

MA IN APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES (Course Work)

MINI-DISSERTATION

TITLE:

Motivation, Attitude, and English Language Proficiency in the Monash South Africa Foundation Programme.

Name: Maria Mushaathoni

Student Number: 29618772

e-mail address: maria.mushaathoni@monash.edu

Name of supervisor: Dr Nerina Bosman

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The English language fulfils a very important role in South Africa. The South African constitution stipulates that each of the eleven official languages shall enjoy parity of esteem and shall be treated equitably. However, the reality in South Africa is that English is the preferred language in most formal contexts, such as professional environments and the commercial sector. Therefore the other official languages fulfil a subsidiary role in these contexts.

The expectation in South Africa is that the education system should fulfil an important role in producing learners who have high levels of English language proficiency and who can therefore function successfully at school level and at tertiary institutions. One outcome of this expectation is that English is used as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) in the majority of schools and tertiary institutions in South Africa. In order for learners to succeed academically, they should be proficient in English. However, at present a high level of English language proficiency does not necessarily prevail in South Africa. Many students who enrol at tertiary institutions do not have the requisite English language proficiency. The higher education institutions consider remedial courses to be the solution to the language problem. The general agreement is that students should be afforded better tuition in English and should have access to academic literacy development or support programmes.

There are also other factors that should achieve attention at tertiary institutions. Researchers have largely dismissed the assumption that academic achievement depends solely on cognitive abilities and have endorsed the importance of a

combination of intra-psychic, socio-emotional and other non-cognitive variables in the educational process (Berg, 1990:68).

There are two important psychological variables in second language learning, namely motivation and attitude (Gardner & Lambert 1972, Gardner 1985). Motivation and attitude are generally recognised as being two factors that should be considered when accounting for achievement outcomes. Within the field of second language learning and achievement, motivation has long been recognised as an important factor (Norris-Holt 2003, Gardner 1992, Crookes and Schmidt 1991, amongst others). Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:2) state that a highly motivated learner can learn or acquire a second language well even though he/she has limited intellectual ability. In second language learning, as in every other field of human learning, motivation is a crucial force. It largely determines whether a student will embark on a task at all, how much energy he/she will devote to it and how long he/she will persevere.

Previous research, as summarised by Ehrman (1996), indicates that motivation is linked to a student's investment of time, energy and effort (Ehrman, 1996:137). It is linked to the reason why the student is there in the first place and what keeps him or her working. An important element of motivation is that it is responsive to success and failure. If a student succeeds at a task, he or she is usually energised to do it better at the next opportunity. On the other hand, failure may lead to avoidance of the challenge (Ehrman, 1996:141).

According to Louw and Edwards (1997:425), motivation is a precondition for learning. It initiates, sustains and directs thinking and behaviour. It is undisputed that it is one of the factors that contribute to academic achievement.

Motivation is the driving force behind all actions (Cann, 1992:48). Littlewood (1994:87) states that motivation is a complex phenomenon that includes many components, such as an individual's drive; need for achievement and success; curiosity; and desire for

stimulation and new experience. Cann (1992:48) concludes that motivation is of the utmost importance and value in the attainment of English language proficiency.

This research project recognises the importance of motivation and attitude in learning in general and, in this instance, in the learning or acquiring of a high level of skills in English.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Monash South Africa (MSA) is a local campus of Monash University, one of Australia's leading public universities. The University leads the way with pioneering research and teaching programmes. Its undergraduate students are highly sought after the world over. The MSA Foundation Programme was designed as a pathway to Monash South Africa undergraduate degree programmes (Monash South Africa, 2011). The Foundation Programme enables students, whose admission scores do not meet the requirements for direct entry into undergraduate programmes, to bridge the gap between their highest school education qualification and the undergraduate programme of their choice. The programme also prepares students for the pace and depth of undergraduate study as individually streamed curricula prepares students for their chosen undergraduate course (Monash South Africa, 2011).

The English language requirements that are set for entry into higher education are based on the fact that poor English language proficiency appears to be the main reason for the lack of academic success. Academic English is one of the obligatory subjects to be taken by the Foundation Programme students in order to prepare them for undergraduate programme studies. The aim of the course in Academic English in the Foundation Programme is to improve students' proficiency in English to the extent that they can enter the mainstream tertiary programmes with in-depth knowledge of the language.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

There is at present in South Africa a lack of knowledge about the motivation (or lack thereof) and the attitude with which students approach their obligatory extra tuition in English at tertiary institutions. This research project is focused on the motivation and attitude with which students approach the obligatory Academic English course in the Foundation Programme presented by MSA.

The researcher teaches Academic English to the Foundation Programme students at Monash South Africa. Therefore MSA has been selected as the tertiary institution at which to conduct the research. A literature review has revealed that a limited amount of research has been undertaken on the role of motivation and attitudes in the field of academic literacy in general and English language proficiency in particular at tertiary institutions in South Africa. The present study aims to contribute insight in this field.

In a study undertaken by Coetzee-Van Rooy in (2002) as cited by Madileng (2007), Coetzee–Van Rooy reaches the conclusion that the motivation for learning English is a pragmatic one. She investigated the relationship between cultural identity profiles and the English Second Language (ESL) proficiency of Afrikaans and Southern Sotho students at the Vaal Technikon. She found that, in South Africa, English is learnt in order to communicate with and to better understand speakers of other South African languages. English operates as a *lingua franca* in South Africa and this situation provides the mainly pragmatic (that is, instrumental) motivation to master English well enough for academic purposes.

Another South African study is that of Madileng (2007) who investigated the relationship between motivation and English at a Further Education and Training (FET) College. On the basis of the empirical evidence that she considered, Madileng concludes that the development of ESL proficiency could be influenced by a number of motivational variables, some of which were possibly not included in her investigation. Madileng (2007:113) concludes that the development of English Second Language (ESL)

proficiency of the first-year National Intermediate Certificate (NIC) students at the Alberton campus of the Ekurhuleni West College is not necessarily related to:

- Socio-psychological aspects of motivation,
- Student involvement
- Parental involvement, or
- Contextual factors that concern the influence of the school and classroom on the students.

On the basis of the empirical evidence considered by Madileng (2007:114), the following conclusion can be drawn:

- There is no significant correlation between the identified motivational variables and the ESL proficiency of the first-year National Intermediate Certificate (NIC) students.

Clark and Schroth, as cited by Coetzee (2011:55), examined the relationship between personality and academic motivation of 451 first-year college students in Pretoria. They found that those students who are extrinsically motivated tend to be extroverted, agreeable, conscientious and neurotic. Extrinsic motivation can be useful in certain academic situations and it is therefore important that lecturers take note of this type of motivation.

Mnyandu (2001), as cited by Coetzee (2011:65), conducted a study on 120 learners in three primary schools in Soshanguve in South Africa. The study found that intrinsic motivation is not positively related to academic achievement.

In conclusion, the various studies cited by Coetzee appear to reach different conclusions and even contrasting findings regarding the relationship between motivation and academic achievement. The present project aims to contribute to the growing body of research regarding the relationship between motivation, attitude and ELP.

1.4 AIM

The aim of this research project is to investigate the nature of students' motivation (or lack thereof) and their attitude towards the English Language Proficiency (ELP) course in the Foundation Programme at Monash South Africa.

1.5 RESEARCH PROBLEM

This research project aims to investigate the nature of students' motivation and attitude towards ELP in the Academic English course in the Foundation Programme at Monash South Africa. Students who register at Monash South Africa come from all over the world and have diverse language backgrounds. Based on their grade 12 marks, those who are admitted to the Foundation Programme (382 students were admitted in the 2011 academic year) are students who are underprepared for higher education. Therefore students who start at the foundation level are those who fail to obtain direct entry into undergraduate programmes, because they do not fulfil the minimum admission requirements at Monash (English language admission requirements included).

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Hereunder are the questions that this research project aimed to address. The research questionnaire was designed in such a way that the participants' responses would assist the researcher in addressing the research questions that were posed. The research findings address all the research questions listed below.

- How do the students rate their motivation to improve their English language proficiency?
- How can their motivation best be characterised. Is it intrinsic or extrinsic, i.e. instrumental or integrative?
- Do the students consider it to be important to be motivated?

- If so, why?
- What are the students' dominant attitudes towards English?
- What are the students' dominant attitudes towards the status and importance of English in South Africa?
- What are the students' dominant attitudes towards native speakers of English?
- What are the students' dominant attitudes towards speakers of ESL?
- What are the students' dominant attitudes towards the Academic English module?
- What **specific** instances of motivation (e.g. encouragement by parents or lecturers, lecturers' own motivation in respect of presenting the course, high marks, rewards etc.) are rated positively by the students in the research group?

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This study can be characterised as falling within the category of *survey research*. Leedy, (1993:183) describes this type of research as involving the acquisition of information about one or more groups of people (in this case, one group only, namely the Foundation Programme students at MSA) by asking them questions and tabulating their responses.

This study involves quantitative research. Quantitative research designs maximise objectivity, structures, statistics, and control (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006:23). The present type of research may also be called a descriptive survey. A descriptive survey is a study that focuses on and describes phenomena (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:28). The purpose of most descriptive research designs is limited to the characterisation of things as they are.

In the present study a questionnaire was used in order to obtain answers to the research questions posed above. The responses were then summarised in

percentages. Tables and graphs were used to present the findings in a summarised and visual form and inferences were drawn about the research group concerned.

1.8 RESEARCH GROUP

The Foundation Programme students at MSA formed the research group. A total of 382 students were expected to participate. However, only 150 (39.27%) students participated in this investigation. As a result of the low return rate, the findings have limitations and therefore any generalisations should be qualified. However, the study is in line with the scope of the requirements of a mini-dissertation. It was convenient for the researcher to use only the Foundation Programme students in this study, because she has direct access to them and they could be reached relatively easily. The students were thoroughly informed of the details via email. A neutral venue was booked well in advance for the completion of the questionnaire during the MSA lunch hour (13h30 to 14h30). The students were reminded of the study, venue and time after the normal lecture.

1.9 THE INSTRUMENT: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is attached as Addendum A.

1.10 DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected by means of the questionnaire was analysed with the assistance of the Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria. A quantitative and descriptive analysis is presented in chapter 4.

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All the respondents that were included in the sample gave their informed consent for their participation in the research. The participants were assured of anonymity and the confidentiality of all the sensitive information that would be divulged and used. The researcher undertook to release the findings obtained in this mini-dissertation.

1.12 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 1: Introduction and overview

This chapter serves as an introductory orientation to the study, rationale for the study and a brief explanation of the research problem as well as the research methodology and design.

Chapter 2: The literature review

Chapter two elaborates on the theoretical contextualisation of motivation, attitude and English language proficiency.

Chapter 3: The research methodology

The research methodology is explained in detail in this chapter. Aspects that are dealt with include research design; research group; data gathering method and procedure; and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4: The findings and data analysis

In chapter 4, the findings and data are analysed and answers to the research questions are presented on the basis of the analysis of the responses.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the study

In chapter 5, the findings from both the literature review and the empirical investigation are summarised. Conclusions are presented, which are based on the findings of the data gathered. Finally, the limitations of this study are highlighted and recommendations for future research are made.

1.13 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 contains an introduction to and orientation in respect of the study. It discusses the research problem and poses the research questions that guide this study. In chapter 2, the concepts motivation, attitude and English language proficiency are discussed in detail against the background of relevant literature.

CHAPTER 2

2. CONTEXUALISATION: MOTIVATION, ATTITUDE AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the focus is on the importance of motivation and attitude within the context of English language proficiency (ELP). There has been a considerable amount of research conducted on the topic of attitudes and motivation in second language learning. The literature review provides an overview of the research done in this regard.

2.2 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

In this section, key concepts to be used in this study are defined. The study is about motivation, attitude and English language proficiency in the Monash South Africa Foundation Programme. The key concepts that are defined are motivation, attitude and English language proficiency. Other concepts that are relevant to the topic of the study are also briefly defined, namely, second language learning and second language acquisition.

2.2.1 Motivation

Before exploring motivation and its function in the acquisition of a language, it is necessary to first explore the term in its general sense. Motivation has been defined as “an attribute of the individual describing the psychological qualities underlying behaviour with respect to a particular task” (MacIntyre *et al* 2001:463). Williams (2010:372) defines motivation as the set of forces that initiates and directs actions and makes people persist in their efforts to accomplish a goal. Motivation has also been defined as any influence that triggers, directs or maintains goal-directed behaviour (Hellriegel, Jackson, Slocum, Staude, Amos, Klopper, Louw and Oosthuizen 2005:263). Smit, Cronje, Brevis

& Vrba (2011:384) define motivation as an inner desire to satisfy an unsatisfied need. Motivation is what drives people to behave in certain ways.

Dornyei (2003:173) describes motivation explicitly when he writes the following:

The motivated individual expends effort, is persistent and attentive to the task at hand, has goals, desires and aspirations, enjoys the activity, experiences reinforcement from success and disappointment from failure, makes attributions concerning success and/or failure, is aroused, and makes use of strategies to aid in achieving goals.

Within the context of second language learning, Gardner (1985:85) defines motivation as "a combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language".

Norris-Holt (2003:74) defines motivation as the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language. Gardner (1985:197) maintains that motivation has affective characteristics that orient the student towards trying to acquire elements of the second language and this includes the desire that the student has for achieving a goal and the amount of effort he or she expends in this direction.

Motivation is a crucial factor in determining whether the learners embark on a task in the first place, how much energy or effort they are prepared to expend on it and the length of time that they persevere (Brown, 1987:114). According to Cann (1992:48), motivation is regarded as a crucial factor in an individuals' progress in respect of whatever he or she is doing. In order to succeed in everything that you do, you must be well motivated. Motivation has to do with why the learner is there in the first place and what keeps him or her working. Motivation is an essential part of the complex process of human learning (Sikhwari, 2004:54).

Cann (1992:48) claims that motivation is the driving force behind all actions. If one is motivated, it tends to facilitates learning as you both initiate something without anyone forcing you to do so and later sustains the action with ease. In order to learn effectively,

learners should be motivated to do so. For Cann (1992:48), learners should be provided with immediate rewards such as ‘well-done stickers’. The teacher-learner relationship should be improved by giving learners time and support; negotiating an agreement with them on what is acceptable and expected; and insisting on small groups in which behaviour is easily managed. Materials and class tasks should be appropriate to a learner’s interests and level of ability.

According to Macaro (2003:114), motivation may be construed as a state of cognitive and emotional arousal, which leads to a conscious decision to act and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal.

2.2.2 Attitude

Attitude, as presented in the *Oxford Dictionary* by Soanes and Hawker (2008:55), is defined as a way of thinking or feeling. Chapman (1990:4) defines attitude as the way in which you communicate your mood to others. It is an on-going dynamic, sensitive, perceptual process. Chapman (1990:4) defines attitude as the disposition towards something that is transmitted to others. Attitude has to do with the way things are viewed mentally.

2.2.3 Language proficiency

To be proficient is to be competent or skilled in doing or using something (Soanes and Hawker 2008:812). Proficiency, as presented by Davis (1999:675) in *A Dictionary of Language Testing*, is defined as a general type of knowledge of or competence in the use of a language, regardless of how, where or under what conditions it has been acquired, the ability to do something specific in the language and the performance as measured by a particular testing procedure.

