez & Leal, 2010). The family is recognized as the basic cell of society and the focal point for the construction and learning of values which happens through the "daily interaction and experiences in the family and social environments" (p.64), resulting in the formation of the value system of the Self. Correspondingly, the members learn a set of desirable behaviors and this serves as a mechanism to perpetuate appropriate expected conducts to future generations, which at the end influence the construction of the individual's identity.

Berger and Luckmann (1966) address the primary socialization in their work to explain how the internalization and creation of meaning through interaction shape the self constructions of identity which make an individual a member of the society. These authors acknowledge the relevance of the sense of identification with the family to properly internalize behaviors and attitudes, and how learning takes place in different stages that, when completed, enable the individual to integrate the society and be qualified for secondary socialization (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), the moment when the individual, already socialized at a primary stage joins other social groups different to family (schools or any other groups).

Many studies agree in the conception of the school as the secondary socialization process of the individual. Fernández, Lúquez and Leal (2010) refer to the school as the entity that assumes the role of the family in the formation of the individual, as the role of the latter starts to dilute through the socialization stages. The school then becomes the place where the individual engages in social interaction fundamental for the development of cognition, and this was described by Vygotsky (1978) as part of his formulation of Sociocultural Theory: learning is a social process that takes place in the interaction with others and the later integration of cognition into the individual's mental structure. Turner (1999) (in Canto Ortiz & Toranzo Moral, 2005, p. 62) supports Vygotsky's (1978) assertion stating that the human mind is not an individual product or process but rather it is socially structured (also known as Social Cognition in Haslam & Turner, 1998; Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994; Turner & Oakes, 1997). Gramsci (in Alfaro, 2000) also ascribes the diversity and content of human cognition to the social structure, building objectivity by means of reaching intersubjective consensus among human beings, namely social interaction.

Social interaction involves the construction of identity and knowledge through emotions, and its relation to learning has been addressed in numerous works. In the case of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), references to identity focus on the affective learner characteristics (Kęblowska, 2012) to describe how the own emotions towards any subject of knowledge affect the learning process. Conclusions about the relation between identity and learning basically range on how the creation of positive emotions in the classroom enables the learner to feel more comfortable about the learning process by creating positive emotions and enhancing their identities, as individuals learn more easily by associating positive experiences with learning (Kęblowska, 2012). The Input hypothesis, also known as the Monitor Model proposed by

Stephen Krashen in the 1970s (p. 160) also includes emotions and relates them to the construction of knowledge and language learning.

One of the Five Hypotheses Krashen's Monitor Model holds is the Affective Filter Hypothesis (p. 160), which states that if the language learner experiences negative emotions as anxiety or low self-esteem, the learner's filter might block the input of language into the brain, resulting in a poor response in language learning. Thus, the connection between emotions and identity is found as the emotions are generated inside the Self, caused by various influences around the individual that may shape how he or she feels towards any person, activity, thing, etc.

However, the analysis on how emotions shape the learning process is insufficient, as it does not clearly address what the sources of positive or negative feelings in the learner are. Emotions can emerge from the inner perception towards any event or situation that may make the individual feel good or bad about it. Nonetheless, external factors may also influence the emotions a learner perceives, and this influence may also shape identity aspects in the Self. Family, for instance, can be one of the factors generating positive or negative emotions towards learning a language, and these emotions may impact in the learner's constructions of knowledge and identity (Fernández, Lúquez & Leal, 2010).

Consequently, the connection between social interaction and learning (or learning as a social phenomenon), and more particularly Second-language acquisition is found in some works. Atkinson (2007) coins the term "alignment" to refer to the "complex process through which human beings effect coordinated interaction, both with other human beings and environments, situations, tools and affordances" (p. 2), a crucial aspect for SLA. In this fashion, the development of a language is a form of "social action" that must be "learned in, for and by virtue of the social world" (Atkinson, 2007, p. 170). In their effort of reconceptualizing SLA; Firth and

Wagner (2007) the language use to the construction of knowledge and emphasize the social interactive nature of the language and its usage in the process of knowledge construction. The individual is recognized as the actor of the own construction of knowledge and meaning, on the basis of personal experiences and "social, cultural and language-based interactions" (Dewey, 1910). Similarly, Coffey and Street (2008) define the language "as a social act" and the language learner "as a participating social agent", which implies that language learning is a socially constituted practice that enhances the individual with the ability to create and construct knowledge and identity.

Hughes (2010, p. 47), Lave and Wenger's (1991) (in Holley & Taylor, 2009) make a special emphasis in social context in which learning occurs and the active role of the individual in this process.. Wenger (1998) also describes social learning as a "mutual engagement with others" (p. 48) that aids the individual to make and negotiate meaning. In this path, evidence found by Xheko, (2011) suggests that individuals learn English by way of observing and participating: students were learning by participating in the "social practices" of the class. This author concludes that classrooms are "social environments for the apprenticeship and socialization of children, which is based in the claims of authors as Dewey (1910), Piaget (1964) and Vygotsky (1978) that the creation of mental structures befalls in collaboration with peers instead of the isolation of the individual to construct knowledge. As Roschelle and Teasley (in Zenios, 2011, p. 259) agree, "knowledge construction is often seen as the outcome of collaborative work".

Other studies in regards to social interactions and SLA include ecological perspectives on SLA and socialization (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2008). The discipline of ecolinguistics describes "linguistic phenomena as interconnected, interdependent and interactional" (Kramsch &

Steffensen, 2008, p. 18): every part of the whole is connected and changes if any other part is changed, meaning that the effects in other parts can also affect the Self. To put it into a social context, every action an individual does affects other individuals and also affects the Self, any change is perceived by the individuals and phenomena permeates all individuals belonging to a group. Sociolinguists claim that the focus of these studies on the social context has come after the 1990s with the social and cultural transformations (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2008) and the understanding of the language use, not only as a "mode of communication but a symbolic statement of social and cultural identity". The understanding of the influence of socialization in SLA gives an insight of a more ecological approach to SLA (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2008, p. 20).

In this line, SLA and the construction of identity are related as both of these terms are the result of social interactions of the individual. Studies address the acquisition of bilingual competences as a necessity or priority for undergraduate students (Del Ángel Castillo & Gallardo Córdova, 2014), as most people use two or more languages to inforce identity "according to their social circumstances, job opportunities or intellectual needs" (Haugen, 1972 in Del Ángel Castillo & Gallardo Córdova, 2014, p. 704). This assertion is closer to the object of this study: the previously mentioned social circumstances, job opportunities or intellectual needs may be part of the factors that influence the learner's decision-making process of learning a second language, however they are not a sufficient explanation of the decision-making process itself. There is a need of deeper research to understand what socio-affective factors may also influence this decision and how these factors influence the individual's constructions of identity.

Language learning and identity have been connected in some studies in the sense of considering language as "more than a system of signs, it is a social practice in which experiences

are organized and identities negotiated" (Norton, 2006 in Maftoon, Sarem, & Hamidi, 2012, p. 1160), thus language serves to construct a sense of the Self and the own subjectivity (Weedon, 1987, p. 21, in Norton & Toohey, 2011). This definition of language as a social practice might entitle that language allows the individual to constantly reaffirm its uniqueness and condition of individuality, as identity is constructed and constructs language (Chen & Ferdonia, 2010 in Maftoon, Sarem & Hamidi, 2012): through language use, some aspects of the individual's subjectivity can be understood, and language allows the individual to reposition and transform its own subjectivity as the identity is constantly constructed. Language, in other words, "is more than a system of communication. It is a complex structure of beliefs, values, ethics and desires" (Smith, 2006, p. 72) built by every individual through interaction and the creation of meaning.

As we can see the existing literature establishes direct relation between a family and SLA and helps to define factors and contexts of this relations: knowledge construction, identity formation, emotions and integration in the society. Graphically it could be presented as follows:
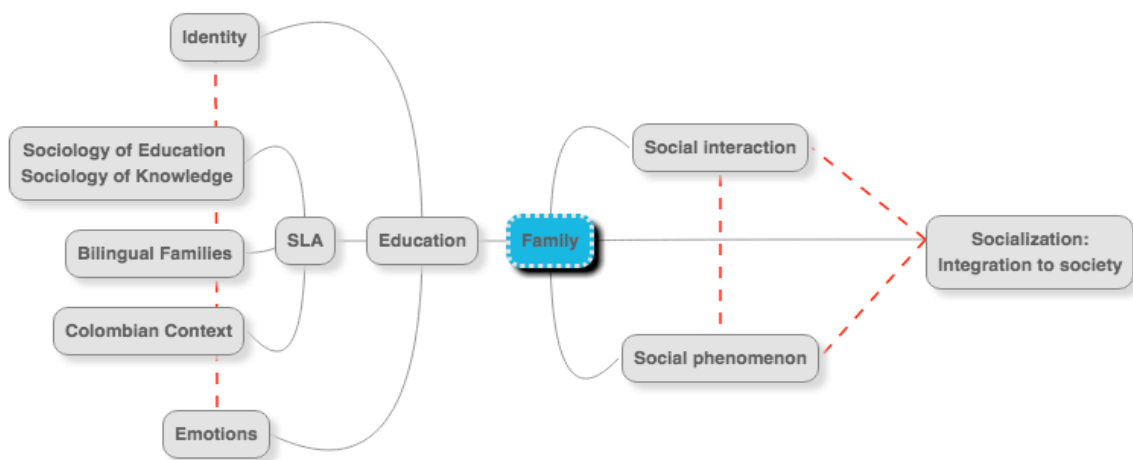

Illustration 1: links between the key concepts of the study

However, there are some gaps in the study of the influence of the family in SLA and the construction of knowledge and identity. The family is only understood as the first and most important social group in the first socialization stage of the individual (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), as the provider of the first interactions of the individual with the real world. Other authors, on behalf of affective theories, give the family the importance as the group in which positive or negative emotions towards any subject are developed, and as the contributor to the positive or negative associations the individual might make towards learning (Kęblowska, 2012; Krashen, 1981). While the formative role of a family to the first stage of socialization is acknowledged, the possible influence that a family could continue exerting on the latter stages of socialization of the individual is generally ignored in the literature. In this sense, there is an evident lack of understanding family as an influential factor in the later stages of the individual.

One of the most recent documents issued by the Ministry of Education in Colombia (2016) refers to the basic rights of learning languages and math for Colombian students, hoping that these rights are understood as a useful tool for the community as a framework of reference to plan and execute curricula. However, when the document refers to the family of the learner, it is only understood as the entity in charge of following the academic process of the student, not taking into consideration socio-affective elements that may also be present in the formation of students and the learning of languages in the Colombian context.

In the context of this study, the family has a significant role in the latter stages of development of the individual and even in adulthood after having entered various stages of socialization. The present study proposes that the family as the main social group to which the individual turns to before any important event or decision to be made has power to influence certain decisions individuals make at the various socialization stages. While recognizing the

family´s impact on the construction of knowledge and identity in the first stage of socialization of the individual, which is determinant in the development of the Self, the study intends to explore the role of the family at the following to primary stages of socialization on the decisions towards learning a second language and endorse the role of the family both in the decision-making process of learning a second language and the learning process itself.