Arua and Magocha (2002:454) define language proficiency as the use of fluent speech in such a way that an individual is able to demonstrate academic knowledge in content areas as well as the ability to understand and speak conversational language without apparent difficulty. Language proficiency includes the notion of grammatical correctness and communication competence, while taking various levels of language development into consideration.

2.2.4 Second Language acquisition

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is defined as the learning of another language after the first language has been learned (Gass & Selinker, 2001:458). According to Gass and Selinker (2001:198), acquiring a language is a subconscious process. Language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring the language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication. The result of language acquisition, i.e. acquired competence, is also subconscious. We are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the languages that we have acquired. For Gardner and Lambert (1972:14), the acquisition of a new language involves much more than a mere acquisition of a new set of verbal habits.

2.2.5 Learning a language

Learning a second language refers to acquiring conscious knowledge of language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. Learning is “knowing about” a language, known to most people as “grammar” or “rules” (Gass & Selinker, 2001:199). When a student wants to know a language, he/she should be willing to adopt appropriate features of behaviour that characterise members of another linguistic community.

In the next section, the relationships between motivation, attitude, SLA and English language proficiency are discussed.

2.3 MOTIVATION, ATTITUDE AND SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

In the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), motivation and attitude are unchallenged as important factors in the learning of a language (Cann, 1992:48). According to Cann (1992:48), motivation and attitude may be regarded as important factors in the acquisition of a second language, while personality variables, such as anxiety, introversion, extroversion, self-esteem, risk-taking, empathy, and toleration of ambiguity, may influence motivation and attitude. However, there is no evidence that such personality variables are dominant factors in the successful learning of a second language. On the other hand, Gardner (1985:197) maintains that motivation has affective characteristics that orient the learner to attempt to acquire elements of the second language. These characteristics include the desire that the learners have to achieve a goal and the amount of effort that they expend in this direction. Motivation can be expected to play a direct role in the second language learning situation.

Gardner (1985:206) states that motivation could be expected to play a direct role in the formal language training situation, because it would serve to keep the learners in the programme, influence their perception of the training situation and serve as the basis for many reinforcements which might be obtained in the classroom. If a learner has a negative attitude towards learning a second language he will not be motivated to learn more and this will affect his desire to expend energy in that direction. For Gardner (1995:206), short-term motivational variables, such as fear of failure, desire to do well in school and vague future job requirement, do not have a stable and long-lasting power to maintain consistent levels of motivation.

Ralenala (2003), as cited by Setati (2005:18), refers to ESL learners as “apprentice learners of English”. Furthermore, he asserts that one characteristic of these learners is that they are often unable to demonstrate their true competence in the content subjects that are presented through the medium of English, because they lack the necessary language and cognitive skills.

It is generally agreed that a language that is taught in school or taught only to enable adult learners to read literature or technical works, or to listen to the radio, can be regarded to be a foreign language, whereas a language that is taught in order to be the medium of instruction among speakers of widely diverse languages can be regarded to be a second language (Kilfoil & van der Walt, 1993:5). Motivation represents one of the most appealing, yet complex, variables that are used to explain individual differences in language learning (MacIntyre *et al.*2001:462).

Lindholm (1987), as cited by Setati (2005:25), asserts that when English is the language of instruction, the majority of second language learners are not able to fulfil their potential. However, when they work in their mother tongue, they tend to display a huge amount of interest in what they are doing. They contribute to discussions more freely, use models more frequently, and their statements are more complex at the pre-conceptual level. Language can therefore be regarded to empower learners to draw upon their own knowledge, which is more easily accessible through their mother tongue than through a language of which they have little experience.

According to Cummins (1981:21), the language deficit of ESL learners is a hidden one. It is not noticeable on the playground or in everyday situations in which conversation requires only informal, colloquial language, which these learners have often already acquired. However, the school use formal language, and consequently these learners lack the more sophisticated command of language that is required in the school system.

In order for a learner to master a language for instructional purpose, that learner should be proficient in the language of instruction. According to Cummins (1981:21), the child requires between five and seven years to acquire sufficient Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) skills, whereas the acquisition of Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) usually develop within six months to two years of learning.

BICS consists of the aspects of language such as pronunciation, basic vocabulary and grammar, which enable learners to converse fluently in everyday situations. BICS alone

is not sufficient for academic success. It should be supplemented by CALP. CALP comprises the proficiency that is required to understand academic concepts and to perform the higher cognitive operations that are more abstract and less easily understood and experienced than the ideas and terms that are used in social interaction (Cummins, 1981:22). The acquisition of both BICS and CALP is enhanced when a student is motivated and has a positive attitude towards learning the English language.

Gardner and Lambert (1959:56) studied English speakers who were learning French in Quebec and argued that integrative motivation led to greater success in second language learning. Gardner (1979), as cited in Gardner and MacIntyre (1995:209), reported that native Americans who are learning English demonstrated integrative motivation when viewing the learning of English as being valuable in order to become truly part of the American culture.

According to Schumann (1986:210), the socio-psychological approach to second (L2) learning refers to the extent to which the second language learner manifests the following characteristics:

- A positive attitude towards the target language community, whilst not being threatened by the acquisition of that language;
- motivation to learn the target language either for instrumental or integrative reasons; and
- willingness and openness to use the target language

Similar research has been conducted by a number of South African researchers. In a study undertaken by Coetzee-Van Rooy in 2002, as cited by Madileng (2007), she reaches the conclusion that the motivation for learning English is a pragmatic one. She investigated the relationship between cultural identity profiles and the English Second Language (ESL) proficiency of Afrikaans and Southern Sotho learners at the Vaal Technikon. Coetzee-Van Rooy found that English in South Africa is learnt to communicate with and better understand speakers of South African languages other

than English across language boundaries. English operates as a *lingua franca* in South Africa and this situation provides mainly pragmatic (that is, instrumental) motivation for making an effort to master English well enough for academic purposes.

Coetzee-Van Rooy (2002) found that integration with the South African English L1 group is not a primary reason for learning English and that successfully mastering English is not the primary reason enough to be accepted into the English-speaking community in South Africa. She furthermore maintains that integration is a problematic predictor of English L2 achievement in South Africa and that economic considerations could be a motivation for people to learn English as L2 (Coetzee-Van Rooy (2002), cited by Madileng (2007:36).

Another South African study is that of Madileng (2007) who investigated the relationship between motivation and English at the Further Education and Training (FET) College in Alberton. On the basis of the empirical evidence gathered, Madileng found that the development of ESL proficiency could be influenced by a number of motivational variables, some of which might not have been included in her investigation. Madileng (2007:113) concludes that, with regard to the findings of her literature review, the development of the ESL proficiency of the first-year National Intermediate Certificate (NIC) learners at the College is not necessarily related to:

- Socio-psychological aspects of motivation;
- learner involvement;
- parental involvement; and
- contextual factors that are related to the influence of the school and classroom on the learners.

On the basis of the empirical evidence produced by Madileng's (2007:114) study the following conclusion can be drawn;

There is no significant correlation between the identified motivation variables and the first-year National Intermediate Certificate (NIC) students' ESL proficiency.

Madileng (2007) used a questionnaire and a test as instruments for collecting data. The test paper was from the Department of Education (2005). The question paper was integrative in nature and embraced all the language skills, except for listening and speaking skills which could not be tested in the form of a written examination or test. The language proficiency test determined the student's ability to skim read and identify and differentiate between main ideas and supporting ideas in a given text. Students were also asked to point out, from the given passage, a list of ten ways in which to promote cultural sensitivity in the work-place. The test also covered linguistic items such as vocabulary, use of appropriate tenses, prepositions, adverbs, affixes, passive voices and indirect speech as well as discourse analysis in which students had to use information in a given text in order to design correspondence documents. Madileng also used information contained in the literary study regarding the contribution of motivational variables in second language (L2) learning and second language proficiency to design the questionnaire. Coetzee-Van Rooy used the questionnaire only to collect data from the respondents.

2.4 TYPES OF MOTIVATION

Scholars have found it important to identify both the type of motivation and combination of types of motivation that promote the successful acquisition of a second language. At the same time it is necessary to view motivation as one of a number of variables in an intricate model of interrelated individual and situational factors that are unique to each individual learner. It is assumed that students who are most successful in learning a target language are those who like the people that speak the language, admire the culture and have a desire to become familiar with or even integrate into the society in which the language is used (Falk, 1978:56).

The above-mentioned desire is a form of integrative motivation, one of the types of motivation that is recognised by scholars. The type of motivation that a student has when wishing to acquire a second language may have a significant influence on his or her success or failure in acquiring that language.

2.4.1 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

A distinction often found in the relevant literature is that of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. According to Ehrman (1996:138), **intrinsic motivation** prevails when someone is motivated to learn a language for his or her own reasons and for the satisfaction that it brings. Some learners of a second language may be interested in the language and culture, some may relish the challenge of learning the language and others may want an instrument that will increase interaction with interesting people. A student who is intrinsically motivated, undertakes an activity for its own sake, for the enjoyment that it provides, the learning that accompanies it, or for the feelings of accomplishment that it evokes (Lepper, 1988:46).

Secondly, Ehrman (1996:138) distinguishes **extrinsic motivation**, which represents the desire for some kind of external benefit, such as an increase in salary, job enhancement, getting along with people in a foreign society or fulfilling an organisational or academic requirement. According to Lepper (1988:46), an extrinsically motivated student performs in order to obtain rewards or to avoid punishment that is external to the activity. Ehrman is of the opinion that extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation are mutually exclusive. Many students enrol in language classes because they have to, but they might find that there is considerable personal satisfaction in mastering the content, getting to know the people who speak the language or mastering a new area of intellectual endeavour. The initial extrinsic motivation may then be replaced by intrinsic motivation (Ehrman 1996:138).

Deci and Ryan (1985), cited by Noels *et al.* (1999:38), state that intrinsic motivation refers to an individual's motivation to engage in an activity as a result of an innate need for competence and self-determination. A learner can be intrinsically motivated to perform an activity, because it is simple to understand, or because the learning experience is fun and enjoyable. It is possible that, if learners are given a chance to choose freely what activity they want to perform, they would choose the activity which

they think would be fun to do and with which they would be comfortable, and such choice would increase their motivation to complete the activity.

According to Nikolov (1999), cited by Madileng (2007:38), extrinsic motivation in the form of rewards, marks and approval is a very important source of encouragement for young children to learn an L2. For many learners, achievement, which is represented by good marks and rewards, serves as a motivating force. If such learners succeed, the experience of success could generate the need for further success.

Ryan and Deci (1985), cited by Noels *et al.* (1999: 39), distinguish between various types of extrinsic motivation, namely:

- *External regulation*, which refers to activities that are determined by external benefits that derive from an activity that is done or from costs that are incurred.
- *Introjected regulation*, which refers to activities that are performed as a result of pressure that someone incorporates into himself or herself as he or she reacts to the pressure exerted by others. Such a person is not acting on the basis of personal choice, but is reacting to personal pressure.
- *Identified regulation*, which refers to an activity that is chosen for personal reasons, such as performing an activity because it is important for the achievement of a valued goal.

The current researcher agrees with Madileng (2007:38) that some parents pressurise their children into striving to get high marks and that for many learners achievement that is represented by good marks and rewards serves as a motivating force. If such learners succeed, the feelings of being successful could generate the need for further success.

When learners are convinced that the target language has status and prestige and will provide opportunities for economic mobility, this conviction could influence their motivation to learn. On the other hand, Clement *et al.* (1994:441) point out that self-confidence influences L2 proficiency directly and indirectly, through the students' attitudes toward and effort expended on the learning of English. They maintain that a good classroom atmosphere promotes learners' involvement, activity and self-confidence while also moderating anxiety.

According to Deci and Ryan (2008:182) although intrinsic motivation is clearly an important type of motivation, most of the activities that people do are not, strictly speaking, the result of intrinsic motivation. For Deci and Ryan (2008:182), extrinsic motivation has typically been characterised as a 'pale and impoverished' form of motivation that contrasts with intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, Cokley *et al* (2001:110) state that it is important to note that extrinsically motivated behaviours should be conceptualised as being more controlled forms of behaviour when it is compared to intrinsically motivated behaviour.

Deci and Ryan (2008:182) argue that extrinsic motivation is a construct that is relevant whenever an activity is done in order to attain some reward. It is therefore in contrast to intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing an activity simply for enjoyment rather than for the instrumental value that it represents. Cokley *et al* (2001:177) declare that the ideal and eventual objective should always be for learners to move away from extrinsic motivation and to become intrinsically motivated, because this is the most desirable form of motivation.

For Cook (2001:118), the process of creating successful learning situations, which can spur high motivational levels, may best be achieved under the teacher's control, if the learners' original motivation is lacking. For example, the choice of teaching materials and the content of the lesson should correspond to the motivational levels of the learners.

2.4.2 Instrumental and Integrative Motivation

Gardner (1985:139) describes two forms of motivation, namely *instrumental* and *integrative motivation*. According to Gardner (1985:139), instrumental motivation refers to learning that occurs to accomplish a task, such as passing a course, getting better pay, etc. It is very similar to extrinsic motivation. Integrative motivation has to do with the desire to become part of the target language community. Such motivation appears to have components of both intrinsic motivation (desire to join a community) and extrinsic motivation (satisfaction of affiliation needs).

Brown (1994), cited by Ehrman (1996:139), suggests that instrumental motivation can also be intrinsic, for instance when learning for the purpose of enhancing a career that one values. Motivation is a precondition of learning, both for initiating and for sustaining learning. Motivation also varies in intensity, the levels of which can be described as high motivation and low motivation. When a learner is highly motivated, it could result in successful learning, whereas when a learner is not highly motivated, the result could be very poor. For Brown (1994), learners rarely have only one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather have a combination of both orientations. Furthermore, Brown (1994) cites the example of international students residing in the United States who learn English for academic purposes while simultaneously wishing to become integrated with the people and culture of the country.

While both integrative and instrumental motivation are essential elements of success, it is integrative motivation that has been found to sustain long-term success when learning a second language (Taylor, Meynard and Rheault 1997; Ellis 1997; Crookes *et al* 1991).

2.5 MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS IN THE L2 CLASSROOM

Crookes and Schmidt (1991:470) identify four motivational factors in the L2 classroom: ***interest, relevance, expectancy and satisfaction.***

Interest in the language situation enables the learner to develop curiosity and the desire to know more about himself or herself and the broader environment. ***Relevant*** learning classroom instruction and content helps the learner to relate such instruction to his or her personal needs, values or goals and to mastering L2. ***Expectancy*** refers to the help and support that the learner will require from the teacher to master difficult tasks. ***Satisfaction*** concerns extrinsic rewards such as praise and good marks as well as intrinsic rewards such as enjoyment and pride.

The above-mentioned factors play a pivotal role in motivating learners and instilling a positive attitude towards learning and improving their English language proficiency.

2.6 MODELS OF MOTIVATION

2.6.1 Gardner's Socio-Educational Model

The work undertaken by Gardner in the area of motivation was largely influenced by Mowrer (1950), cited by Larson-Freeman and Long (1994), whose focus was on first language acquisition. Mowrer (1950) as cited by Larson-Freeman and Long (1994) proposed that a child's success in learning a first language could be attributed to the desire to gain an identity within the family unit and thereafter within the wider language community. Using this proposal as the basis for his own research, Gardner went on to investigate motivation as an influencing factor in L2 acquisition.