Chapter 3

Conceptual Framework

Before we proceed to the categories of our analysis let us consider the overall meaning of education as part of the society and an important component of its organization and sustainment. In his interview with Hernán Suárez, Colombian writer and philosopher Estanislao Zuleta (1985) argued that education constitutes the means to transmit a set of values, behaviors, perceptions and accumulated knowledge through years of academic and social training of individuals belonging to a social group. Discussing the educational system contemporary to the time the interview was conducted, which is not far from our times, he stated that education neither teaches nor allows the individual to think or construct knowledge: education is just a way in which knowledge produced by others is transmitted with no place to discuss or elaborate new.

Within such a system an individual is a subject to the idea that there is somebody who knows better, and this knowledge is what is meant to be learned. After finishing the educational stages, individuals are expected to be able to apply all the acquired knowledge and skills to be competent in the society according to the standards and needs of the job market, linking in this form the educational policies to the needs of the productive system. Education does not entitle a cultural purpose but an economic one, which results in ignoring the reality of the individual as a unique being, capable of thinking and constructing knowledge (Zuleta, 1985).

Therefore the individual, or the student-learner, is not considered as the most important part of the process and an active part in the learning process. Not being in charge of constructing and shaping their own learning processes, they are a passive component of the educational system, and they receive and store the sets of knowledge to be applied in certain expected life situations. The learner is not contemplated as an individual but rather as a part of a group, and

due to this generalization, the learner, his or her motivations, background, and all what integrates the own learning process tends to be ignored or treated as if it was the same for each one of the individuals. Hence this traditional view would assume that all learners construct knowledge in the same way and the needs that one individual may have might also be common to a group of individuals. This has direct implications on the individual's construction of knowledge and identity and how the learner undertakes his or her learning process.

However, a substantial change in this conception for a more student-centered learning started to appear in the 1970s based on the works of such theorists as John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Paulo Freire, Lev Vygotsky, Carl Rogers, and Maria Montessori among the others. They promoted a shift in the focus of instruction from the teacher to the learner. Student-centered learning or Learner-centered education "is based on the philosophy that the learner is at the heart of the learning process" (Attard, Di Ioio, & Geven, 2010, p. 9). Therefore, the learner is considered as an individual who might require different approaches for learning and who needs to be able to develop autonomy, control, responsibility and independence in the own learning process.

Student-centered learning is influenced by the principles of the Learning Theory developed and formalized by Jean Piaget during the 1960s. He described the importance of understanding that, when centered in the learner, the individual has the responsibility for his or her own learning process. In this way, the learner, acquires, shapes, constructs and uses new meaning from the information perceived through significant experiences lived by the individual who reorganizes progressively the mental processes, with the aid of a facilitator, who can be family at first stages and then teachers in the next stages in the learning path (Piaget, 1964, p. 11-94).

Learning theory together with the Social Constructionism Theory presented in this study by the work by Berger and Luckmann (1966) emphasizes the need of interaction to construct, internalize and finally learn. Interaction can be understood as the reciprocal action between two or more actors. In this case, interaction is nothing else than the process the learner goes through when exposed to external stimuli from various sources. The sources might be family, peers, friends, the environment, the social groups in which the individual develops, etc. Learning results from the relation between the learner and the sources, and the subsequent constructions of knowledge made by the learner with the new meanings, information and experiences obtained in the interaction process (Atkinson, 2002, 2007).

Then the learner is conceived as an individual who obtains information, meanings, and experiences and constructs knowledge from their interactions. But there are three elements to discern in this statement: first, what is the definition of individual; second, what is the nature of the information, meanings and experiences (from now understood as reality), along with the relationship between the individual and reality in the construction of knowledge and identity.

Within this framework that understands the learner as the center of the learning process the presented study whose objective is to contextualize second language learning with such socio/effective factor of the individual development as family considers the following categories of the analysis that can help to answer the research questions about the role of the family in the second language learning process and the socio-effective elements it implies:

a) The learner as an individual

b) Social-individual nature of reality and knowledge

c) The individual and the family

d) The individual, the family and the social construction of reality

e) The role of the family in the learning process

The learner as an individual

An individual is an independent, autonomous person who controls his or her learning process and is, at the same time, involved in a complex network of relationships with the Self, the others and the world that allow him or her to shape and construct knowledge and identity. In this manner, the individual can see him or herself in relation to what they experience and learn from the world. The world at the same time is understood in relation to the conceptions and connections the Self does when constructing knowledge and identity (Piaget, 1964). The individual develops and constructs the own identity through social interaction.

Correspondingly, in the light of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) the social identity can be assumed to be integrated by different representations of the Self that may coexist and work relatively independently, all of them constituting a cognitive system known as the categorization of the Self (Turner & Onorato, 1999 in Canto Ortiz & Toranzo Moral, 2005). The identity of the Self is the collection of Self conceptions the individual develops of him or herself from the social interaction and social categories the individual belongs to (Canto Ortiz & Toranzo Moral, 2005, p. 64-65). A similar argument was developed by Turner (1999), who stated that the human mind is neither a product nor an individual process. The human mind is socially structured, which implies that the society is in the individuals as well as the individuals are in the society; the human mind is "characterized by psychological emergent properties that are socially produced and affected by social interaction" (p. 62).

Social-individual nature of reality and knowledge

Let us now discuss the nature of the reality and knowledge the individual develops. Berger and Luckmann (1966) consider reality as socially constructed. The authors speak about social relativity of both the reality and knowledge: "What is 'real' to a Tibetan monk may not be 'real' to an American businessman" (p. 15). This example entitles the idea that perception of reality and the later appropriation of it as what is real changes substantially depending on the individual and the self. Therefore, reality also changes depending on the "observable differences between societies in terms of what is taken for granted as 'knowledge' in them" (p. 15). According to these authors, it is important to sociologically analyze the implications of what the individuals understand as reality and then transform into their own knowledge in the particular society, and even more since the nature of knowledge is to be "developed, transmitted and maintained in social situations" (p. 14-15).

As we can see from the discussion of the two previous categories both individual identity an individual knowledge of Self and social reality is the result of the individual's participation in the social interaction. Now, let us turn to the role of the family in this process.

The individual and the family

With the learner as a social being, we must analyze what the constituents of the Self as a learner are. At first, all human beings are born from other two humans who decided (or not) to form a new social collection of members or group: a family. Other individuals are born from a couple of humans, but this couple may decide not to form a family, giving their child in adoption. The concept of family is not as simple as it may seem, since there can be numberless configurations of familial groups and they are still valid as social groups with an affective or biological affiliation. According to Schwartz, Luyckx and Vignoles (2011), the family is a "highly complex social organism that mirrors and actively interacts with its social and cultural

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context" (p. 566). Therefore, the concept of family has assumed different forms that have been documented by research (Laslett & Wall, 1972, in Schwartz, Luyckx, & Vignoles, 2011) and that may also change by different sociocultural backgrounds.

By reason of this, it may be a difficult task to analyze what the basic characteristics of the family are. On this matter, sociology has tried to identify some features of the family as "the unity of interacting personalities" (Burgess, 1926; Cooley, 1909). Psychologists have also searched for a possible definition of what family is. For instance, Lewin (1951) proposed the definition of this social group as a "dynamic whole". Using the word "whole" implied that the group is different and therefore has different properties on its own, and the term "dynamic" defines its nature as a changing group that may have different members, with various personal characteristics and identities but that keeps its bond interdependently and connectedly.

Hence the family is an organized group with a certain degree of unity; there is also a degree of interaction, interdependency and development of relationships. Each member of the family may have a degree of autonomy; nevertheless members are still interdependent to each other in the family system. This family relationship binds members through time, even if the family members are not physically present or if the group has added up more members or started other familial associations. In this manner, family members share values, meanings, rituals, conceptions and even serve as a mechanism to perpetuate and transmit a set of desirable behaviors or appropriate conduct to futures generations (Adams & Baronberg, 2005, p. 15-16). This is how the family membership "imposes strong constraints on individual development" (Schwartz et al., 2011), since an individual cannot escape from his or her family membership. A member can avoid a role within a family, but he or she cannot break the existing biological tie between the family and the individual. Even if a member acts as if it was not any bond among

the family members, this individual may be acting "to the detriment of their own sense of identity" (Walsh, 2003, p. 377 in Schwartz et al., 2011, p. 568).

Now, conveying this into the particular sociocultural characteristics of the Colombian families in the last century, Rico (1998, p. 112-113) has recognized the importance of understanding the family as a social group that is interrelated to other sectors in the social organization and that has a high influence in the development of the individuals and the society. The author makes a clear differentiation between families: those who share a blood tie and their members are linked by a kinship; and those called the "residence family": members who are not strictly linked by a blood tie but may share a space, affinity or friendship and they jointly organize their mode of living.

Rico also mentioned social phenomena that nowadays influence the conventional composition of families, for instance family ruptures and couple recompositions, families in which there is only one of the parents involved or present, less children per family, migration, rural and urban displacement, unemployment, impoverishment, violence, homosexual coupling, etc. These phenomena are "cause and effect for drastic modifications in the roles and power relations between men and women, youngsters, elderly and adult people". The changes and dissolution in the configuration of the families bring new forms of parenthood and coexistence between the members of the family and therefore transform the conceptions and understanding of the Self and the construction of identity inside the family.

The individual, the family and the social construction of reality

All of the possible influence that family has in the construction of one's identity and knowledge, has to do with the socialization process approach elaborated by Berger and

Luckmann (1966), which implied a two-step induction of the individual to the social structure, as follows:

The primary socialization takes place when the individual is a child, as "The individual is not born as a member of the society" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 149) but is implied to be a member at some point. This is why, in the primary socialization, the individual is "inducted into participation in the societal dialectic" (p. 149). This process starts with "internalization": The individual starts internalizing and creating meaning from the interaction with the others, apprehending the world as "meaningful and social reality". The individual springs by "making part of a world in which others already live" and therefore, the individuals "participate in each other's being" (p. 150). When the individual finally reaches this stage of socialization, he or she can be considered a member of the society.

The importance of the family in the individual's construction and development of reality and identity, is based on the fact that family and individuals make part of the closest socio-affective circle of the individual, so they become the authors and inductors of the individual's primary socialization. This process takes place in highly emotional situations, generating emotional attachment from the individual to the members of the family and vice versa. As mentioned before, in the internalization process the individual appropriates and creates meaning from the others, and this necessarily takes emotional involvement in different ways. The individual internalizes only if he or she feels identified with his/her significant others. "In other words, the self is a reflected entity, reflecting the attitudes first taken by significant others towards him/her" (p. 152).