Gardner (1979), in his socio-educational model, identifies several factors in the learning of a second language. Unlike other research carried out in the area, Gardner's model concentrates specifically on second language acquisition in a structured classroom

setting rather than in a natural environment. His work focuses on the classroom in which a foreign language is learnt. The model attempts to inter-relate four features of second language acquisition. These features include the social and cultural milieu; individual learner differences; the setting or context in which learning takes place; and linguistic outcomes (Gardner, 1979).

Linguistic outcomes refer to the actual knowledge of the language and to language skills. They include test indices such as course grades or general proficiency tests. Non-linguistic outcomes reflect an individual's attitudes concerning cultural values and beliefs and attitude towards the target language community. Ellis (1997:56) reasons that individuals who are motivated to integrate both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes will attain a higher degree of proficiency.

2.6.2 Schuman's Acculturation Model (1986)

Schuman's model (Schuman, 1986: 380) focuses on two concepts, namely, socio-psychological openness or closeness and socio-psychological proximity or distance. Socio-psychological openness refers to the extent to which the second language learner manifests a positive attitude towards the L2 community, is motivated to learn the L2 for instrumental or integrative reasons and is openly willing to use the new language. If the L2 learner manifests characteristics that are opposite of the above, he or she may be regarded as socio-psychologically closed to acquiring the L2 concerned.

Schuman (1986:200) defines acculturation as the degree to which a learner aspires to be integrated into the L2 community. The more a learner aspires to be integrated into the second language community, the more successful he or she will be in the learning of the target language. Language learning is therefore perceived to be both a social and an affective activity that can lead to acculturation.

2.6.3 Lambert's model (1963)

Lambert's model (1963), cited by Gardner (1979), is based on a socio-psychological approach to inter-group behaviour. It focuses on language and its use and considers how members of each linguistic community retain the identity of their own group in contrast to identifying with other groups. This model explains how each group clings to its linguistic identity, which is related to a broader cultural identity.

Lambert (1963), cited by Gardner (1972), claims that individuals who want to acquire a second language successfully, gradually adopt various aspects of the behaviour that characterises members of another linguistic group. Such learners' ethnographic tendencies and attitude toward the other group are believed to determine their success in learning the new language. Their motivation to learn is considered to be determined by their attitudes and by orientation toward learning a second language.

2.6.4 Clements' model (1980)

Learners' success or failure in acquiring the second language can be explained by their level of motivation as determined by the ethno-linguistic vitality of the L2, their levels of confidence to use the L2 and the quality of experience they have each time they try to use the L2 (Clement, 1980: 148).

The concept of ethno-linguistic vitality originates from Lambert's social identity theory in which an attempt is made to explain how individuals construe societal conditions as factors that mediate inter-ethnic attitudes and behaviours (Clement, 1980:280). This model presupposes that if the acquisition of the L2 is regarded as one of the aspects of inter-ethnic interaction, then the acquisition can be successfully achieved. It furthermore assumes that the status enjoyed by a language in a community has an influence on inter-ethnic behaviour.

Ethnographic vitality is also believed to trigger an individual's motivational process, called primary motivational process, which mediates the influence of the social milieu on communicative competence (Clement, 1980:281). The primary motivational process comprises integrativeness, i.e. the individual's positive attitude and willingness to become a member of the L2 cultural group and fear of loss of own cultural identity. Unpleasant social contacts can result in anxiety that tends to accompany the failure to use the second language.

2.7 MOTIVATIONAL VARIABLES

2.7.1 The socio-psychological variable

According to Schuman (1975:186), the socio-psychological approach to L2 learning refers to the extent to which the ESL learner manifests the following characteristics:

- A positive attitude towards the target language community whilst not being threatened by the acquisition of that language;
- motivation to learn English, for either instrumental or integrative reasons; and
- the learner's willingness and openness in using the target language.

Gardner (1985, 255-256) undertook a series of studies of how language learners' attitudes towards the L2 speaking community affect their desire to learn the L2 language. He followed a socio-psychological approach, focusing on the influences of the social context and the relational patterns between the language communities, which were measured by means of the individual's social attitudes (Gardner, 1985:256). He distinguishes between integrative and instrumental motivation to L2 learning and learning through the medium of a second language.

Gardner (1985) maintains that integrative motivation occurs when the learner wishes to identify with the culture of the L2 group. Instrumental motivation occurs when the L2

learner learns a language in order to pass the examination, to enhance career prospects or to facilitate the study of subjects through the medium of the L2.

Gardner and Lambert (1972), cited by Gardner (1985:260), undertook a series of studies in which they examined the relationship between motivation and attitudes of learners in Canada. Their hypothesis was that students' attitudes toward a specific language group and their motivation are bound to influence their success in developing academic competence. Their findings indicated that motivation subsumes other components, such as the desire to learn the language and the attitude towards learning a language.

The findings of a study by Gardner and Lambert, in which they measured the French proficiency of Canadian school learners, reveals that the learners' attitude toward L2 learning strongly correlates with measures of their French proficiency (Gardner, 1985:200-202).

Other research findings reveal that learners' achievement in French is closely associated with both integrative and instrumental motivation (Burstall, 1975, as cited by Ellis 1985:161). Brown and Ellis (2000:1994), cited by Madileng (2007:36), state that, although there is contrasting evidence as to whether instrumental or integrative motivation is better, both types have been shown to lead to successful language learning.

Macaro (2003:115) ranked several variables that impact on motivation. These are presented below in the order of being very significant to being less significant.

1. *Gender*, at least in some educational contexts, is a good predictor of motivation (positive or negative attitude toward learning a language).
2. *Social class* produces relative aspirations for language learning, but there is insufficient research that examines the relationship between this variable and second language learning.

3. There is some evidence that *age groups* differ in the way that they perceive and attribute success or failure in learning a language.
4. Various *nationalities* differ in their motivation to learn other languages.
5. The effect of motivation that stems from learning English, an *international language*, is undeniable, even though the identification of this factor may mask a complex set of other factors.

2.7.2 Self-determination Theory

According to Noels, Clement and Pelletier (1999) as cited by Dornyei (2002: 119) *self-determination theory* provides a comprehensive framework within which a large number of L2 orientations can be systematically organised. These orientations can be categorised in accordance with the extent to which the goal of performing an activity is self-determined, that is, the performed activity is chosen freely by the individual concerned. These researchers found empirical evidence for several meaningful links between the learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to learn and the teachers' communication style.

2.7.3 Goal-oriented theory

Goal-oriented theory has also featured in research on motivation in respect of an L2 (Dornyei, 2003:18). It has been an area of active research on learners' motivation in classrooms and has proved to have direct implications for learners and teachers. Dornyei (2003:18) maintains that, as far as the role of goals in language learning is concerned, motivation has different characteristics that depend on the level and stage that the learner has reached in the pursuit of targeted goals. Those goals cover three stages, namely, the practical stage, the execution-motivational stage and the completion of action stage (Dornyei, 2003:18);

- *The practical stage* occurs when an individual decides on choosing a goal or task to be pursued. Such a person will be influenced by motivational factors, such as

the various goal properties; values associated with the learning process; attitudes toward the L2 and its speakers; the expected success; and the strategies and environmental support or hindrances.

- *The execution-motivation stage* occurs when the generated motivation is actively maintained and protected. Such motivation is relevant to activities such as studying an L2 and learning in the classroom setting. This motivation can be influenced by factors such as the quality of the learning experiences; a sense of autonomy; teachers' and parents' influence; classroom reward and goal structure; influence of the learner group; and knowledge and use of self-regulatory strategies such as goal setting, learning and self-motivation.
- *The completion action stage* occurs when learners process their past experiences in trying to determine the future goals to pursue. During this phase the learner attempts to determine the kind of activities to pursue in future. Such motivation can be influenced by the learner's self-concept and the type of feedback that they received, such as praise or good marks.

2.8 ATTITUDE AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

In Gardner's model of integrative motivation (Gardner, 1985:97), psychological factors such as attitude contribute to integrative motivation for learning a second language and wishing to do well in the second language. The current leaders in this field are undoubtedly Lambert and Gardner (cf. amongst others Gardner & Lambert 1959, Gardner & Lambert 1972, Gardner 1985, Gardner 1991).

Many researchers have postulated that language learning could be positively or negatively influenced by attitudes towards the language and the speakers of the language such as Jordan 1941, Arsenian 1945, Dunkel 1948, Jones 1950 as cited by Gardner & Lambert (1959), conducted an investigation into the relationship between attitude, motivation and second language proficiency. Lambert provided the theoretical

rationale for the research in this area in a series of articles (Gardner, 1991). Gardner (1985) provides a detailed overview of the studies that he and Smythe (1991) measure to assess, amongst other things, students' attitudes towards the language they are learning.

Attitudes can be positive or negative depending on circumstances and/or situations. According to Chapman (1990:9), a positive attitude is the outward manifestation of a mind that dwells primarily on positive matters. It is a mind-set that is tipped in favour of creative activities rather than boredom, joy rather than sadness and hope rather than futility.

A positive attitude is that state of mind that can be maintained only through conscious effort (Chapman, 1990:10). Chapman states that a positive outlook provides the courage to address a problem and to take action to resolve it before it gets out of hand. By refusing to become angry or distraught, a positive attitude can motivate an individual to assemble the facts, talk to others, determine the options and then come up with a solution.

Positive attitude triggers enthusiasm and can provide higher energy levels, greater creativity and an improved personality. On the other hand, negative attitudes are self-defeating. An individual will find it difficult to find solutions to life's problems by looking for someone or something to blame.

Attitudes may have an impact on motivation. When learners feel that the target language has status and prestige and it will provide opportunities for economic mobility, their attitude may influence their motivation to learn. Teachers and the course materials also play a pivotal role in the attitude of students. Students will inevitably have very different views about the kind of teacher they think is best for them. Students also vary in their attitudes towards teaching materials (Ellis, 1985:83).

Clement *et al* (1994:441) point out that self-confidence may be induced by a positive attitude. They maintain that a good classroom atmosphere promotes learners' involvement and activity, as well as their self-confidence, while also tempering feelings of anxiety. Cook (2001:122) states that the goals of language teaching include changing people's attitudes towards other cultures and to using the second language effectively.

2.9 MOTIVATING FACTORS

2.9.1 Parents

Parents play an important role in the choice of language that is to be used as a medium of instruction in South African schools. Many parents support the use of English as a second language for teaching and learning, because English is an international language and it is also regarded as a language that is useful in socio-economic and technological contexts (Kamwangamalu, 2000: 57). Therefore parents want their children to be taught through the medium of English at schools rather than in their first language. The parents' level of education determines, to some extent, their levels of motivation for the education of their children. Due to the status that the English language enjoys, parents may eventually have a strong desire for their children to achieve their learning objectives through the use of this language. Children of highly educated parents benefit more from education as their parents are able to assist them in their learning (Driessen *et al.* 2002:176).

Even though some of the parents of the students at MSA are not educated, they generally believe that English is a language of high prestige and it will be much easier for their children to find a job or explore the world if they have undertaken their studies through English as the medium of instruction. Some parents might forget that they cannot speak or understand the language very well and that they therefore cannot reinforce their children's acquisition of English after school hours. Some parents are unable to assist their children with homework or assignments, because they are unable to do so or because they are not at home due to work-related commitments. However,

regardless of these issues, the parents still have the desire to see their children succeed in life. Parents fulfil an important role in encouraging their children to work hard to improve their English language proficiency.

According to Ehrman *et al* (1987) as cited by Mahlobo (1999:47), parental involvement has to do with their ability to assist their children with scholastic achievements; offering academic guidance; provision of resources for school-related tasks; managing and emphasising the educational activities of their children rather than the pleasurable things such as watching TV programmes; and providing guidance in respect of the choice of books and magazines. Madileng (2007:42) states that the parents' expression of affection and interest in their child's academic and personal growth; effective value systems and family practices; parental beliefs; and attitude toward education can contribute to children's motivation and positive self-concept. Madileng (2007) furthermore states that when parents cannot speak or understand English, learners' acquisition of English is not supported and reinforced at home. Such parents may also feel ill-equipped to assist with homework or assignments.

According to Schimdt and Lee (1990), and Mahlobo (1999), as cited by Madileng (2007:42), learners' self-improvement and high self-esteem can be stimulated through, amongst other things, parents' verbal encouragement; helping them with English homework and practical projects; monitoring their progress in English; rewarding every improvement; and offering academic guidance when possible. Parents should also provide reading materials, such as books, newspapers and magazines that have topics that interest their children. Furthermore, parents should encourage their children to read in order to increase their vocabulary.

2.9.2 Teachers

The terms *teachers*, *lecturers* and *educators* are used concurrently in this study to refer to any person who provides schooling and guidance to others. The teachers' attitude towards their work plays a crucial role in motivating learners to succeed in learning in a

second language. The teachers' level of commitment in their professional work and the way in which they convey knowledge to the learners in a positive manner can enhance the learners' motivation and achievement of academic competence. Crookes and Schmidt (1991:228) state that teachers are expected to develop and stimulate learners through the modelling of positive attitudes and orientations towards learning.

According to Dornyei (1994), cited by Noels (2001:112), teachers' motivation and attitudes; their style of learner control; and their manner of presenting tasks and providing feedback positively are associated with students' motivation.

The research conducted by Crookes and Schmidt (1991:243) identifies two important areas in this regard, namely:

- Motivating students during the lesson; and
- maintaining motivation.

Teachers' attitude towards their work has been identified as an important factor in ensuring learners' success in learning a second language. The level of commitment in their professional work, and the way in which they guide learners to attain certain goals or outcomes in a positive manner can enhance learners' motivation. Crooks and Schmidt (1991:228) state that teachers are expected to develop and stimulate learners through modelling positive attitudes and orientations toward learning. Teachers should promote the importance of the subject that they are teaching by outlining to the learners their own motivation for having studied the subject and wanting to teach it.

Several authors cite teacher motivation or enthusiasm as an important element in motivating learners Dornyei (2001), as cited by Macaro (2003:112). This assertion should be treated with caution, because self-determination is the most powerful motivational force that comes from the learner who focuses himself or herself. Shifting the spotlight onto the teacher in this regard would be a course of action that contradicts the evidence (Dornyei 2001:179 as cited by Macaro (2003).

Dornyei (2001: 215 as cited by Macaro (2003) proposes the following guidelines for teachers in regard to the motivation of learners:

- Set a personal example with your behaviour
- Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom
- Present the tasks properly
- Develop a good relationship with the learners
- Increase the learners' linguistic self-confidence
- Make the language and other subjects interesting
- Promote learner autonomy
- Personalise the learning process
- Increase the learners' goal-orientation
- Familiarise the learners with the culture of the target language

2.9.3 The Context

The environment in which learning takes place plays an important role in motivating learners to develop academic competence with ease. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972:178), the classroom environment and the context of teaching and learning have a much stronger motivational influence than has thus far been acknowledged.

Research findings (Madileng, 2007:43) highlight a variety of factors that influence the learner's competence in the school, namely;

- The course-specific motivational components (for example relevance of learning materials, interest in the tasks and the appropriateness of the teaching methods); and
- Teacher- specific components (for example the motivational impact of the teacher's personality, behaviour and teaching style).

In order for learners to be motivated, the learning environment should be free from anxiety and learners should not feel threatened or intimidated. To communicate freely, the learners should feel that they will be heard and that what they are saying is worth listening to.

Support from home is also very important for learners' motivation to learn a second language. If parents value both the native language and English, they will communicate with their children in the language in which they are most comfortable, and show support and interest in their children's progress. The children will therefore be more motivated to learn the second language and to learn other subjects through the medium of second language (Ausubel, 1978: 68).

2.10 SUMMARY

In this chapter, a review of the literature concerning the concepts of motivation, attitude and English language proficiency is presented. It is indicated that motivation and positive attitudes play a pivotal role in achieving English language proficiency. According to Sikhwari (2004) there is a positive correlation between motivation and academic achievement. In order to perform better academically, learners need to be proficient in the language that is the medium of learning and teaching.

At Monash South Africa, learners and educators interact through the medium of English, because it is regarded to be the most common medium. Parents, learners and educators need to understand that learners who study subjects such as literature, economic and management sciences; and mathematics need fundamental skills to understand the information presented to them and to express their ideas on these areas. It is through language learning that learners are able to acquire skills that are important in their everyday lives.

Corson (1997:677) describes the role of English language in learning as follows:

Language plays a central role in learning. Regardless of the subjects, learners assimilate new concepts largely through language, that is, when they listen to and talk, read and write about what they are learning and relate this to what they already know. Through speaking and writing, language is linked to the thinking process and becomes a manifestation of the thinking that is taking other words.

This chapter also considers various theories and models of motivation and attitudes that could enhance the development of English language proficiency. Finally, the types of motivation and attitude are elaborated in this chapter, including various motivational variables. In the next chapter, chapter 3, the research methodology is discussed, including the research design, data-gathering method and sampling. Chapter 3 also addresses ethical considerations and the statistical techniques that were used in the analysis of the data.

CHAPTER 3

3. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research is a process that comprises several phases. Gathering of data about the nature and extent of the research problem and considering the envisaged plan of action is one of the critical phases in the research process (Cloete, 2007:512). It is imperative that a researcher should determine the method to be used in gathering the data that is relevant to the research topic before the research is commenced.

According to Schurink (2010:420), matters such as the location of the data, method of gathering the data, research procedure, and method of data analysis play a critical role in deciding on the appropriate research methodology that is to be followed.

Research methodology therefore refers to methods, techniques and procedures that researchers use to gather evidence, data or information about the nature and extent of the research problem and about the envisaged plan of action.

3.1 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The main focus of this study is to address the nature of students' motivation (or lack thereof) in respect of and their attitude towards the ELP course in the Foundation Programme at Monash South Africa. Learners who register at MSA come from all over the world and have diverse language backgrounds. Some of them come from rural areas, some from townships, some from disadvantaged backgrounds and some from suburbs and affluent backgrounds. Those who fail to obtain direct admission to undergraduate programmes are channelled into the Foundation Programme. Academic English is one of the compulsory subjects in the Foundation Programme and is aimed at improving the students' English language proficiency.

3.2 THE RESEARCH AIMS

The aim of this research is to investigate the nature of students' motivation (or lack thereof) in respect of and their attitude towards the ELP course in the Foundation Programme at Monash South Africa.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of a research design is to specify the plan for the generating the empirical evidence that will be used to answer the research questions.

It was decided to use a quantitative research design in this study. According to Reinhardt and Cook (1979), as quoted by Nunan (1992:3), a quantitative design is objective and can be controlled to a high degree. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:396), the use of a quantitative design is a technique by which researchers convert data into numerical form and subject it to statistical analysis. The results of quantitative research can be regarded as reliable if the appropriate regimen is followed and generalisations can then be deduced from them.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:26), quantitative research designs maximise objectivity by using numbers, statistics, structures and control. These designs make use of methods that are distinct from those used in qualitative designs.

A descriptive research design was implemented in this study. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:28) a descriptive design is a study that focuses on and describes a phenomenon. The purpose of most descriptive designs is limited to the characterisation of things as they are.

3.4 THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

According to Brynard and Hanekom (2006:54-55), a sample of a population is used to simplify the research process, save time, cut costs and determine specific properties of the whole. De Vos *et al* (2005:203) describe sampling as “taking a portion of the respondents instead of the entire universe”. Brynard and Hanekom (2006:54) state that researchers are often faced with the dilemma of selecting from the population a small group (sample) for study purposes.

Sample size refers to the total number of sampling units, or cases, that are selected from the sampling frame (David & Sutton 2004:369). The initial sample size in this project was 382 students. As a result of the absence of some students and of others not completing the questionnaire correctly or thoroughly, the actual number of the participants was reduced to 150. The sample was less than half of the overall population. The low participation rate could be attributed to the fact that the survey was conducted during lunch time and the participants could therefore have opted to take a lunch break instead of participating in the survey. The researcher can only report on the responses of those students who participated in the survey. However, the sample size was well within the scope required for statistical validity. The findings of the survey are presented in Chapter 4.

3.5 THE QUESTIONNAIRE: ADDENDUM A

A questionnaire was preferred in this study, because it would provide the researcher with quantifiable data. This is the most widely used technique for obtaining information from subjects (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:194). According to Babbie and Mouton (in De Vos *et al* 2005:166), although the term “questionnaire” suggests that a respondent will have to answer a collection of questions, a typical questionnaire probably contains many statements that are posed as questions, especially if the researcher is interested in determining the extent to which the respondents hold a particular issue to be true.

The questionnaire was administered to students in a neutral venue during the lunch hour. This arrangement should have ensured a high return rate, but the reality proved otherwise. Only 150 completed questionnaires were returned. This number was the actual sample obtained from a potential 382 respondents.

The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery that was developed by Gardner was used as a guide to the compilation of the questionnaire. The Gardner Test battery (Gardner 1985) is intended for use with secondary school students who study English as a foreign language. It could therefore not be used in its original format for the purpose of this study. The questions were amended to suit the particular circumstances of this study.

The questionnaire was based on the research questions formulated in chapter 1. Closed and open-ended questions were used. Students were required to choose 1 item from the 4 items provided (closed-ended) and to provide various responses (students' views) to one question asked (open-ended).

A questionnaire that implements the Likert scale was used. A Likert scale is a convenient method of collecting data on a concept from a number of different approaches. The scale enables the researcher to obtain more information on the respondent's opinions or feelings on a particular topic than by asking questions that require a "disagree/agree" or "yes/no" response Oppenheim (1992), as quoted by David and Sutton (2004:167). According to Oppenheim (1992), the structure of the Likert scale requires the writing of a number of statements, known as scale items, each with the same standard set of responses. The scale items consist of a mix of positive and negative statements. A Likert scale contains five possible responses, namely strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. These response categories are given a score that ranges from 1 to 5.

3.6 QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION

Section A (questions 1 to 4) of the questionnaire was designed to gather bibliographical information. The information gathered included students' gender, age, home language and home country.

Section B (question 5) was designed to gather information about their motivation. The forms of motivation included extrinsic motivation, such as rewards and being praised, and intrinsic motivation, such as better job prospects, improvement of performance in the examinations, etc.

Section C (questions 6 to 8) was designed to gather information about the participants' parents and teacher motivation. These questions covered matters such as parents' assistance with assignments, parents' encouragement of the students to speak English, listening to the English radio programmes and watching English-medium TV channels. There were also questions on the parents' educational background and whether they had attended a tertiary institution. Questions regarding teachers' motivation included matters such as the teachers' preparedness for the lesson, ability to give feedback, ability to give positive reinforcement and willingness to give students time to ask questions.

Section D (question 9) comprised questions regarding students' attitudes towards the ELP module (Academic English). The respondents were required to indicate how they feel about their efforts to learn Academic English. Questions 10 and 11 comprised open-ended questions.

3.7 PROCEDURE FOR ADMINISTERING THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Permission to conduct the study and to have the Foundation Programme students as the participants was obtained from the Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor of Research at Monash South Africa and the Head of the Foundation Programme. The respondents

were asked to complete the questionnaires during their lunch hour at a neutral venue which was booked in advance. The researcher requested two colleagues to assist in the distribution and collection of the questionnaires. All the students in this study received the same stimulus and were exposed to the same instructions and input.

The students were asked to indicate their response to each question by means of a cross, circling the chosen item or by writing in the appropriate space. They were informed that there are no wrong or right answers and that only their opinion was required. The questionnaires took approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete. Not all the respondents returned the questionnaires, but they were nevertheless all thanked for their cooperation and participation.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to De Vos *et al* (2005:57), 'ethics' is a set of moral principles that is proposed by an individual or group and that is subsequently widely accepted. In the context of research, these moral principles give rise to rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects, respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students. The following are some of the ethical issues that should be considered when conducting research:

- **Informed consent**

In the case of research that is conducted at an institution such as a University or school, approval to conduct the research should be obtained prior to data collection (McMillan and Schumacher 2006:144). The current researcher obtained the permission from the Research Department at MSA. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:143), informed consent is achieved by providing the respondents with an explanation of the research, an opportunity to terminate their participation at any time without a penalty and full disclosure of any risks associated with the study.

The researcher's assistants, who distributed and collected the questionnaires, emphasised the fact that the respondents were free to refuse to participate in the study. This freedom was also indicated in the questionnaire. The respondents were also requested to sign a letter of consent in which all the relevant information was provided.

- **Violation of confidentiality**

The information received from the participants has been and continues to be treated as private and confidential and the participants' right to privacy and confidentiality has been respected throughout the research process. According to Dambudzo (2009:97), confidentiality means that the privacy of the individuals is protected, namely by ensuring that the data provided are handled and reported in such a way that no individual's identity is disclosed and that no one, except the researcher, will have access to the data or the names of the participants. Anonymity is guaranteed, which implies that no one will be able to identify any respondent after the research has been conducted.

3.9 ANALYSIS

The data analysis was done with the assistance of the Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria. The raw data was divided into cumulative frequency tables and cumulative percentages. The analysis was done by the researcher by means of tables, graphs and narrative explanation (chapter 4).

3.10 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the research methodology is discussed in detail. The research method and design is explained, including the choice of a quantitative and descriptive design. The sampling method and the sample size are illustrated. The layout of the questionnaire and the details of how it was designed are elaborated. The measuring instruments used in this study and their validity and reliability for assessing specific

variables are also discussed. The procedure used in collecting data is explained in detail and ethical considerations relevant to this study are elaborated.

CHAPTER 4

4. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

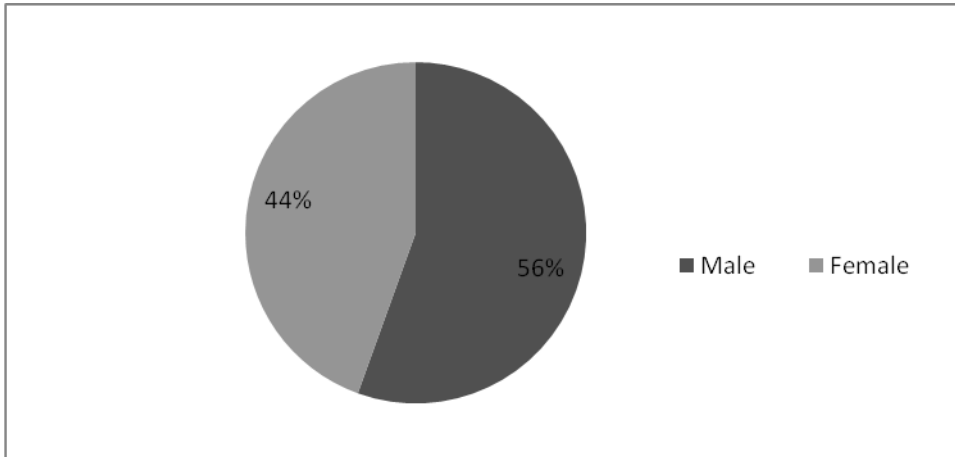
In this chapter, the results of the empirical research are presented. The aim of this chapter is to provide answers to the research questions posed in chapter 1. The percentages for the “strongly agree” and “agree” categories of responses in the questionnaire have been combined for the purpose of the analysis. The percentages for the “strongly disagree” and “disagree” categories of responses have also been combined.

The following are the research questions that were posed:

- How do students rate their motivation to improve their English language proficiency?
- How can their motivation best be characterised - intrinsic or extrinsic/instrumental or integrative?
- Do students feel that it is important to be motivated?
- If so, why?
- What are students' dominant attitudes towards English?
- What are students' dominant attitudes towards the status and importance of English in South Africa?
- What are students' dominant attitudes towards native speakers of English?
- What are students' dominant attitudes towards speakers of ESL?
- What are students' dominant attitudes towards the Academic English module?
- What **specific** instances of motivation (e.g. encouragement by parents or lecturers, lecturers' own motivation in presenting the course, high marks, feedback, rewards etc.) are rated positively by the students in the research group?

4.2 SECTION A: RESPONDENTS' GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Figure 1: Gender of Respondents



The target sample comprised 382 participants. However, only 150 students participated in the research. There were more male participants than females. Out of 150 respondents, 56% were males and 44% were females.