From the primary socialization, the individual not only annexes others' attitudes or roles, but also their world, since the identity is "objectively defined as location in a certain world and

can be subjectively appropriated only along with that world" (p. 152). This alludes to the notion that when an individual constructs an identity, he or she also has a specific place in the world. Then, with the generalization of norms coming from the interactions with the closest others and the later appropriation of these norms as the general expected behavior in their own world, the socialization stage gives the individual the "establishment of a coherent and continuous identity": this might be understood as consciousness and implies that, "what is real 'outside' corresponds to what is real 'within'. Objective reality can readily be "translated into subjective reality and vice versa" (p. 152). However, no individual is entitled to internalize all what is conceived to be objective reality in his or her society. The contents that an individual internalizes are given by their world, and they change between social groups, even though there are some of these contents that are common to all groups: for instance, language.

This is how in primary socialization the first world for the individual is constructed through stages or "learning sequences" dictated by biological facts and the knowledge to be transmitted. When the individual starts internalizing and creating meaning, the individuals around him or her must understand the stages of the growth process and what skills the individual requires to internalize, appropriate and generalize knowledge. The primary socialization has its end when generalization takes place in the "consciousness of the individual": the individual becomes an active and effective member of society, but we still need to be aware of the need of maintaining in consciousness the reality internalized in this first stage and how further internalizations in secondary socializations occur.

Secondary socialization comes when the individual who has already been socialized at a primary stage joins "new sectors of the objective world of his or her society" (p. 150). Secondary socialization occurs for instance when the individual joins other social groups different to family,

such as school, university or any other group. In Berger and Luckmann's terms, it is the "internalization of institutional or institution-based 'sub-worlds'" (p. 158). The extent to which this second socialization happens depends on the complexity of the social distribution of knowledge and the social division of labor. To happen, the secondary socialization requires the acquisition of role-specific languages and legitimating apparatuses: in science, for example, the language and instruments to be used vary significantly from those for social studies. As the individual is trained in any branch of knowledge, he or she acquires the particular functioning of the language intended for that specific branch.

As previously mentioned, both primary and secondary socialization stages are never complete. The contents, internalized in the socialization process abide threats to their subjective reality. This is the reason why, a society must keep "procedures" to maintain the equilibrium between objective and subjective reality. This suggests that a change in the subjective reality can lead to a different internalization into objective reality. Berger and Luckmann (1966) state two types of reality maintenance: Routine maintenance and crisis maintenance; the former, kept through routines and institutionalization obtained through the social interaction. From routine maintenance the individual identifies the significant others, main agents for the maintenance of subjective reality and the less significant others, who support the process of maintenance. To maintain reality, one of the most powerful and important tools is conversation. Conversation with the other helps the individual to understand, to shape, to share and make real some doubts the self may have towards any topic, to objectify reality.

In addition, to maintain reality it is essential to keep collective rituals of reality-maintenance, and these must be institutionalized in times in which the risk of losing the equilibrium between objective and subjective reality is higher. For example, if an individual

chooses not to believe anymore in certain religion, his or her significant others will try to persuade him or her through interaction of the implications of choosing any other religion. Individuals will even use some rituals to make the individual in question to return to the equilibrium between his/her subjective and objective reality. What is certain about all this, is that socialization implies a change, a constant transformation of subjective reality and its construction into objective reality.

The role of the family in the learning process: final considerations

In the development of this conceptual framework, the focus on the primary socialization of the individual responds to the fact that studies regarding the learning process of the individual (as seen in the literature review) refer to the first socialization stage as the most important phase for the affective, identity and knowledge development of the individual. However, this conception ignores the idea that the second stage of socialization also accompanies the development process of the individual in the form of a reassuring influence that is present in the decision-making processes of the individual towards learning.

For the purpose of this study, we will adopt the assumption that socialization always takes place in a determined context of a social structure, therefore socialization gives a particular formation of identity, always led by social processes, as "identity is a phenomenon that emerges from the dialectic between the individual and society" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 195). Distinctly, as crucial for understanding the formation of the self-identity of the learner, we will focus on the understanding of the primary socialization and the family as the leading influence in this socialization process.

On behalf of the primary socialization and the tie the individual builds with his or her family in this stage, the individual starts constructing meaning and knowledge around what the

most significant guidelines from his/her family are. Originating at this point, the individual starts making choices of what knowledge would be most important and aligned to the own construction of identity he/she has made through life and the influence the individual receives from his/her family. Even if the family influence becomes second when the individual goes through the secondary socialization process, the family still has a meaningful role in the individual's decision-making process in many developmental stages of his/her life concerning knowledge and internalization of reality.

Included in this decision-making process of what to learn, how to use it and incorporate it into the self-identity, we account the decision of learning a second language as the focus of this work. Learning a second language becomes a part of knowledge of high or low interest for learners depending on how the influence of their family has shaped their perception towards learning a second language for socialization purposes. A learner may perceive that learning a second language would make him/her successful in the social interactions, while another learner may show no interest on learning a second language as it might not be crucial for his/her social interactions in the specific context each one makes part of.

The opinions that a family may have towards learning a second language, as well as the beliefs that the learner constructs towards it are also a powerful influence on the learner's motivation to learn a second language. Deci and Ryan (1985) mention types of "intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in cognitive and social development". These propositions also emphasize how social and cultural factors can influence positively or negatively the learner's willingness to learn, directly impacting in the learner's performance in the area of knowledge; in this case, the family makes part of the extrinsic factors in motivation as the responsible actor in the primary

socialization of the individual with direct influence on the learner's construction of identity and knowledge.

Chapter 4

Methodology

As it was proposed earlier, the individual is strongly tied to the family in all the stages of socialization, and its influence and power on the individual's decision-making process varies significantly from one stage to another, but still remains as one of the most powerful influences (both positively and negatively) in the individual's constructions of knowledge and identity. The research questions for this project regarding the socio-affective role of the family in the students' process of learning the second language entitle the necessity of acknowledging the socio-affective elements that integrate the role of the family in the learners' constructions of knowledge and identity, to establish the form the influence of family takes when a learner decides to learn a second language, in this case English.

In an attempt to understand the forms in which family plays a role in the learner's constructions of knowledge and identity, specifically in the decision-making process of learning a second language at various stages in the individual's development, the type of study chosen was the qualitative research, which allows the researcher "to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events" (Yin, 2003, p. 14). This study is based on the analysis of real events in a real-life context to which the researcher has everyday contact with the participants' perceptions and opinions. In this environment, the "desire of understanding the complex social phenomena" (p. 3) is the engine to analyze the facts that may constitute evidence to build connections between family, learning and identity, for the case of second language learning.

While most studies and especially qualitative research can't avoid subjective touch as researcher's personal values and previous knowledge affect the choice of the problem, methods and approaches, as well as the process of data interpretation itself, I thought it would be honest to

depart in my inquiry from my personal experience. Therefore, one source of data is formed by my personal narrative describing my own experience with the language learning and reflecting on the role of my family in my decision-making regarding the second language learning. This personal narrative constitutes a type of self-study (Denzin, 1989) to remember meaningful moments of the researcher as the referent to questioning and establishing this qualitative research. As Pinnegar and Hamilton (2009) argued self-study is a way of going back to ontology with the central question defined rather as "what is than about claims to know" (p. 2). Systematic analysis of personal experience allows, as the authors writing about self-study and autoethnography argue (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011) allows in a more just way understand cultural experience as, it was discussed earlier, an individual is always a process and a product of social interaction. Being a process and a product itself (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011), autoethnography presents the process of social construction with its own example; in other words, it visually and on practice presents the subject of its own study. The intention of the research was to compare my personal experience and perceptions about the role of the family to those of the participants, to establish patterns or differences towards these phenomena. Writing the narrative I asked myself the following questions to support the research project and as an extension of the research questions:

    1. How did I decide to learn a second language?

    2. Was my family influential in this decision?

    3. How can I describe their role?

    4. What did it mean to me?

The selection of various data sources, from different types of participants corresponds to the understanding of qualitative research as a comprehensive research strategy capable of dealing

with "a full variety of evidence" (Yin, 2003, p. 8) which helps the research process to examine the variants of the phenomena to be analyzed. As strategies for data collection in qualitative research are not mutually exclusive (Yin, 2003), they serve to establish certain patterns within the context and the phenomena subject of study. This approach allows the researcher to cover various "contextual conditions that might be highly pertinent to the phenomenon of study" (Yin, 2003, p. 13) through triangulation (Glesne, 2006), the combination of multiple data to obtain relevant, accurate input for the research. The systematic analysis of personal narrative implies auto-reflection within theoretical framework and complementation of it with other data collected by means of questionnaires and interviews. Such combination of data offers deeper insight on the social phenomena and their manifestations, which result in the construction of meaning and knowledge in an "accurate measure of reality by those being studied, not imposed by the researcher" (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009 p. 232-233 in Arghode, 2012, p. 157).

Participants in this research are constituted by three groups of female students: The two first groups comprise thirteen students (13) from Tenth grade and thirteen (13) from Eleventh grade, their ages ranging from 15 to 18 years old. These students make part of the 7,6% of the school population classified in the B1 level of proficiency according to the CEFR, with records of high academic performance. The third group is formed by eight (8) students from Tenth Grade, aged 15 – 17, classified into the level A2 in the CEFR, with low records in their academic performance. These three groups were chosen with the objective of finding possible relationships between students' academic performance and the influence of their families in their decision-making process and construction of knowledge. Enrolled parents are the own students' parents (34 altogether), to find closer connections between their opinions and perceptions towards the object of study.

These three groups of students in tenth and eleventh grade were chosen as the researcher's relationship with them has become solid after 3 years of working together. In this way, students feel more confident to share their opinions and perceptions, more particularly in a topic as the family that might be of special treatment. Similarly, as students and the researcher share class time everyday it is easier to find different moments to share ideas, opinions and observe some behaviors in the class. All parents previously signed consent forms, both for their daughters' participation in the research project and the use of the information provided by them and their daughters. The school directors were also aware of the study and provided with relevant information and all the necessary aid for its development.

Questionnaires were designed for the two main groups in the research: students and their parents. Questionnaires for parents were sent with their children to be answered at home, and questionnaires for students were applied in one class (60 minutes approximately), to be answered individually. On the other side, interviews were conducted as follows: interviews with students were carried in the classroom as a group conversation (or focus group) answering one particular question about the influence of their parents in their English learning process. Students were asked to give specific examples of situations in which they noticed the influence their parents have on their decisions when talking about learning a second language. Students shared their own experiences and anecdotes, which served as a complement for their answers in the questionnaires and were voice-recorded.

Parents participating in this questionnaire were asked thirteen (13) different questions; eleven (11) yes/no and multiple-choice questions and (2) open questions in which they should include their opinion in their own words about the importance of learning a second language for their children and the influence of learning a second language in the professional development.

These questions were answered by parents in Spanish, which is their mother tongue, and then translated into English to maintain the uniformity of this work. To see the questionnaire, please review the Appendix section (Appendix 2).