Table 1: Country of Origin and Home Language

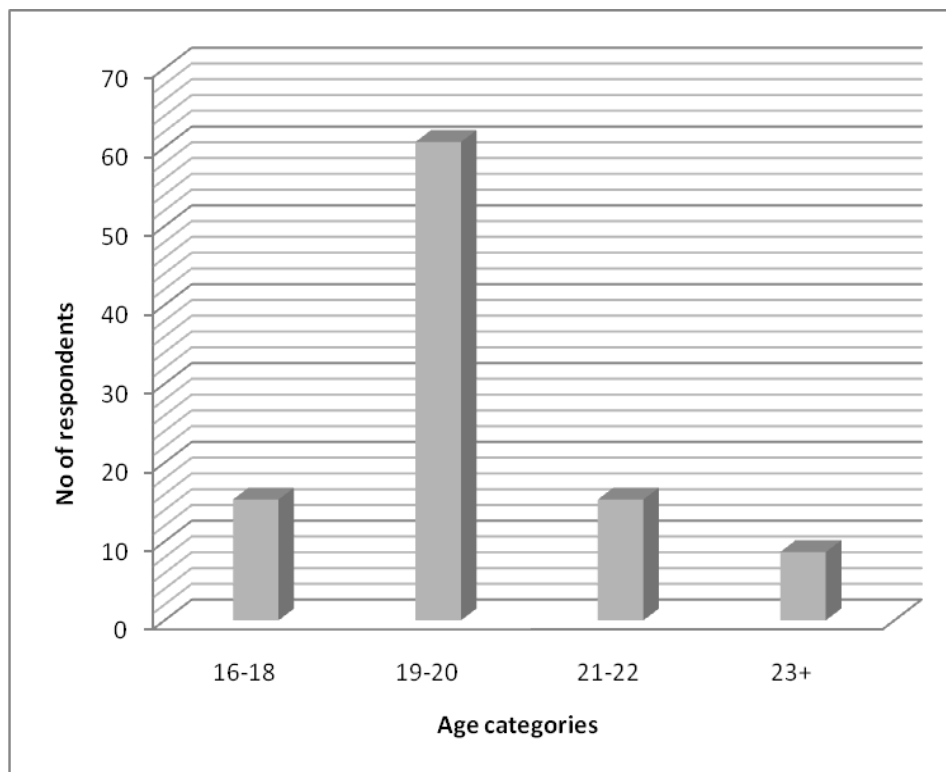
Home language	Frequency	Percent
1. South Africa, English	14	10
2. South Africa, Afrikaans	2	1.43
3. South Africa, IsiZulu	8	5.71
4. South Africa, Xitsonga	2	1.43
5. South Africa, Tshivenda	3	2.14
6. South Africa, IsiNdebele	1	0.71
7. South Africa, IsiSwazi	1	0.71
8. South Africa, Sepedi	4	2.86
9. South Africa, Sesotho	4	2.86
10. South Africa, Setswana	8	5.71
11. South Africa, IsiXhosa	1	0.71
12. SA citizen, Hindi	1	0.71
13. SA citizen, English and	1	0.71

Bemba		
14. Zimbabwe, English	6	4.29
15. Zimbabwe, Shona	33	23.57
16. Zimbabwe, Shona & English	4	2.86
17. Zimbabwe, Ndebele	5	3.37
18. Zimbabwe, Ndebele, English, Shona	1	0.71
19. Zimbabwe, Ndebele & Setswana	1	0.71
20. Zambia, English	5	3.57
21. Zambia, Bemba	2	1.43
22. Zambia, Nsenga	2	1.43
23. Zambia, Swahili	2	1.43
24. Swaziland, English	2	1.43
25. Swaziland, Isizulu	2	1.43
26. Swaziland, Isiswati	2	1.43
27. Botswana, Setswana	4	2.86
28. Tanzania, Swahili	3	2.14
29. Uganda, Nyanja	2	1.43
30. Uganda, Luganda	1	0.71
31. Malawi, English	1	0.71
32. Angola, Kimbundu	1	0.71
33. Nigeria, English	1	0.71
34. Nigeria, Yoruba	1	0.71
35. Nigeria, Edu	1	0.71
36. Nigeria, Ibo	1	0.71
37. Congo, French	2	1.43
38. Congo, Swahili	2	1.43
39. Gabon, French	2	1.43

40. Namibia, Afrikaans	2	1.43
41. Ethiopia, English	2	1.43
42. England, English	2	1.43
43. Lesotho, Sesotho	2	1.43
44. Other English	2	1.43
45. No country mentioned	2	1.43
Total	150	100%

The majority of the respondents (76.43%) have English as their second language. Only 23.57% of the respondents are English speakers for whom English is their mother tongue as well as their Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT).

Figure 2: Age of Respondents



The majority of the respondents (60.67%) are between the ages of 19 and 20 years. Less than 10% of the respondents are above the age of 23 years. The average age of students upon the completion of high school education is 18 years. This fact could be the reason why the majority of the respondents are between the ages of 19 and 20 years old.

Figure 3: Country of origin

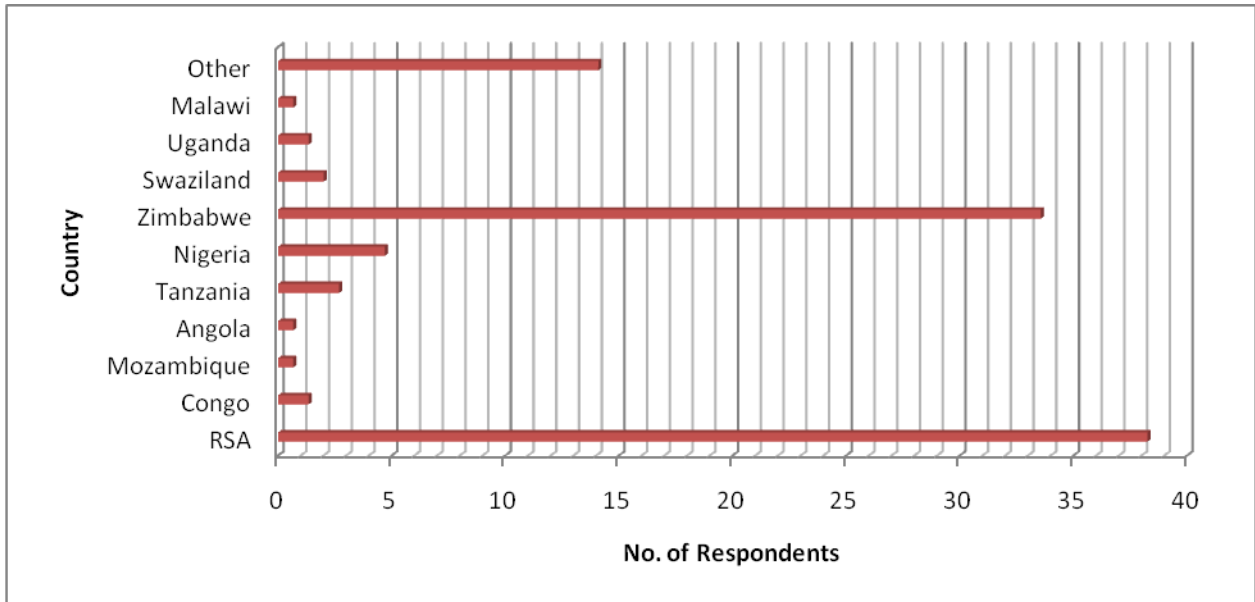
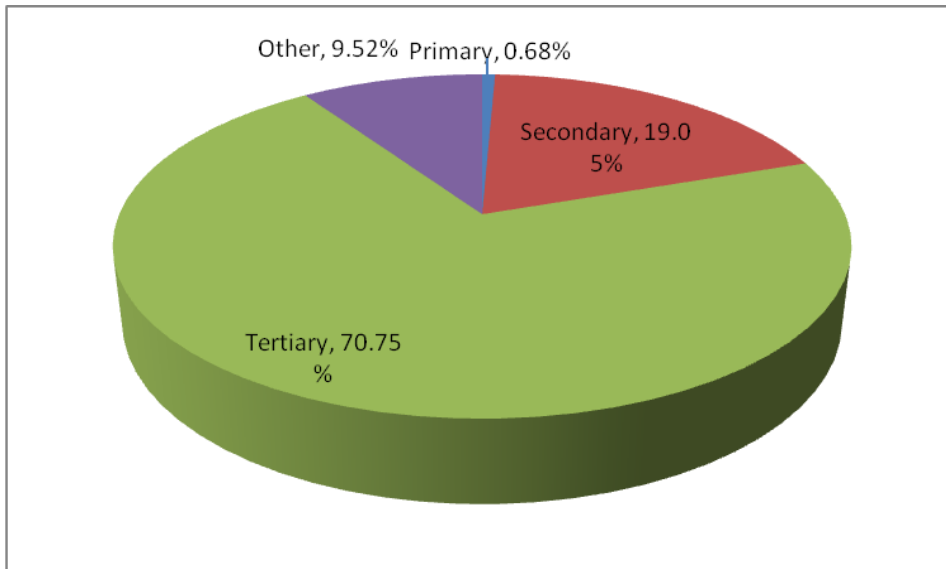


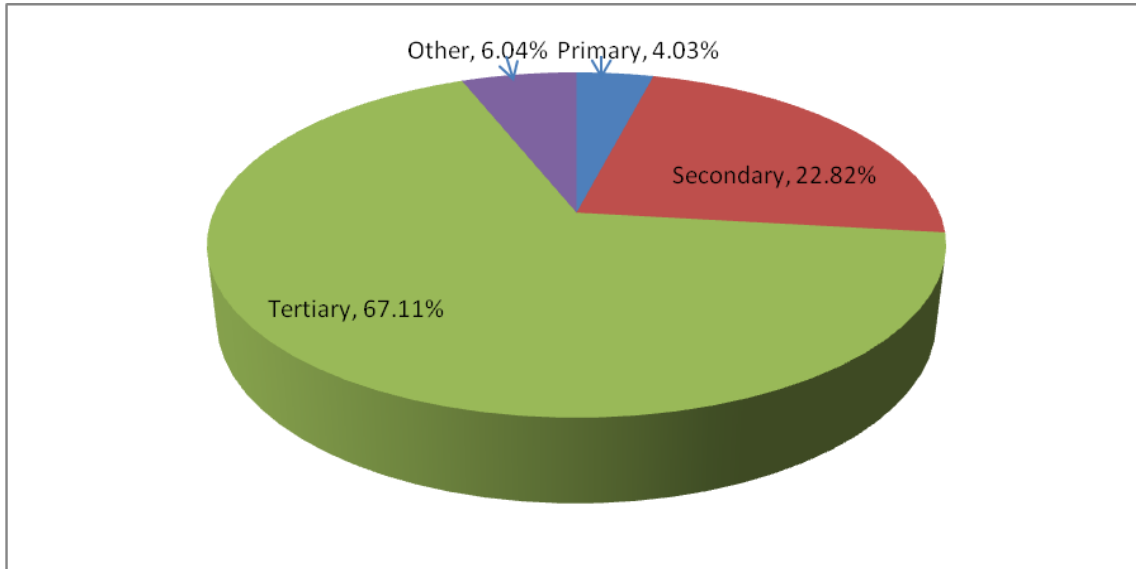
Figure 3 above indicates that the majority of respondents are from South Africa and Zimbabwe. South African and Zimbabwean respondents comprise 38.26% and 33.56% respectively of the total number in the sample. In total, 71.82% of the respondents are from these two countries.

Figure 4: Fathers' highest educational qualification



A total of 70.75% of the respondents indicate that their fathers had reached the tertiary level of education, while only 19.05% had reached the secondary school level and 0.68% had dropped out of school at the primary school level.

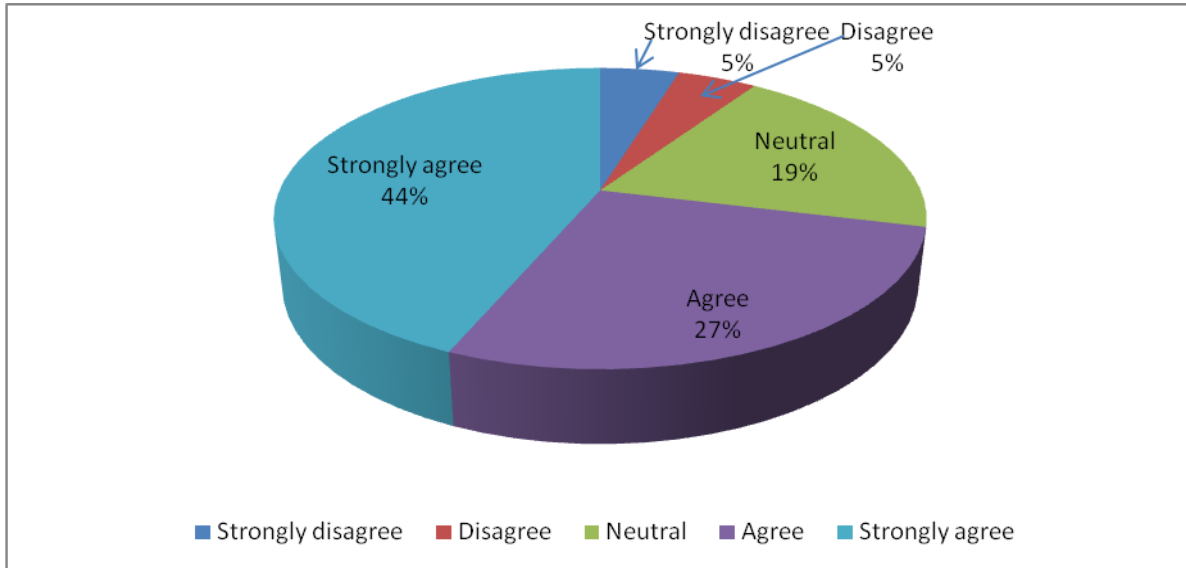
Figure 5: Mothers' highest educational qualification



It is clear from figure 5 that 67.11% of the mothers of the respondents had reached the tertiary education level. Only 22.82% of them had reached the secondary school level and 4.03% had reached the primary school level.

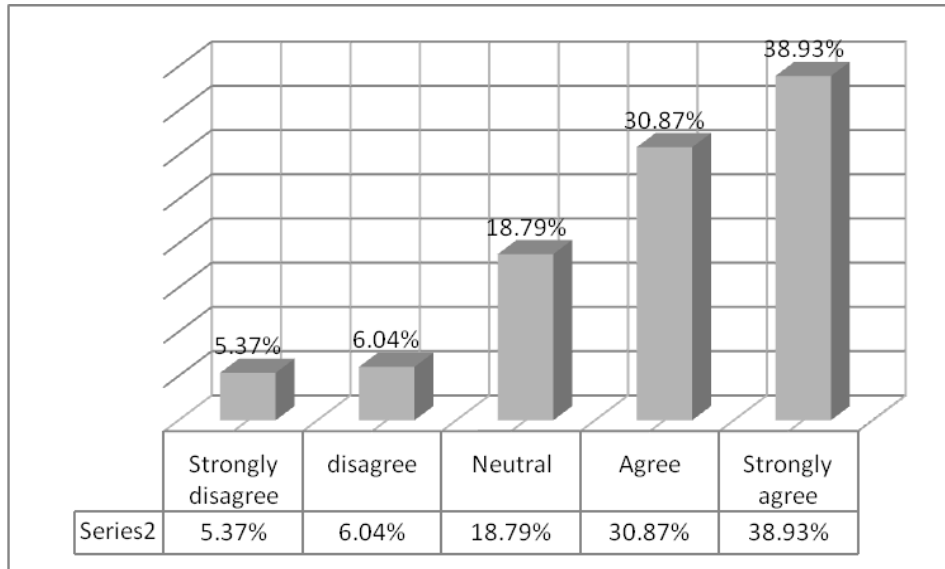
4.3 SECTION B: MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDE AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Figure 6: Academic English enables me to do well in my other subjects



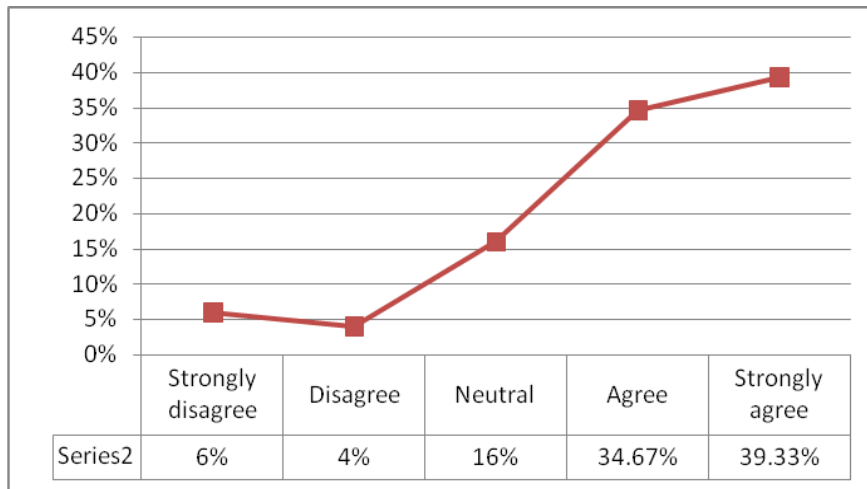
A total of 71% of the respondents agreed that Academic English enables them to do well in other subjects. However, 10% of them disagreed with this statement. These responses indicate that the students are overwhelmingly positive about the beneficial effect of Academic English, because English is the medium of instruction at Monash South Africa. Competence in English could enable students to understand the content of Academic English and that of other subjects, too. This finding suggests that students would work harder to do well in Academic English in order to succeed in their studies in general. As English is also regarded as a major international language, most students might consider it to be important to develop the ability to read, write and express themselves in English.

Figure 7: It is important to be motivated to improve my proficiency?



Only 11.41% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that it is important to be motivated to improve their English language proficiency. The majority of the respondents (69.8%) agreed that motivation is important for improving English language proficiency. This finding confirms the finding discussed in the context of figure 6 above, that a large number of students are motivated to know the English language since it is, amongst other contributing factors, a language that is used for teaching and learning. This finding could also be attributed to the fact that a large number of students accept that being proficient in the English language would make it easier for them to understand Academic English and other subjects, because all the subjects at Monash are taught through the medium of English.

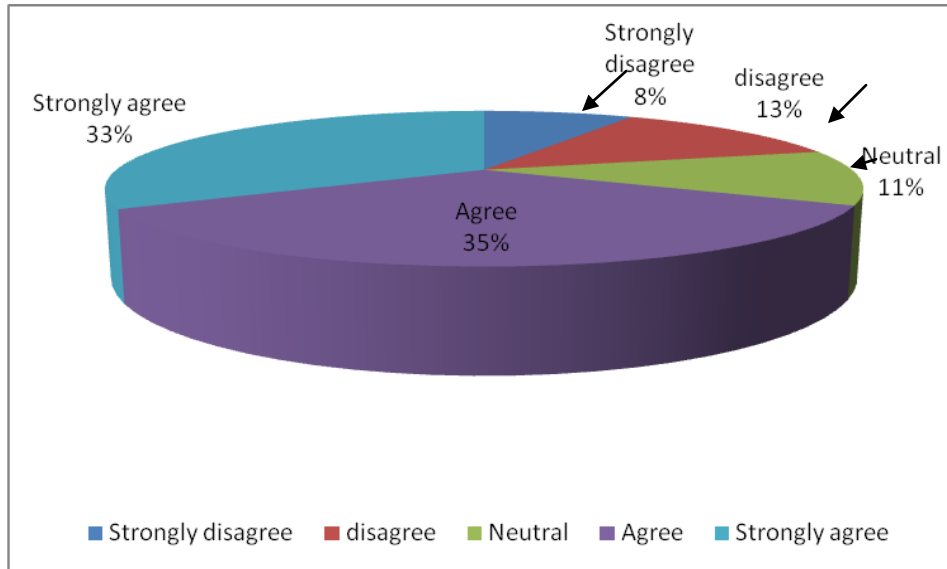
Figure 8: Getting high marks in Academic English motivates me



A total of 74% of the respondents agreed that achieving high marks motivates them to do well in Academic English, while 10% of them disagreed with the statement. Students are therefore inclined to dedicate more of their time to studying in order to achieve high marks in their tests and assignments. Motivation to learn a second language refers to the extent to which an individual is prepared to strive to master the language as a result of the satisfaction experienced in the activity (Gardner 1985:10). The more pleasant students' experiences are in the Academic English class activities, the more motivated they become to exert themselves to learn English and eventually get good marks.

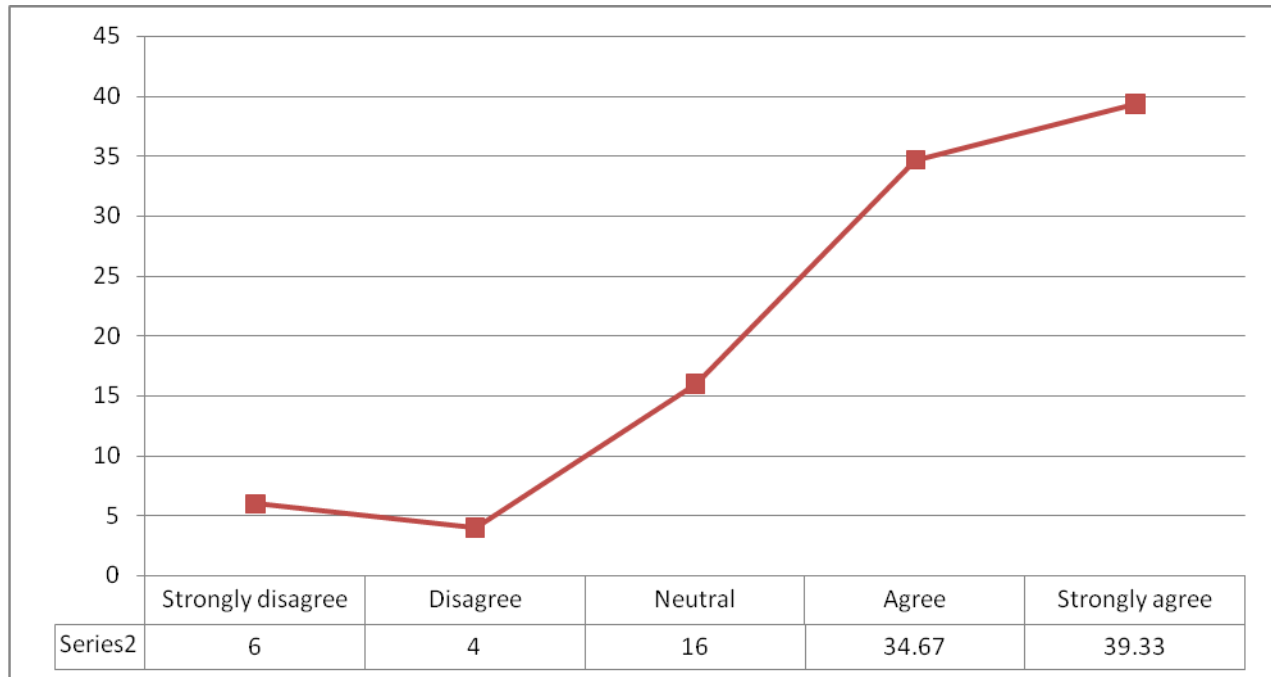
4.4 SECTION C: PARENTS AND TEACHER MOTIVATION AND PERCEPTIONS

Figure 9: it is important to get feedback from my teacher



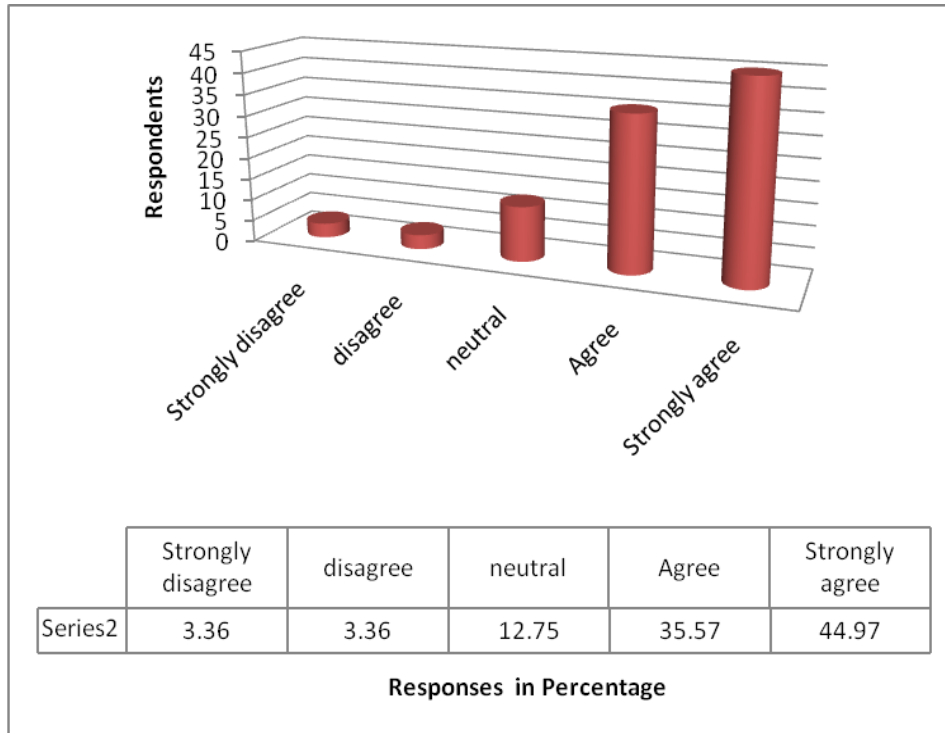
The majority of the respondents (68% in total) agreed that the teacher's feedback is important to them. It could be concluded that feedback is a strong motivating factor for them. Crooks and Schmidt (1991:227) state that teachers' attitude towards their work as well as their positive feedback play a crucial role in motivating learners to succeed in learning in a second language.

Figure 10: Getting a bonus mark in my test or exam in Academic English motivates me



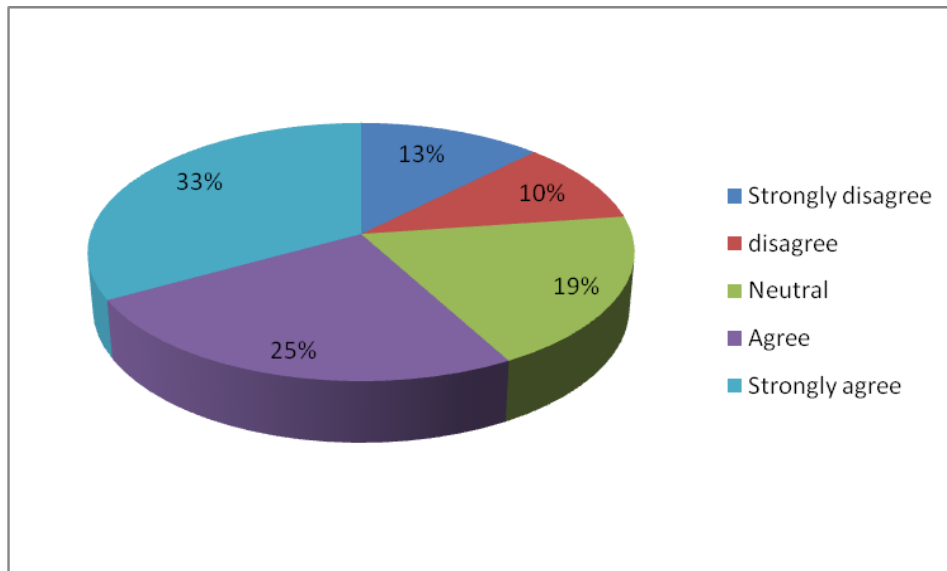
A total of 74% of the respondents agreed that getting bonus marks motivates them. This finding is supported by Cann (1992:48) when he states that learners should be provided with immediate rewards such as ‘well done stickers’, positive reinforcement or a bonus mark in order to motivate them to work harder at their studies.

Figure 11: Getting a certificate and a voucher motivates me



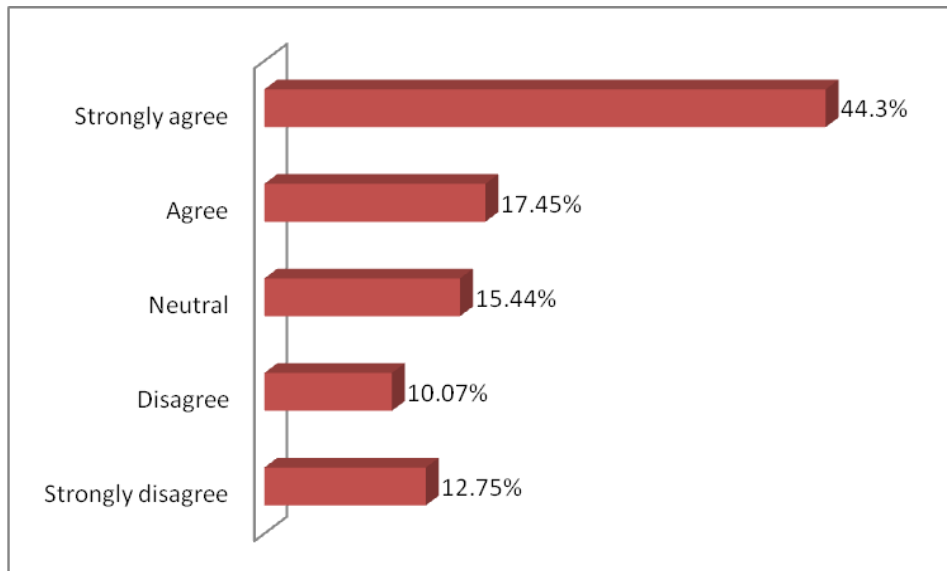
A total of 80.54% respondents agreed that getting a certificate and a voucher motivates them. These students are eager to receive public acknowledgements for their efforts. Only 3.36% of them disagreed with the statement that they would be motivated by the thought of getting a certificate or a voucher. This finding leads to the conclusion that external motivators could encourage students to perform well in English. Such extrinsic motivators include rewards such as prizes. At Monash SA rewards are given to Foundation programme students every semester at a formal award ceremony that is prepared by the Foundation Programme members of staff. Only the top three students in each subject are given a merit certificate and a R200 voucher as a reward for their good achievement.

Figure 12: I am extremely motivated to do well



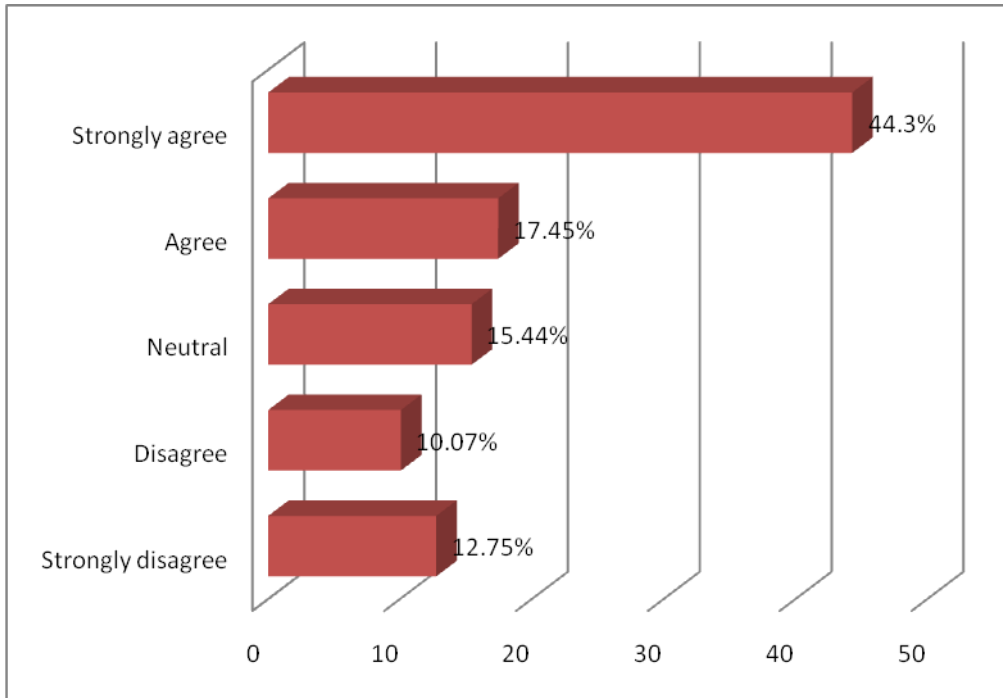
More than half of the respondents (58% in total) agreed that they feel extremely motivated to do well in their studies, whereas 23% disagreed with the statement that they are generally motivated to do well. A total of 19% of the respondents are neutral and indicate that they are not sure whether they are motivated. According to Cann (1992:48), motivation is the driving force of all actions and of the utmost importance for the attainment of English language proficiency.