Data obtained from students was collected in two different ways: Questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire applied comprises ten (10) questions, nine (9) of them multiple-choice questions and arranging preferences questions. The tenth (10th) question asked students to write a 30-word statement in which they described their families' conception towards learning English. This question was used as a sort of narrative in the sense that students could use any language (both English or Spanish) and write any idea that came up to their minds based on their experiences and the opinions they have heard in their families about learning a second language, in this case English.

The use of interviews as a source of information in the research gives an interesting insight on approximated data, as they constitute contextualized information on the phenomena of study. They help as a first-hand source to understand the phenomena and their implications from the perspective of the participant, which offers more accurate and relevant data for the research. Interviews consisted of only one question, which was expanding on the tenth (10th) question of the interview: They were asked to tell in which ways they felt the influence of their parents in their decision of learning a second language. They were also asked to recall if there was any particular moment or word their parents have told them in which they identify their parents' opinions towards learning a second language.

Chapter 5

Data Analysis

In my data analysis I would like to start with my personal encounter as a logical course of this research. When I started teaching English I could not help but compared the experience of students with my own experience as a learner of second language. This became an inspiration for this present study.

"The day I decided to learn a second language, English, I was in San Andrés Island in a family trip. By that moment I was 15 years old and had been learning English at school for five years, still I was not very conscious of what I desired to be in the future, or if languages would make part of my life project. The first moment that marked my life while being in San Andrés was hearing somebody speaking Creole, one of the native languages of the island that is a combination of English, Spanish and some African language.

I could identify some of the words in Creole but I still wanted to learn about the language and communicate with this person; it seemed very interesting to me to communicate in a different language than Spanish, and seeing somebody speaking another language as its mother tongue in my own country was really amazing. I can recall this event as one of my first experiences seeing and listening to another language (different to Spanish) native speaker.

The second encounter with the language was at the swimming pool. I saw two British people speaking English and they started talking to me. I felt a little sad because I could understand them but I could not say any word in English! The only words I could say were "Yes" and "No". This made me talk to my parents about learning English as a second language. When we came back to Medellín, I mentioned my parents about the possibility of learning

English in any academy in the city, and one year later they gave me the chance to study the language in a prestigious institution of the city.

The support of my family in this decision was essential. By the moment I told my parents I wanted to study English, they became really happy and supportive about my decision, providing me with the financial resources I needed to study the language and encouraging me to become an excellent student and language user through their motivating words and their disposition to be attentive to my learning process. I was highly motivated by the support received from my family, and I started feeling very proud when other members of my family recognized me as a high profile student to be proud of; those actions made me keep on making big efforts to be an outstanding learner. In two years, I could reach a high level of proficiency that allowed me to study the major I got graduated from.

During all this time, I felt my family was proud of having a second language speaker, and also supported and helped me to study a third, French. They strongly believe in the necessity and the more opportunities an individual may have if he or she speaks a second and even a third language. This is the reason why we as a family have also encouraged my younger sister to follow this path, and today she is a proficient speaker of English and is thinking about learning Portuguese. Both my parents and myself have encouraged my sister to study and be a proficient user of other languages through our financial support and advices, giving her all the resources she may need to pursue and reach her goals in second language learning. Every time the topic of languages comes to the table, my parents and I mention how important learning English for our academic and professional performance is, and how I am a vivid example of this for my younger sister, who dreams to study her major abroad and puts all her efforts to learning languages as a competitive advantage for her in her field of study."

The role of my family in both my sister's and my own learning process is the role of an encouraging, supportive family who has always been attentive to our learning process and also respects our own decisions on what we learn, when and how we do it. In our context, where people do not have free access to education and studying is highly expensive, where education is not considered yet as the key for development and it is seen as a long, expensive and less economically rewarding process (it takes a lot of time and economic efforts that a person may not be capable of making), where education is not an option when you have to raise a family and there is a lack of job opportunities, we may count ourselves into a minority of people who have the opportunity to study or undertake any project with the financial and affective support of the family. It would have been very different for my sister and I if we wished to study languages but my parents could not afford it, or if our parents were not interested in us learning other languages: My sister would not dream of studying Biology abroad and I would not be writing this thesis project.

Analyzing my own experience, I find that parents definitely have an influence in the decision-making process of learning a second language. The extent of this influence takes the form of support and encouragement to undertake the learning project, in the financial and affective forms. For instance, the financial support comes from parents when they decide to pay for courses, materials or any other resource their children may need. The affective support is evidenced in the encouragement and parental involvement in the learning process of the individual.

It is also interesting to see how my personal experience aligns to what participating parents expressed towards learning a second language and its importance for the professional development projects of the individuals. All 34 participants consider that learning English is a

key factor in their children's professional development. Similarly, the majority of parents (82%) consider that learning a second language is also a differentiator in the professional life and a key factor in the job market, contrasting with the 3% (1 parent out of 34) who considered that learning a second language is secondary or complementary to the academic formation of the student.

As noticed in the parents' answers about how important is learning a second language for their children, many of them recall some experiences that made them make the decision of including English as essential in their children's academic projects. For instance, parents were asked if they had had the opportunity to learn English or to travel abroad any time. 76% of the participants have traveled abroad, while 24% of them have not traveled abroad yet. From the group of parents who have traveled abroad (26), the 96% consider that this experience has shaped/influenced their decision of having their children learn a second language. Only the 4% (one parent) felt this experience did not change his/her opinion towards learning a second language.

In this line, the majority of parents who have traveled abroad (88%) also perceive a high importance of learning and using English or any second language in foreign contexts. Those parents who have not traveled abroad yet consider that learning a second language would be a highly helpful tool in the traveling experience. In the case of parents who have learnt English, they mention that the language has helped them in their professional performance. Those who have not had the opportunity to learn a second language consider that learning a second language could have been important/determining in their professional and personal development.

Another relevant experience for parents and students to decide about the importance of learning a second language for their children is the closer encounters with relatives or friends

who share their insights and experiences towards learning a second language and its usefulness. As one of the students mentions:

"Three years ago a cousin went to Canada to learn English. When he came back, we realized he had learnt a lot."

Another student says:

"Since I was young my parents have always told me that I should learn English since I have many aunts and uncles who live abroad and have developed thanks to the language."

Many of these stories are integrated into the students' own perceptions of learning a second language. They become part of their imaginaries and identities and then incorporate them into their own arguments to make decisions towards learning a second language. In this matter, parents were asked if they consider that their perception about learning a second language has influenced their children's decisions towards learning a second language, to which 85% of parents answered affirmatively.

In regards to students, they were asked about their points of view of the influence of their families in their second language learning process, as well as any other factors that might be included in their decisions towards learning. Students were asked to arrange the reasons why they decide to learn a second language. They were given seven (7) different possible reasons and they had to arrange them in order of importance for them, being the first place the most important and the seventh the least important for students. The analysis of this question entitles a degree of complexity in the sense that all students have very different reasons/motives to learn a second language. However, the intention of this question was to note a pattern in their responses, to find a possible order of reasons why the participants decide to learn a second language. To

construct the order of preferences, it was decided to arrange them according to the highest quantity of answers for each place of importance, as follows:

Place	Aspect
First	Inner motivation
Second	Passion (this aspect is highly divided in the order of preference, it appears in different positions with no concluding data. However, we can say that the highest number of answers is located between places 1 to 4.)
Third	Traveling
Fourth	Meeting people
Fifth	Because it is important to learn
Sixth	Work requirement
Seventh	External pressure

According to these answers, the pattern noticed is the fact that students still value as the most important the inner motivation to learn a second language, as well as the passion they feel for learning it. Other aspects included are traveling, meeting new people and work requirement, the latter in the last positions. This means that students privilege their own perceptions (motivation or passion) towards learning a second language over the external factors that may be considered as the functional motives of learning a language, which, however, does not contradict the possible influence of the family as the environment of the primary socialization.

There is also a highly divided opinion about language as part of the self-identity: For 56% of them, the languages they speak make them the individuals they are, while 44% of students considered that it does not make part of them. This is reflected in their answers in question 4 in the questionnaire: The question intended to ask students about what elements they think make part of their identity. Participants were given eight (8) different elements, and they had to arrange them in order of importance. The range of preferences was set according to the highest number of answers for each aspect, as follows:

Place:	Aspect/Element:
First	Values and Flaws
Second	Family teachings
Third	Things you like
Fourth	Personal experiences (this aspect shares the same position with Things you like).
Fifth	Abilities/Capabilities (this aspect shares the same position with Personal Experiences).
Sixth	Learning from others
Seventh	Language (mother tongue and any other they speak).
Eighth	Physical appearance

In this case, students recognize the importance of the family and the values and flaws they construct through their own development as key elements for the construction of the own identity. In contrast, language is not perceived as one of the main elements of the identity, together with the physical appearance.

Students' answers to this question lead us to think of the family as a key factor in the construction of identity. Family becomes the source of certain values or behaviors, which are transmitted to its members, helping the construction of the identity. The appropriation of these values and behaviors requires a learning process to which students as individuals are active parts in transforming and adopting these influences. Therefore, this question supports the fact that the family is still a strong influence in the students' learning, as also supported by question 5, which intended to understand what the strongest influences in the academic life of students are. They were given five (5) different options and participants arranged them in their own perceived order of importance. The final position for each was defined according to the highest quantity of answers for each aspect in each position, as follows:

Place:	Aspect:
First	Self interest / Opinions
Second	Family
Third	Friends

Fourth	School (This aspect shares the third place with "Friends")
Fifth	Social conventions / Community

In their narratives, students recognize that their parents' opinions influence their choices but in the end, are themselves who make the decisions they consider appropriate for their academic purposes. In this sense, students were asked to answer to what degree learning English becomes important for them in their life projects. 32 students out of 34 altogether answered that learning English is highly important in their life projects, which is complemented by their opinions in the interviews.

According to the data obtained through the research project (questionnaires and interviews), the family has a relevant influence in their children's decision-making processes, in various forms. This influence can be evidenced through the different opinions students give towards their parents' perceptions on learning a second language and how this has shaped their decisions. For instance, one of the students claims:

"My parents have always influenced me in a very strong way, and thanks to that, I started to like the language (English). They registered me for English classes since I was really young and I will always be grateful about it, because this helped me love the language and be really good at it. "

As noted here, the student acknowledges the fact that her parents have helped her with her English studies, in the form of academic and financial support to start taking classes. When the same student was asked if she could remember any particular moment in which she decided to study English and her parents supported her, she tells:

"Since I was a kid I liked singing in English really much, but most of the times I did not know what the songs meant, so my parents proposed me to start taking

classes and in that moment I was eager to do it because I was interested in understanding all songs."

The student here could recall a particular experience that shows one of the motivations she had to learn English. At the beginning, she wanted to understand the songs she used to sing in English, and the support of her parents became important as she could access to English classes with their financial aid and emotional encouragement. Later the student developed some sort of passion for the language learning, and she still recognizes that this passion -or love, as she calls it- comes from her parents' encouragement and support to learn English.

A second student expresses:

"My mom has always told me that English is the key to the world, so she always tells me that I have to speak English… so I ended up loving it. I speak English, not perfectly but I am on my way. My family has always been there in the academic field, they tell me that a good education is ideal."

In this case, the student recognizes directly that her mother's opinion towards learning English has been essential for her learning process and the motivation she has to learn the language. She acknowledges that her family has supported all her academic life and that her family's opinions about education have shaped her understanding of learning as an important element in her life. If we resort to this particular student's parents' perception towards learning English as a second language, they express that:

"A second language opens up borders, allows them to explore and learn from other cultures, improves job opportunities and enhances personal projects."

This perception is really close to their daughter's understanding of her parents' opinion towards learning English as a second language. Parents concede that learning a second language would allow their kids to interact with the world, learning from other cultures and increasing job opportunities and personal projects, which goes in the same line of understanding education as ideal for the development of the individual, and as a differentiating factor in the individual's education.

Similarly, 100% of parents express that personal experiences (such as traveling abroad, for instance) or people they know who have profited from learning English as a second language in their professional endeavors, have shaped their understanding of English as important for the professional development. Therefore they insist and encourage their children in various forms (both emotionally and financially) to pursue English education, and 92% of them include English as a primary aspect in their children's education. As these two parents express:

Parent 1:

"I see it (learning English) as a compelling need in their professional life and for

their professional development."

Parent 2:

"This (learning English) is important because they learn much more and will be in

the same level of other professionals, to compete in the job market with anyone."

As we can see, parents see English as one competitive factor in the professional development of any individual, and this is the strongest reason why they consider learning English important for their children. This belief is supported in two ways: From all parents participating in the research project, 64% of them have had the opportunity to study English and a high number of them (64%) express that learning English has resulted in meaningful

opportunities in their jobs. From those parents who have not had the opportunity to learn English, 89% of them think that learning the language would have resulted in better opportunities in the job market for them. These assertions also support the common belief or desire of parents of having their children access better opportunities than they had in their lives, both in their professional and personal enterprises.

These conceptions have been passed to students through family, which constitutes the influence of parents in the students' decision-making process of learning a second language. Students grow up believing that they will have more opportunities in their professional lives if they learn English, which is pretty close to their parents' conceptions about learning a second language. For instance, this student expresses:

> "My parents have always told me that I have to learn a second language because it is really important; they have told me that it opens up many opportunities for working and for life, and I have also liked English a lot, I think it is an awesome language that actually helps you to connect to the world. Since I was a kid, my parents have told me to learn English, because I have family living abroad (…) I think is really important to learn English and I am sure that if I know English I will have more job opportunities and live a life wherever I want."

This student's opinion is composed of two elements: a component of inner motivation as the student expresses that she likes English, combined with the influence of her family, evidenced in the facts that she thinks she will have more job opportunities, even if she does not have experience in the job market, and the idea of living a life wherever she wants, as she sees it in her own family with her relatives who live abroad.

Students' opinions are also shaped through unconscious (or unintended) influences. This means that the members of the family do not pretend to force or highlight the value of learning English, it comes from the experiences they live that transcend into the students' conceptions and see their families as examples of why learning English, as this student mentions:

"I realized I had to learn English because I have bilingual cousins and it seems very important to me how they develop and all the opportunities they have in all aspects thanks to this."

Another student says:

"Actually I have always had the influence of English (…) for example, since I was young my brother showed me some music in English and I started to like it (…) Also because my father did not study in the university and he has always wanted to travel and visit new places (…) And my other brother has also influenced me because he has a technology supplies company and he constantly travels to China and US, and he says it is very important for him to commercialize its products."

These opinions reinforce the fact that parents can influence both from their words of encouragement and direct opinions towards learning a second language as well as their own actions and examples to which students are exposed in their daily interactions and that come to shape their own perceptions on what they want to learn or who they want to be in the future.

What is the type of influence of parents in students' language learning? The concept of Personal Development.

As noted in this research process, students acknowledge that their families do have an influence in their decisions towards learning. According to the students' perceptions, the role of

the family is given a high place in the strongest influences they identify in their academic lives. They find that their own interests and opinions about what they want to learn, together with their families' are the most influential elements in their decision-making process of learning. Still, students consider that the influence of their family is not coercive:

"My family thinks it is something almost essential and they encourage me to do it,

but they do not push me."

Students understand what their families think towards learning a second language, and they even share their opinions, but they do not feel forced to do what their parents say they should. In the questionnaire, one of the questions was addressed to know the extent of the influence of the family in their decisions. Most of the students acknowledged there is an influence, but in the end are students who have the power to decide what to learn and how to do it. However, they still recognize that their identities are mostly composed of their values (which at some point are learnt from family), what their families teach them and the things they like. Again, family plays a significant role on students' identities and learning process.

In the students' personal narratives there is no evidence of any coercive form in which parents make students learn English. All students expressed the influence and the support of their families in two basic forms: Financial aid, reflected in their parents' commitment to pay for their language courses and all the necessary items for such an enterprise, and words of encouragement, to keep them interested in learning a second language by showing them why it is important to learn it, through their own opinions and personal experiences. In this form, students recognize the influence of their families as a positive trigger that leads them to the desire of learning a second language for their personal and professional development.

Similarly, this argument is supported by the analysis of the personal narrative of the researcher. How the researcher perceived the influence of her family in her decision-making process of learning a second language tells about the consistency of the influence of the family in the form of support and encouragement through various means (affective, financial, social, etc.). The researcher also refers to the notion that learning the language served professional purposes in the future for her and other members of the family, which is related to the concept of professional development as one of the motives to learn a second language.

As previously mentioned, the concept of personal and professional development is a common point in both parents' and students' perceptions about learning a second language. 97% of students definitely believe that learning a second language will represent more opportunities and success in their professional life and 100% of parents have the same conception, both mentioning professional development as one of the main motives for learning a second language.

Then, when students were asked about the importance their parents give to learning a second language, the concept of personal development constantly appears as part of their discourse to emphasize the importance their parents give to learning other languages. Therefore it is essential to determine the extent and the implications of this concept for students through their own definitions of personal development.

One of the students defined personal development as:

"The evolution of every human being as a person and in his/her emotional and professional aspects. English is important in this development (or evolution) because it helps to find our identity, to break barriers and define who we are along learning through the attitudes and abilities the human being acquires while evolving."

This definition carries the concept of identity, and how English (and learning any other language) is understood as a part of the development of a self-identity. For this student, language becomes crucial in her own definition of herself. Similarly, personal development refers to the fact that it is integrated by emotional, academic and professional elements that constitute the evolution of a human being, thus we can include learning languages as one of these academic and professional elements that lead to the development of a human being.

The second student defines personal development as:

"Additional activities to school that can contribute to your self-formation as a professional or as a person. Some of these things I have done for my professional development include learning other languages like English and Portuguese, playing a musical instrument, learning about history and agriculture. These activities come from your personal interests and are not imposed by others."

Personal development in this case is understood as a process that entitles not only the academic formation (school) but also other activities the individual may consider complementary to his/her own formation (learning other languages and other areas of knowledge). This student also sees these activities as coming from the own interests of the individual, which certainly talks about the inner motivation required to undertake a project as such.

The third student conceives personal development as:

"The activities in life that can help you to grow as an individual and also in the social interactions, to achieve objectives in life. Personal development is the activities you do to be a better person every day."

At this point, one may notice a pattern in their answers: personal development is understood as a process that makes the individual take some steps to improve performance in the

personal and professional environments. Some other students refer to personal development as the ways in which the individual learns from experiences and applies them in his/her personal life. In this case, the students talk about learning a second language as an experience that will help the individual to sort any life situation that requires the use of a second language, in this case English, as these two students express:

Student 1:

"Personal development is the way in which the individual can take all experiences lived along his/her life to solve a problematic situation. For example, learning a second language can help professional development because we can face any situation or obstacle of communication with other people we interact with in our lives."

Student 2:

"Personal development is how an individual learns through experiences or life. I think that personal development helps you learn how to overcome obstacles in life. "

After analyzing their own conceptions of personal development, this can be a definition that summarizes their own ideas about the concept:

Personal development is the process one individual carries to improve the self, to construct personal growth and advancement through life. It is composed by professional and affective aspects, as well as the individual's abilities, skills and experiences (For instance, learning a language or developing problem solving skills). Personal development is motivated by the desire of being a better person in all the aspects previously mentioned and contributes to the construction of the self and the own identity.

Chapter 6

Discussion

This study provides a better understanding of the different influences students receive and appropriate when making decisions towards learning. Part of students' understanding about what impulses them to study any discipline, or in this case learning a second language is their inner motivation, created by their will to learn. However, after a deeper dialogue with students, one may notice that their families' conceptions about learning a second language become something crucial which does not make them be compelled to take any decision but still makes students take into consideration their families' perceptions as part of their decision-making process to learn a language. This implies that, what families tell their daughters becomes something students will consider when deciding about their life projects, and here lies the essence of this research project: Finding the dimension and extent of the power of families' conceptions gives us a better insight on how the construction of knowledge and identity takes place from the first stages of socialization to the latter, and how the family in this context still maintains its dominant role in the individual's self constructions.

In this sense, assuming that families' perceptions and understandings towards learning a second language are influential in the learners' decision-making processes of learning a language is key to assert that:

Family becomes a source of construction of identity and knowledge

1. The influence of the family is not only devoted to the first stage of socialization of the individual (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The family is not only entitled the role of the first socialization group; it also comprises the role of a source of support, encouragement and example of life in the later stages of socialization of the individual.

In the context of the study, families' perceptions, opinions and conceptions towards learning a second language may play a significant role in the learners' constructions of knowledge and identity, in the form of parental involvement and support through affective or material means. When a learner decides to learn a second language, and the family is involved in the process as a support, the learner may feel a stronger motivation to learn the language based on the own motives and their families' perceptions and experiences. Similarly, when a learner decides to learn a second language, this automatically becomes part of his/her identity and acquis of knowledge.

2. Families become a source of experiences, opinions and perceptions that may shape either positively or negatively the learners' attitudes towards learning a second language. This is a strong reason to believe that parental involvement (family involvement) (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Tam, 2009) is essential in all the stages of development of the individual, leaving aside the idea of parental involvement as being relevant only in the first stage of socialization of the learner.

3. The idea that students are in the end the ones in charge of making their own decisions towards learning a second language, deals with the notion that students' learning and teaching processes are effectively moving around a learner-centered approach. Learners are the main agents in charge of their own constructions of knowledge and identity with the support or guidance of tutors who may be their parents or any other individuals (Piaget, 1964; Vygotsky, 1978).

Family impacts the learning process and the importance of the language for learners

The influence of the family in second language learning, as it appeared in this study, has been evidenced as the form of encouragement and support both emotionally and financially.

Students evidenced that their families' opinions towards learning a second language are part of what they consider important when learning a second language: both parents and students share perceptions about learning a second language for the personal and professional development. Students also recognize that their families have shaped their understanding of learning a second language to travel, to meet new cultures and interact with others, and that language becomes a key tool for their success in the job market.