Figure 13: I am motivated because English is the language that is used most in South Africa



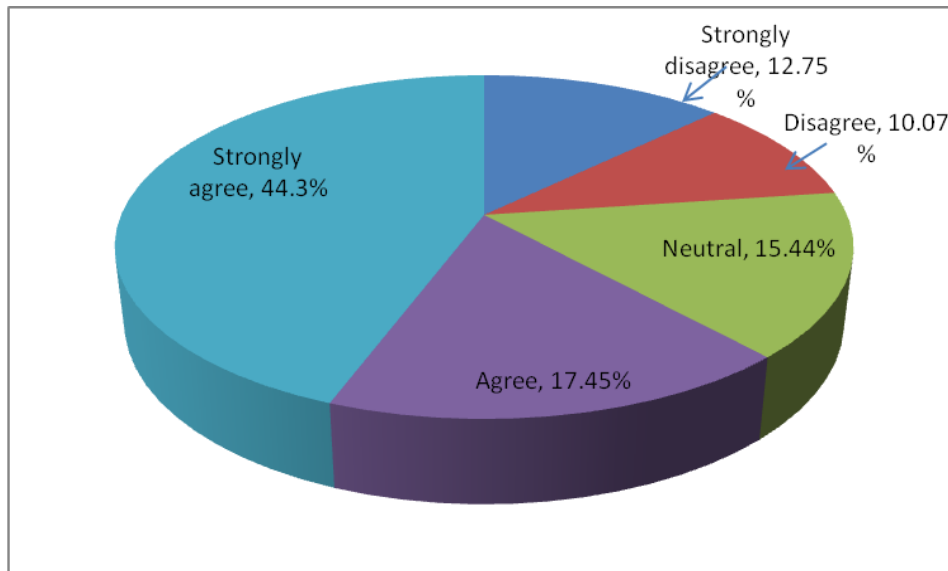
The majority of the respondents (61:75%) agreed that they are motivated to learn English, because it is the language that is used most in South Africa. Only 22.82% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. English is a language that is used for learning and teaching at MSA. This finding confirms the finding mentioned earlier that the status of English and its use as a *lingua franca* are clearly motivating factors for students. Students could be of the opinion that to be proficient in English would bring rewards in the future. English is regarded as an international language and this status could motivate students to learn the language in order to be able to communicate effectively. Instrumental reasons for learning English also motivate students to strive for communicative competence in order to broaden their outlook and to acquire new ideas.

Figure 14: English language proficiency is important for my career prospects



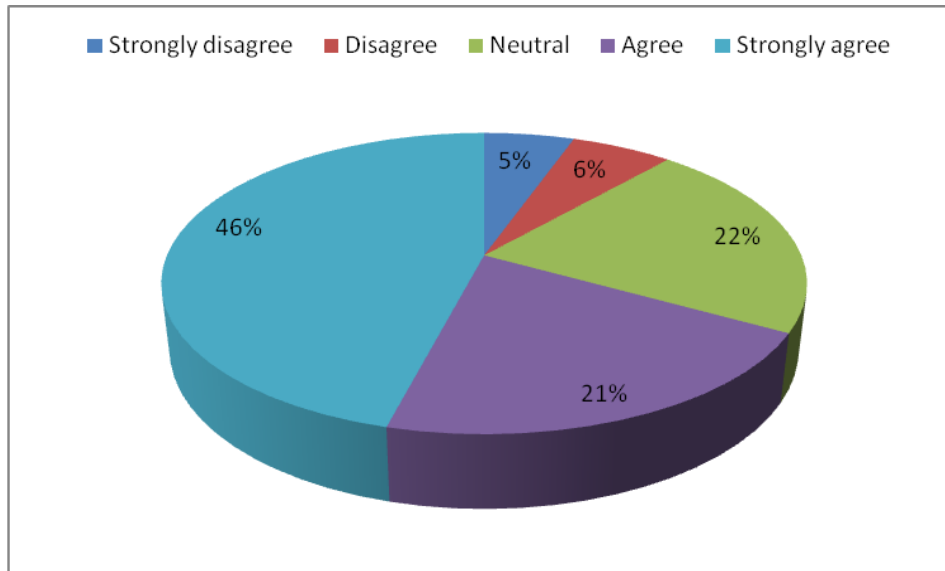
The majority of the respondents (61.75% in total) agree that English language proficiency is important for their career prospects and 22.92% of the respondents disagreed. According to Ehrman (1996:138), extrinsic motivation represents the desire for some kind of external benefits such as an increase in salary, job prospect enhancement, getting along in a foreign society or fulfilling an organisational or academic requirement. It can therefore be concluded that the respondents who agree that English language proficiency is important for their career are extrinsically motivated.

Figure 15: English is important because it is used in job interviews



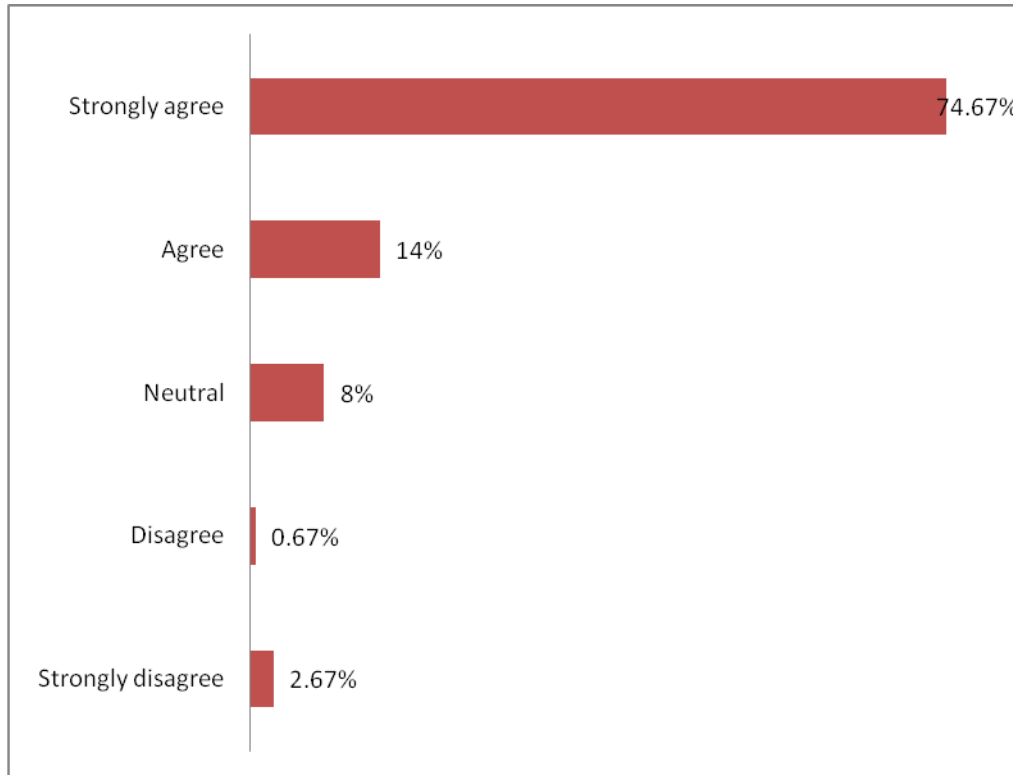
A total of 61.75% of the respondents agreed that English proficiency is important for job interviews. This view could be attributed to the fact that English is the language that is used most in job interviews in South Africa. However, 10.07% of the respondents disagreed that English is important for job interviews. According to Ehrman (1996:141) a student who is instrumentally motivated will strive to learn English in order to pass an examination. The prospects of a good job that requires English language proficiency could also motivate students to do well in English in order to enhance their chances of impressing the panel when they are being interviewed for a job.

Figure 16: I want to be proficient in English in order to socialise with a variety of people.



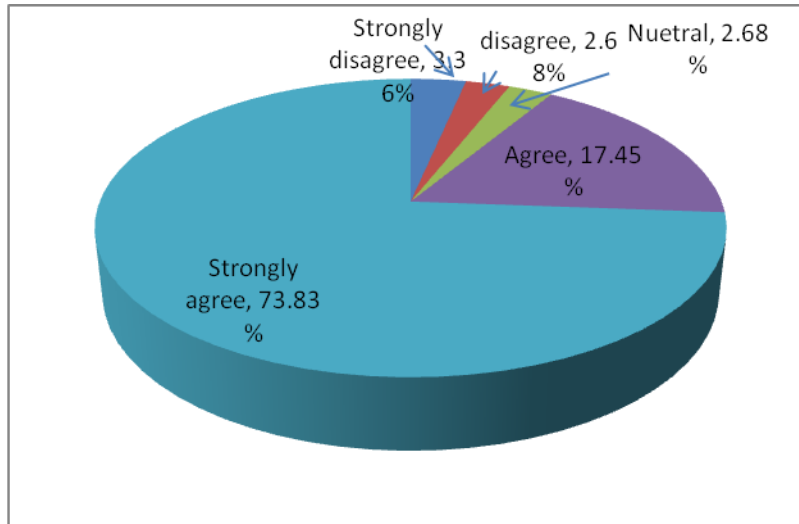
The majority of the respondents 67% agreed that they could be motivated to study Academic English by the fact that English would enable them to communicate with ease when they are socialising with other people. Only 11% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. It is important for individuals to socialise for the sake of internal satisfaction. Internal satisfaction is linked to intrinsic motivation. According to Ehrman (1996:138), intrinsic motivation occurs when people are motivated to learn a language for their own reasons and for internal satisfaction. The satisfaction that a student derives from his or her successful interaction with peers in the English language learning situations may influence his or her attitude towards the target language. When students are in a learning environment, they have a need to socialise with fellow schoolmates. An ability to communicate effectively in English at MSA is an advantage, because students come from diverse environments.

Figure 17: I cannot do my work at university if my English proficiency is lacking.



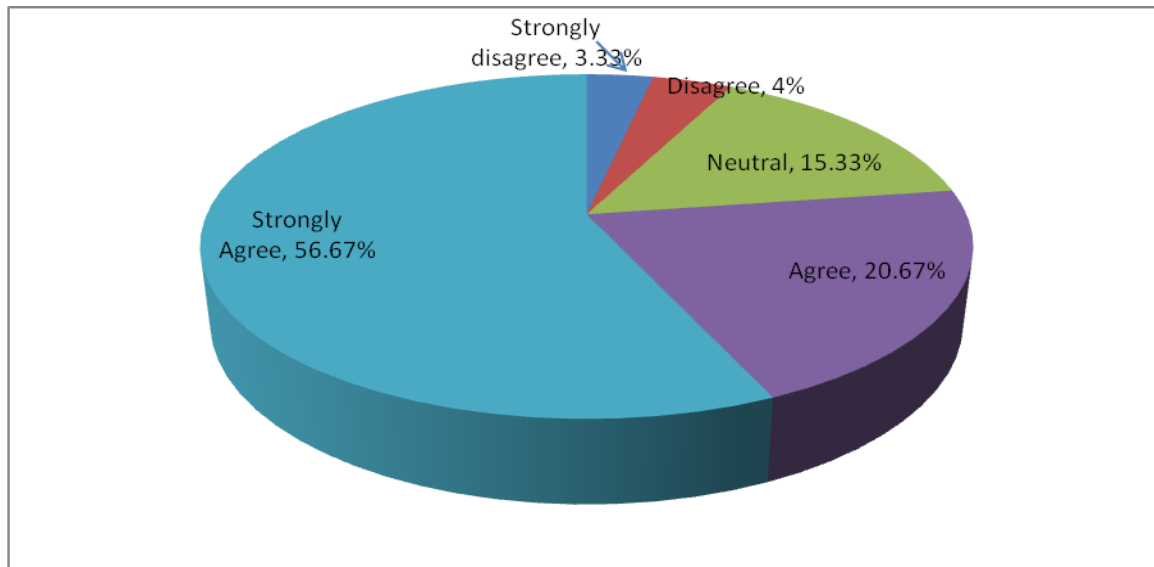
The greater majority of the respondents (88.67%) agreed that English is the language that should be mastered in order to perform well at university. Only 3.34% of them do not agree that English language proficiency enhances their chances to master their university work. The large percentage of students who agreed that they cannot do their work at university properly without being proficient in English confirms the findings of the researchers who have arrived at the same conclusion. This and other findings also confirm that students are aware of the fact that, in order to do well in all their subjects, they need to have a sound command of the language of instruction. This finding could indicate that students would strive to do well in English in order to do well in their studies in general.

Figure 18: I reward myself when I have performed well



A clear majority of 91.28% of the respondents give themselves a reward when they have performed well in Academic English, whereas only 6.04% of the respondents do not.

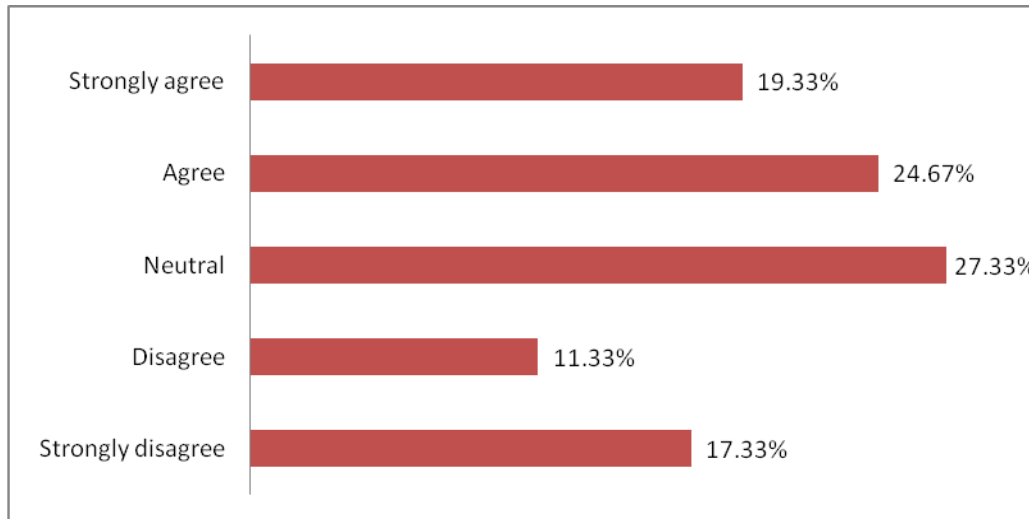
Figure 19: Academic English is my favourite subject, because it helps me to understand other modules



The majority of the respondents (77.34%) agree that Academic English is their favourite module, because English is used as the medium of instruction in the other subjects. Because English is used as the medium of instruction in other subjects, a sound comprehension of the language makes it easy for students to understand the subject

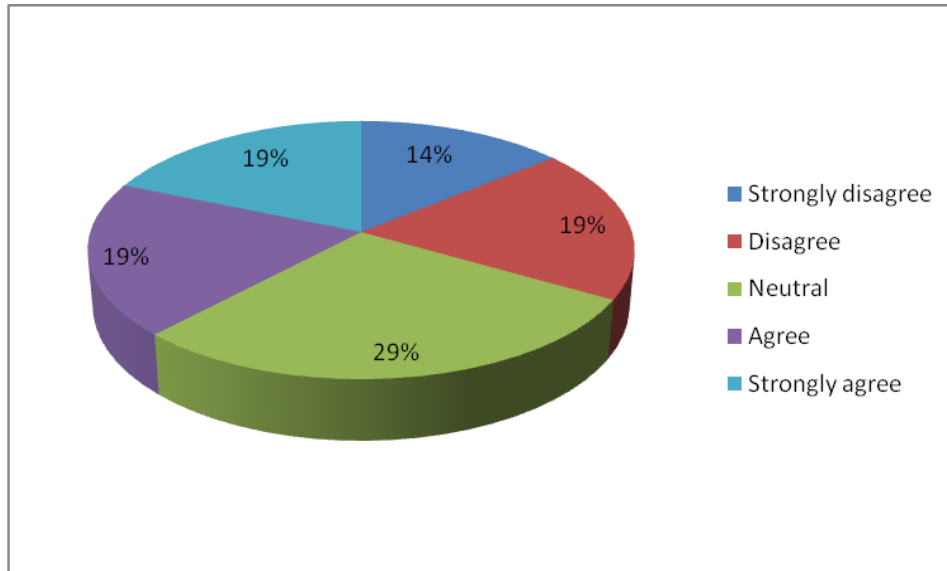
matter or content of all their subjects. Only 15.33% of the respondents took a neutral stance in this regard.