Therefore, their families consciously and unconsciously have become their examples of life and their counselors or advisors on what to do, what to learn and why to do it. However, students feel they have the power to decide at the end what is best for them, pondering all they already know, what they have heard from their surroundings and what they appropriate as best for their own plans and purposes, in conjunction with who they are as individuals. As an example to support the latter, both groups of students, with high or low records of academic performance agree in the fact that learning a second language is essential for the personal and professional development, which shows that in the end, is the students who decide about their learning processes. In this manner, the influence of the family becomes also a part of their identity as they have grown up surrounded by their family traits and their opinions and conceptions towards different situations in life. Students then appropriate some of these conceptions and they become part of their discourse and their decision-making processes through life.

Similarly, their families' conceptions and support towards learning shape their learning process in the sense that, what their families think about learning a second language may direct their efforts towards the attainment of this goal. If a family considers that its members should learn a language for personal and professional purposes, all efforts, thoughts and conceptions will be directed to the success in the learning process, considering each individual's needs,

abilities and motives. These efforts include the emotional support through words of encouragement, motivation and family involvement in the learning process, and even unconscious motivation through life experiences from the family and others, and the financial support, expressed in the efforts families make for their members to have access to education, which may vary significantly according to the possibilities of each family group.

In this form, the role of the family is not only devoted to the first stage of socialization of the individual: Families still exert influence in their members in both their identities and learning processes through their lives. This influence may vary through time and its extent depends on the individual and the matter of influence, as well as the type of family configuration in terms of beliefs, conceptions and perceptions.

The analysis of the influence of family in second language learning is a complex yet enlightening process. It becomes complex as the reality of each family is significantly different according to the context of study, and even from family to family. In this study, most families make part of a medium-class high school, which means their children have access to quality education and have had certain types of experiences that allow them to perceive language learning meaningful for their life projects. Similarly, most of the families in this context have the resources to, for example, financially support their children in any endeavor they intend to pursue. This fact becomes important to be taken into consideration as it may constitute one of the forms in which families support and influence their members' decision-making processes towards learning.

However, the financial support is not a key factor to determine if an individual will pursue or not education. Even if financial resources are one of the components for individuals to pursue education, they are not decisive when the individual has the motivation and affective

support necessary to undertake any learning enterprise. To cite an example, one of the most prominent minds in Colombia who later became the President of the Republic in the early twentieth century was Marco Fidel Suárez (1855 – 1927), a young boy who did not have the financial resources to study but his desire to learn drove him to pursue education at every cost and become a well-known writer and politician in the country.

Along these lines, we can consider there might be a potential role of the family in the individual's learning process. As it has been studied before, parental involvement is a key factor in enhancing the learner's performance and the levels of confidence and positive attitudes towards learning (Tam, 2009). Now, the perspective of the family involvement, in both conscious and unconscious ways in the individual's decision-making process towards learning a second language, may result in individuals who are more conscious and confident of their decisions with the support of their families and the knowledge of the potential outcomes of studying a second language, based on what they already know and what their families may provide them as examples from experiences. It is important to consider that one key fact of this research project is that parents' perceptions towards learning a second language does not affect the academic performance: both groups of students and their parents, with high and low academic records still agree on the fact that learning a second language is essential for their personal and professional development.

It might also be interesting to analyze in which ways families may help with their children's constructions of knowledge and identity to build better decision-making processes of learning second languages that result in higher intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci, E & Ryan, R., 1985) from students to learn, similar to the parental involvement as a trigger of positive attitudes towards learning (Tam, 2009).

Furthermore, it could also be insightful to replicate the model of this research in different contexts to understand other possible factors that influence families' opinions and perspectives towards learning a second language or any other subject of knowledge. As stated in the conceptual framework, family configurations are various and therefore their way of acting and reacting towards life may vary considerably, which may also result in very different approximations to life, identity and learning and different ways of influencing the individual.

Finally, this study may also help further research about family involvement in the learning of English in the Colombian context, as the field still requires a lot more insight on the socio-affective influences of the family in the learner. An example of this is the recently published document "Basic Learning Rights" for English by the Ministry of Education (2016), which includes basic aspects on what the learners have the right to learn but ignores the essential, participating role of the family in the learning process. The family is only devoted the role of a guardian of the learning process in the light of the rights proposed by the document, disregarding the fact that the family should be recognized as one of the strongest supports of the learner in all stages in learning.

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Appendix A

Graphs for questionnaires' results – This Appendix includes all the data obtained in questionnaires for both parents and students arranged in graphs for its analysis.

Parents:

|	
Question 1 50 28 3 1 2 0 1 2 3 4 **Question 1: Learning a second language is a differentiator?**	**Question 2** 24% ■ Yes ■ No 76% **Question 2: Have you had the opportunity to travel abroad?**
Question 3 40 23 20 3 0 0 0 High Medium Low None **Question 3: Parents who traveled abroad and the importance of English in foreign contexts**	**Question 4** 4% ■ Yes ■ No 96% **Question 4: Traveling abroad and the influence of this in having children learn a second language**
Question 5 8 10 0 0 0 a b c **Question 5: Parents who have not traveled and their perception on the importance of learning English**	**Question 6** 0% ■ Yes ■ No 100% **Question 6: Is English a key factor in the learner's professional development?**
Question 7 0% ■ Yes 100% ■ No **Question 7: Other family experiences about English and its relevance for professional development**	**Question 8** 40 32 20 1 1 0 Yes No NA **Question 8: English as a primary aspect in learners' academic projects**

Question 9: parents' perception and its influence in learners' decisions
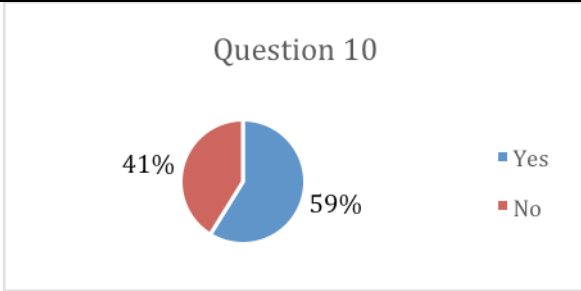
Question 10: Percentage of parents who know a second language
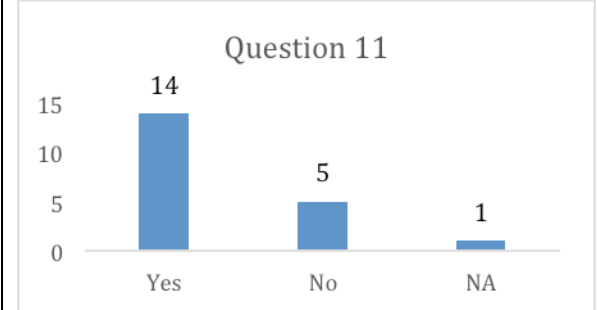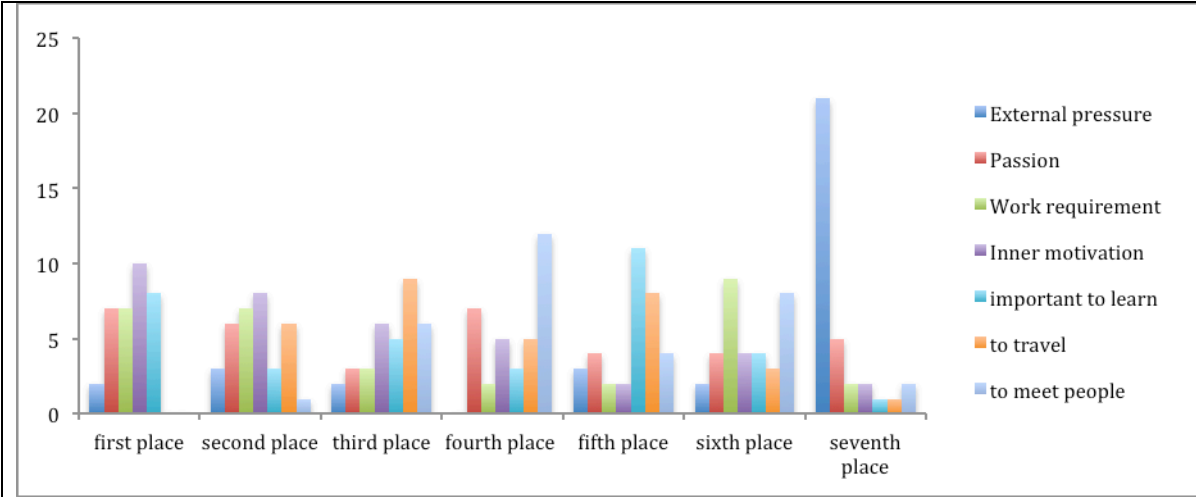

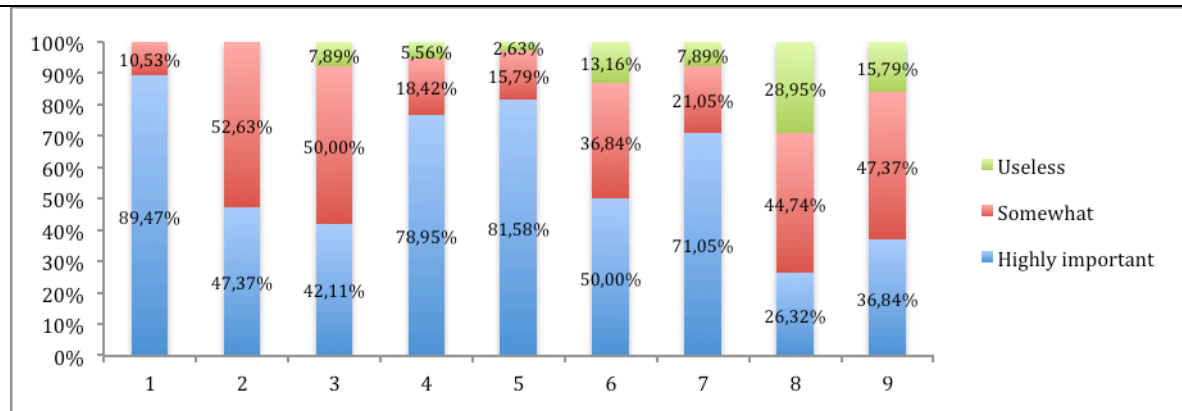**Question 11: Parents who know English and believe is important in the work life**
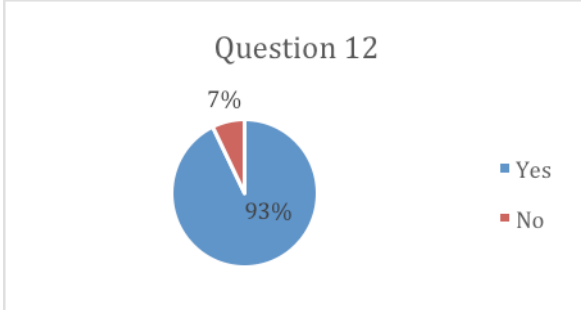
Question 12: Percentage of parents who have not learnt English and consider it would have been important for their professional lives

Students:

**Question 1: Reasons why students decide to learn a second language**

| 1. To interact with other people (students, teachers, foreigners) and have encounters with second language speakers outside the classroom.	Highly Important (89,47%)
2. To constantly check on my progress in my learning process and ask for help to improve.	Highly Important (47,37%) Somewhat important (52,63%)
3. To have the support of my family, friends, teachers to learn.	Highly Important (42,11%) Somewhat Important (50%) Useless (7,89%)
4. To have dedication.	Highly Important (78,95%) Somewhat important (18,42%) Useless (5,56%)
5. To be interested / to have inner motivation.	Highly Important (81,58%) Somewhat important (15,79%) Useless (2,63%)
6. To have abilities for learning languages.	Highly Important (50%) Somewhat important (36,84%) Useless (13,16%)
7. To have the necessity of learning for professional purposes or life projects.	Highly Important (71,05%) Somewhat important (21,05%) Useless (7,89%)
8. To participate in extracurricular courses.	Highly Important (26,32%) Somewhat important (44,74%) Useless (28,95%)
9. To be responsible with school duties.	Highly important (36,84%) Somewhat important (47,37%) Useless (15,79%)

Question 2: Importance of actions to promote language learning according to learners
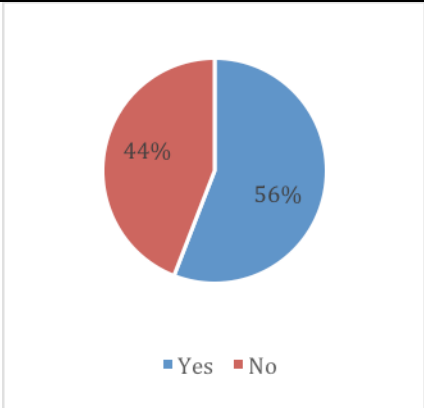
Question 3: Learning English as part of the identity
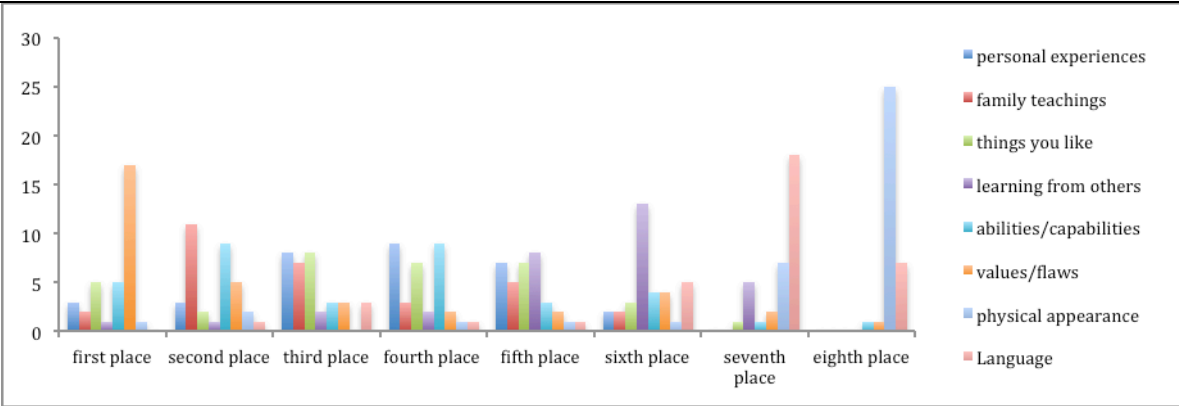
Question 4: What elements make part of identity?
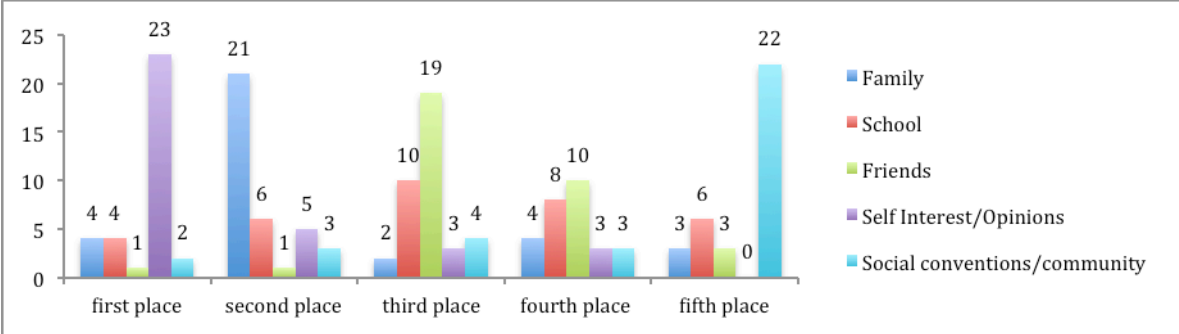
Question 5: What are the strongest influences in the learners' academic lives?
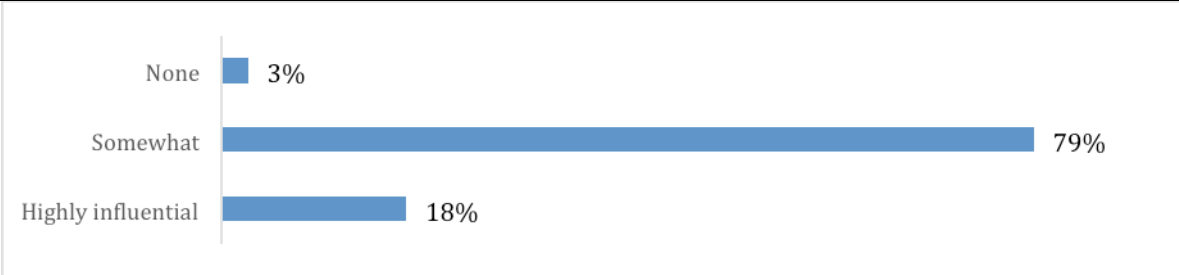
Question 6: Extent of influence of family in learners' decisions towards learning
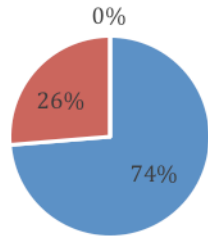
0%

26%

74%

- A. Perceives learning a second language very important for your professional development.
- B. Gives learning a second language the same importance as any other subjects for your professional life.
- C. Do not give an importance to learning a second language.

Question 7: Parents' perception about life projects according to learners

None 0%

Somewhat 6%

Highly important 94%

Question 8: to what degree learning English is important for them in their life projects?

Not important 0%

More or less 3%

Strongly believe 97%

Question 9: Does learning English represent more opportunities in the professional life?

Appendix B

Questionnaire for parents – This questionnaire was applied to all parents participating in the research project (34 altogether). The questionnaire was originally applied in Spanish as it is their mother tongue.
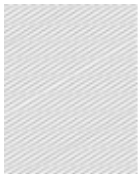
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ESCUELA DE EDUCACIÓN Y PEDAGOGÍA

MAESTRÍA EN PROCESOS DE APRENDIZAJE Y ENSEÑANZA DE SEGUNDAS LENGUAS

ENCUESTA PARA INVESTIGACIÓN TESIS DE MAESTRÍA: LA INFLUENCIA DEL ENTORNO
FAMILIAR EN EL APRENDIZAJE DE SEGUNDAS LENGUAS

INVESTIGADORA: ANA MARÍA SERNA SÁNCHEZ
Candidata a Magíster en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas
Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Sede Central Medellín

Estimado Padre de Familia,

Esta encuesta hace parte de mi proyecto de investigación para mi trabajo de grado: "La Influencia del Entorno Familiar en el Aprendizaje de Segundas Lenguas". Por favor lea cuidadosamente cada pregunta y responda de acuerdo con su opinión. De antemano muchas gracias por su participación.

1. De estos mensajes, ¿cuál es el que usted considera más ajustado a su opinión respecto al aprendizaje de segundas lenguas? Seleccione una de las siguientes opciones:

a. Es tan importante como cualquier otra materia aprendida durante la vida escolar.
b. Es algo secundario y/o complementario a la formación del estudiante.
c. Es un elemento diferenciador para la vida profesional del estudiante, indispensable en el campo laboral.

2. ¿Ha tenido la oportunidad de viajar a otros países donde se hablen otras lenguas distintas al español?

_____ Si   _____ No

3. Si su respuesta a la pregunta número 2 fue SI, ¿Cómo ha percibido la necesidad del aprendizaje y uso de una segunda lengua? Seleccione una de las siguientes opciones:

_____ Alta   _____ Media   _____ Baja   _____ Ninguna

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Página 1
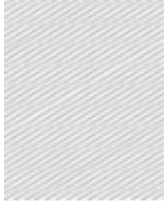
4. Si su respuesta a la pregunta número 2 fue SI, ¿Esto ha influenciado su decisión de que los miembros de su familia tengan acceso al aprendizaje de segundas lenguas?

_____ Si   _____ No

5. Si aún no ha tenido la oportunidad de viajar a otros países de habla distinta al español, considera usted que el idioma inglés: Seleccione una de las siguientes opciones:

_____ Sería una herramienta de gran ayuda.

_____ Sería un valor agregado a la experiencia, sin mucha influencia en su viaje.

_____ No representaría ninguna diferencia en su experiencia de viaje.

6. ¿Considera usted que el inglés para sus hijos es determinante para su desarrollo profesional?

_____ Si   _____ No

¿De qué manera?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

7. ¿Conoce usted experiencias (familiares, amigos, personas conocidas) para los que el aprendizaje y uso de una segunda lengua ha sido clave en su desarrollo profesional?

_____ Si   _____ No

8. ¿Dentro de los proyectos académicos de vida de sus hijos (colegio/universidad), incluye usted el aprendizaje de segundas lenguas como un aspecto primario?

_____ Si   _____ No

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9. ¿Cree usted que su propia percepción respecto al aprendizaje de segundas lenguas ha influenciado las decisiones de sus hijos respecto al aprendizaje de las mismas?

_____ Si   _____ No

10. ¿Ha tenido usted oportunidad de aprender una segunda lengua?

_____ Si   _____ No

11. Si su respuesta a la pregunta número 10 es SI, ¿Considera usted que su aprendizaje de una segunda lengua ha tenido una importancia significativa en su vida laboral?

_____ Si   _____ No

12. Si su respuesta a la pregunta número 10 es NO, ¿Considera usted que el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua hubiera sido importante/determinante en su desarrollo profesional?

_____ Si   _____ No

13. En máximo 30 palabras, por favor escriba su opinión sobre la importancia del aprendizaje de sus hijos del idioma inglés:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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Appendix C

Questionnaire for students – This section includes the questionnaire applied to all thirty-four (34) students participating in the research project. It was applied in English and clarifications about it were made when needed, especially in terms of vocabulary.
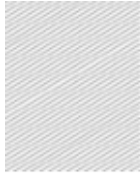
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MAESTRÍA EN PROCESOS DE APRENDIZAJE Y ENSEÑANZA DE SEGUNDAS LENGUAS

ENCUESTA PARA INVESTIGACIÓN TESIS DE MAESTRÍA: LA INFLUENCIA DEL ENTORNO FAMILIAR EN EL APRENDIZAJE DE SEGUNDAS LENGUAS

INVESTIGADORA: ANA MARÍA SERNA SÁNCHEZ
Candidata a Magíster en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas
Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Sede Central Medellín

Dear Student,

This survey makes part of my research for my Master's thesis project called "The influence of the family in Second Language Learning". Please read carefully each question and answer according to your own opinion. Thank you in advance for your participation.

1. What are the reasons why you decide to learn a second language? Place them from 1 to 7 in order of importance (being 1 the most important and 7 the least important).

_____ External pressure / Obligation

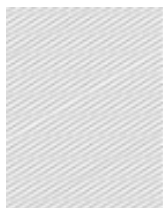_____ Passion / Pleasure

_____ Work requirement

_____ Inner motivation

_____ It is important to learn everything in life

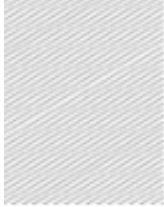_____ To travel around the world

_____ To meet new people and cultures (both in your own city or different places)

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2. When you learn a second language, do you think it is important to: Choose the best option according to your personal opinion:

	Highly important	Somewhat important	Useless
1. To interact with other people (students, teachers, foreigners) and have encounters with second language speakers outside the classroom.			
2. To constantly check on my progress in my learning process and ask for help to improve.			
3. To have the support of my family, friends, teachers to learn.			
4. To have dedication.			
5. To be interested / to have inner motivation.			
6. To have abilities for learning languages.			
7. To have the necessity of learning for professional purposes or life projects.			
8. To participate in extracurricular courses .			
9. To be responsible with school duties.			

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3. Do you think that learning a second language makes part of who you are as a person?

_____ Yes   _____ No

4. What things make part of your identity? Place them from 1 to 8 in order of importance (being 1 the most important and 7 the least important).
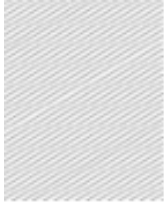
_____ Personal experiences you learn from

_____ What your family teaches you

_____ The things you like / your interests

_____ What you learn from others

_____ Your abilities and capabilities

_____ Your values / flaws

_____ Physical appearance

_____ Language (Mother tongue and any other language you use)

5. Which of these aspects influence the decisions you make academically speaking? Place them from 1 to 5 in order of importance (being 1 the most important and 5 the least important).

_____ Family

_____ School

_____ Friends

_____ Self interests/opinions

_____ Social conventions/community

6. To what extent has your family influenced the decisions you make in your academic life? Choose one of the following options:

_____ Highly influential
_____ Somewhat influential
_____ My family has no influence in any of my academic decisions

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de segundas lenguas

7. When talking with your family about your life projects, do you notice that your family: Choose one of the following options:

a. Perceives learning a second language very important for your professional development.
b. Gives learning a second language the same importance as any other subjects for your professional life.
c. Do not give any importance to learning a second language.

8. In the process of making a decision about your life projects (what to study in the university, for instance), what is the importance you give to learning a second language? Choose one of the following options:

_____ highly important

_____ somewhat important

_____ it is not important

9. Do you think that learning a second language will represent more opportunities and success in your professional life? Choose one of the following options:

_____ I strongly believe this

_____ More or less

_____ It will not represent any opportunities or success

10. Please write a statement (Max. 30 words) that best describes your family's opinion towards learning English:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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Appendix D

Consent forms – In this section you may find the consent forms used in the research project (school headmaster and parents).

School headmaster:
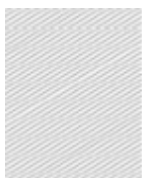
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MAESTRÍA EN PROCESOS DE APRENDIZAJE Y ENSEÑANZA DE SEGUNDAS LENGUAS

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPACIÓN EN INVESTIGACIÓN PARA TESIS DE MAESTRÍA

Hermana Marta Cardona Narváez
Rectora
Colegio Palermo de San José Medellín
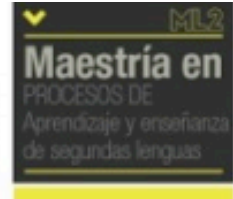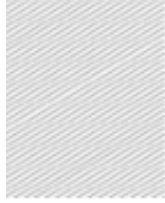
Estimada Rectora,

Cordial saludo.

Yo, **Ana María Serna Sánchez**, soy estudiante de la Maestría en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas de la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Uno de los requerimientos para aspirar al título de magíster es el desarrollo de un proyecto de investigación como parte de mi trabajo de grado (tesis). Para dicho trabajo, he propuesto la investigación "La influencia del entorno familiar en el aprendizaje de Segundas Lenguas", cuyo objetivo es entender cuáles son los factores preponderantes del entorno familiar que inciden en la decisión de aprender una segunda lengua. Este trabajo de investigación está dirigido por la Dra. Polina Golovátina-Mora, Profesora Asociada de la Escuela de Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana.

Como parte de la investigación se hará la recolección de datos, que consiste en:
1. Narrativas personales: Textos en los que las estudiantes responden a determinadas preguntas basadas en sus propias experiencias.
2. Cuestionarios de opinión a las estudiantes y padres de familia.
3. Entrevistas a padres de familia.

Dicha recolección de datos se llevará a cabo durante el mes de mayo y junio del presente año, con las estudiantes de los grados décimo y undécimo.

Esperamos que los resultados de este estudio nos ayuden a conocer las opiniones de los padres de familia y las de sus hijas respecto a las influencias del entorno familiar en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua. Los resultados de este proyecto de investigación se emplearán en principio para la escritura del trabajo de grado (tesis). Sin embargo, los datos que se recojan en el trabajo de campo también se podrían utilizar en futuras ponencias y publicaciones académicas. En todos los casos, se hará uso de pseudónimos. En el caso de la institución, solo si usted como líder de su institución lo permite, se hará referencia al nombre de la misma en el trabajo investigativo a realizar.

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Esta carta, entonces, tiene por objeto solicitar su autorización para que yo, en el marco de este proyecto de investigación, pueda llevar a cabo mi trabajo de campo para desarrollar mi investigación. A los padres de familia que vayan a apoyar esta tarea se les entregara una forma de consentimiento similar. En el caso de los estudiantes, se les enviará copia del consentimiento a sus padres o acudientes.

Los padres de familia y estudiantes que participen en esta tarea lo harán en completa libertad y se espera que no haya ninguna coerción para su colaboración. Ellos estarán en completa libertad de no participar, sin que ello pueda constituir motivo de represalias en la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Ellos estarán en derecho de ver el producto final y, de no estar de acuerdo con algo en el mismo, se harán los cambios del caso.

De antemano agradezco su colaboración en el desarrollo de esta investigación, la cual me ayudará en mi formación como investigadora. En caso de cualquier inquietud con respecto a este proyecto de investigación, puede contactar directamente a la Profesora Dra. Polina Golovátina-Mora en su correo polina.golovatina@upb.edu.co. También puede contactar al Coordinador Académico del programa, Dr. Raúl Alberto Mora Vélez, en el correo maestria.ml2@upb.edu.co.
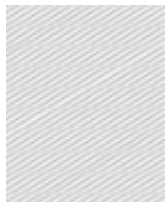

Atentamente,

Ana María Serna Sánchez
Candidata a Magíster en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas
Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Sede Central Medellín

He leído la información en esta carta y estoy de acuerdo con la participación de las estudiantes de esta institución en esta investigación.

Nombre, Cargo y Firma

Fecha

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Parents:

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CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPACIÓN EN INVESTIGACIÓN TESIS DE MAESTRÍA

Estimados Padres de Familia,

Cordial saludo.

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2. Cuestionarios de opinión a las estudiantes y padres de familia.
3. Entrevistas a padres de familia.

Dicha recolección de datos se llevará a cabo durante el mes de mayo y junio del presente año, con las estudiantes de los grados décimo y undécimo.

Esperamos que los resultados de este estudio nos ayuden a conocer sus opiniones y las de sus hijas respecto a las influencias del entorno familiar en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua. Los resultados de este proyecto de investigación se emplearán en principio para la escritura del trabajo de grado (tesis). Sin embargo, los datos que se recojan en el trabajo de campo también se podrían utilizar en futuras ponencias y publicaciones académicas. En todos los casos, se hará uso de pseudónimos, a no ser que usted autorice lo contrario.

Esta carta, entonces, tiene por objeto solicitar su autorización para que yo, en el marco de este proyecto de investigación, pueda contactar a su hija y pueda realizar este estudio de carácter exploratorio, que pretende identificar las principales influencias que el entorno socioafectivo (especialmente el entorno familiar) tiene sobre la decisión de las estudiantes de aprender una segunda lengua, en este caso el idioma inglés.

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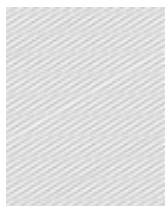
Usted está en completa libertad de aceptar la participación de su hija, sin ninguna forma de coerción para su colaboración y sin ninguna posibilidad de represalias en su institución educativa o en la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana en caso de no aceptar. Usted tiene derecho a ver los resultados de las encuestas de opinión y los hallazgos de la investigación, y, de no estar de acuerdo con algo en el mismo, se harán los cambios del caso.

De antemano agradezco su colaboración en el desarrollo de esta investigación, la cual me ayudará en mi formación como investigadora. En caso de cualquier inquietud con respecto a este proyecto de investigación, puede contactar directamente a la Profesora Dra. Polina Golovátina-Mora en su correo polina.golovatina@upb.edu.co. También puede contactar al Coordinador Académico del programa, Dr. Raúl Alberto Mora Vélez, en el correo maestria.ml2@upb.edu.co.

Atentamente,

Ana María Serna Sánchez
Candidata a Magíster en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas
Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Sede Central Medellín

_____

He leído la información en esta carta y estoy de acuerdo con la participación de mi hija en esta investigación.

_____

Nombre, Cargo y Firma

_____

Fecha

_____

He leído la información en esta carta y estoy de acuerdo en que mi hija aparezca en materiales de audio para el propósito de esta investigación.

_____

Nombre, Cargo y Firma

_____

Fecha

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Reseña Biográfica del Autor

Ana María Serna Sánchez received her degree in International Business with an Emphasis on International Relations from Universidad EAFIT, Colombia in 2012. Since 2011 she has worked as a language teacher in prestigious institutions of Medellín, and she is currently a teacher in Dirección de Idiomas in Universidad EAFIT, in the English Program for Children and Adolescents and Sislenguas. Currently she is a candidate for the Master of Arts in Learning and Teaching Processes in Second Languages (ML2) at Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. She has also presented this work (preliminary findings) in the 50th Annual Conference of ASOCOPI (Asociación Colombiana de Profesores de Inglés- Colombian Association of English Teachers) that took place in October, 2015.