Figure 20: I do not care whether or not I pass the Academic English module



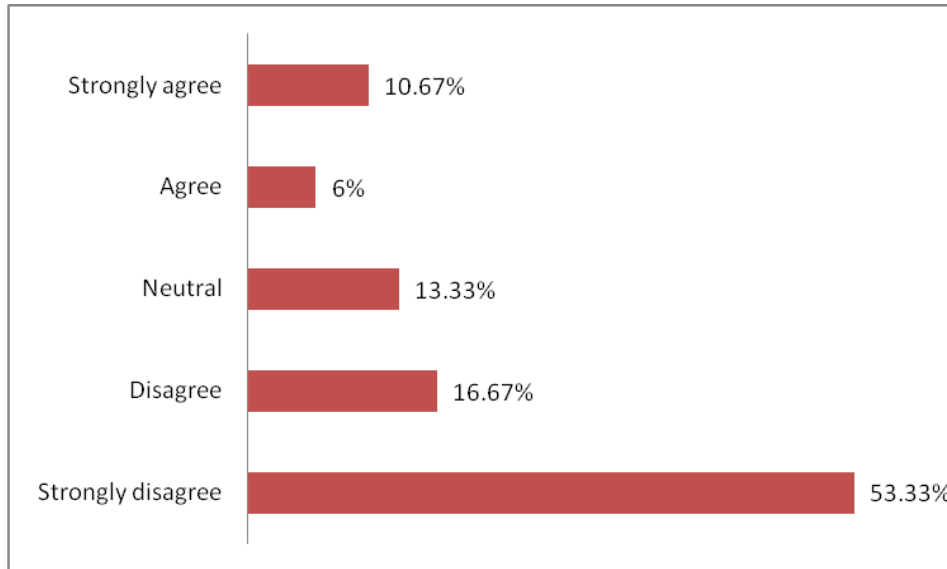
It is clear from the above figure that 27.33% of the respondents indicate that they are neutral in this regard, i.e. they are not sure whether they care about passing the Academic English module. Less than half (44%) of the respondents indicate that they do not care whether they pass the module, while 28.66% of the respondents indicate that they do care about passing the module. This response contradicts the other responses given by the respondents. For example, figure 8 indicates that 74% of the respondents agreed that achieving higher marks in Academic English motivates them to do well in the module. The finding in figure 19 indicates that 77.34% of the respondents stated that Academic English is their favourite subject. It is therefore questionable why most of the respondents would state that they do not care whether they pass the Academic English module while on the other hand they indicated that, achieving high marks motivates them, they like English as a subject and there is a need to master the language in order to perform well. There is clearly a need for further investigation of these contrasting findings.

Figure 21: I feel it is important to be motivated to pass Academic English



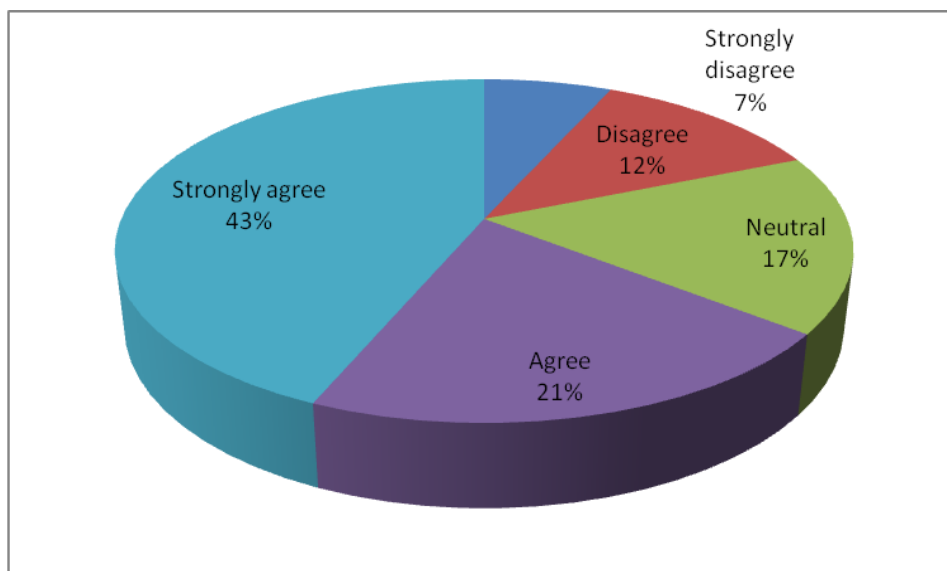
Only 38% of the respondents agreed that it is important to be motivated to pass the Academic English module, while 33% do not think so and 29% are neutral on the issue. Motivation is a key to success. Lack of knowledge of the importance of motivation could be the reason why the participants responded to the statement in the way that they did. This indicates a more or less divided opinion on the part of the respondents regarding their motivation towards the importance of passing the Academic English module. The responses to this statement and the preceding one could indicate that, even though students are motivated to master the language, it is not because of a desire to pass the module, but it could be because of the influence of the other factors referred to above.

Figure 22: My parents help me with my assignments



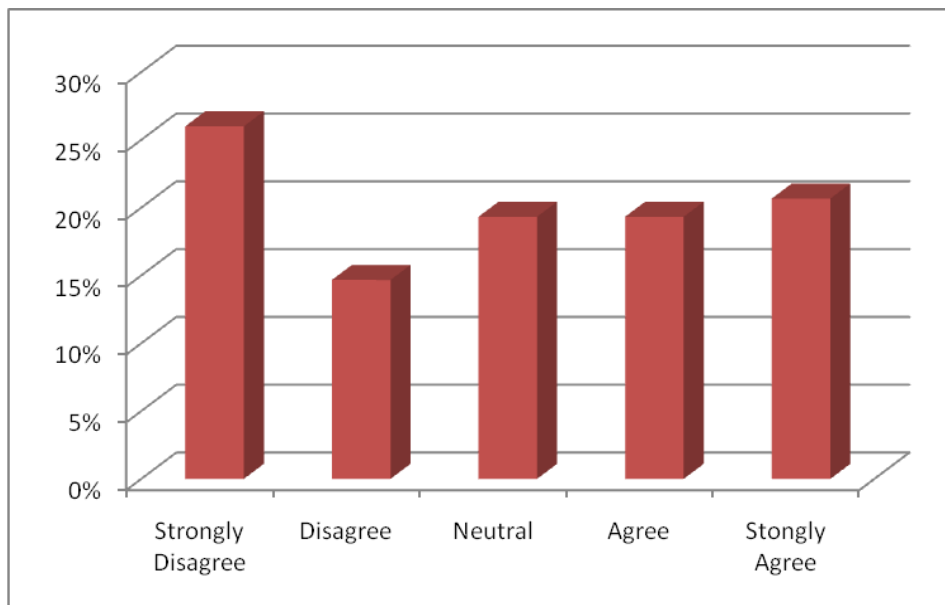
A total of 70% of the respondents indicate that their parents do not help them with their assignments. Only 16.67% indicate that their parents do assist them with their assignments. However, students' lack of parental assistance does not affect their motivation to be proficient in English. The students' motivation to do well is therefore not necessarily derived from the form of assistance that they receive from their parents, but derived from other factors. Those other factors could be contained in their extrinsic or intrinsic motives.

Figure 23: My parents encourage me to do well



The majority (64%) of the respondents stated that their parents encourage them to do well in Academic English, while 19% disagreed with the statement. Even though many parents do not assist their children with their studies, they generally do encourage them to do well. Parents play an important role in their children’s education. The encouragement indicated in figure 23 could be due to the fact that most of the parents in this investigation had reached university level, as indicated in figures 4 and 5 (fathers 70.75% and mothers 67.11%). Parents could be aware of the fact that the higher the level of education that their children reach, the greater their career prospects will be and hence the encouragement they give their children.

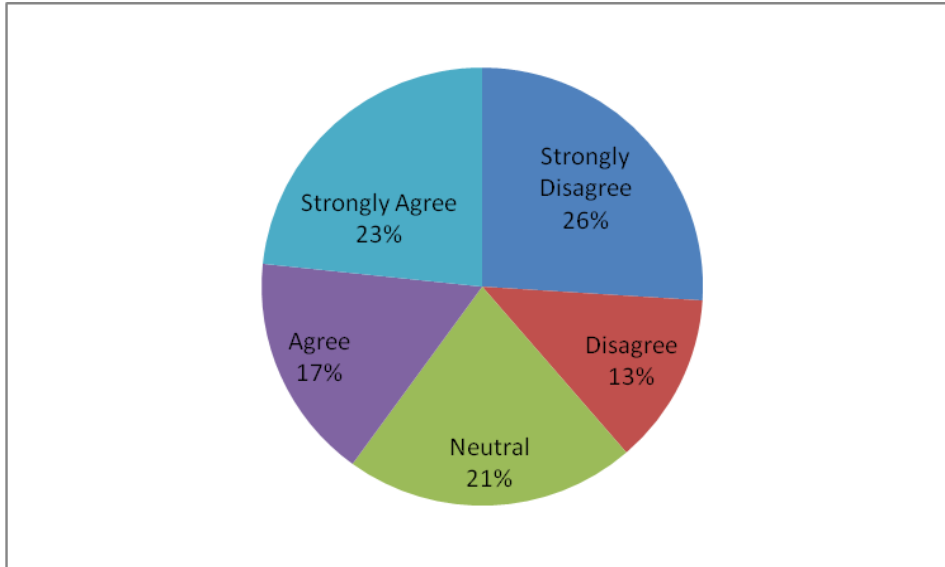
Figure 24: My parents encourage me to listen to English medium radio and TV



A total of 40.67% of the respondents are not encouraged to listen to English medium radio and to watch English television programmes. A total of 40% of the respondents agreed that they are encouraged to do so, while 19.33% of the respondents are neutral about their parents’ encouragement. These responses could be indicative of an equal split between those parents who appreciate the role that English medium radio and television plays in their children’s English proficiency and those parents who do not believe in the fact that listening to English medium radio and watching English television programmes could assist their children to master the English language. Some parents

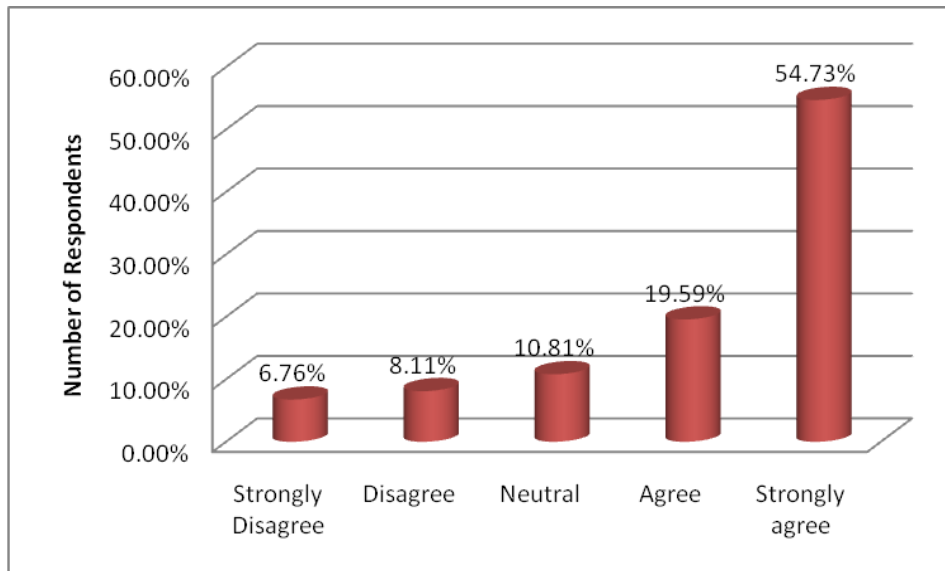
believe that television viewing distracts children from reading and therefore do not encourage their children to spend time watching television.

Figure 25: My parents buy me English books



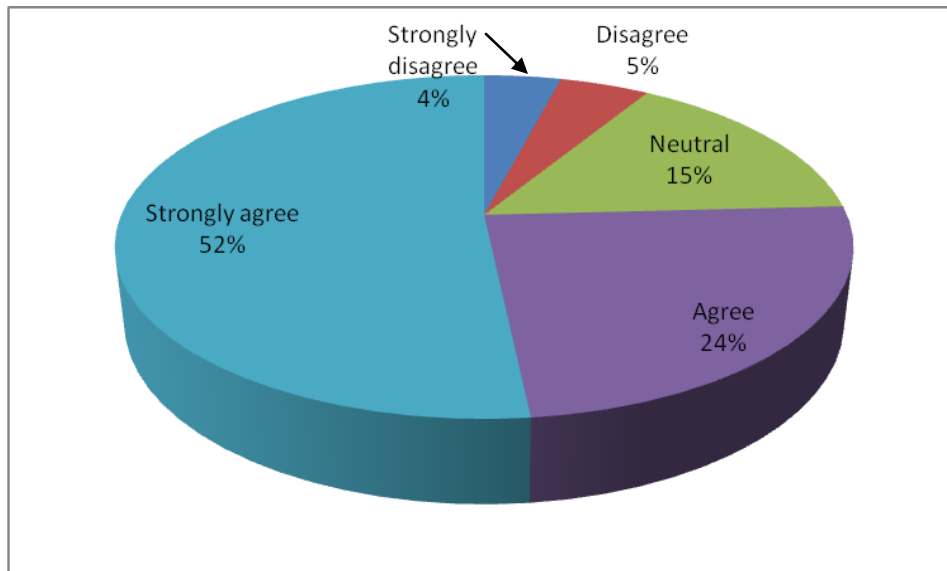
A total of 38.67% of the respondents indicate that their parents do not buy them English books, whereas 40% state that their parents do buy them English books. There is not such a significant difference between those parents who buy books for their children and those who do not. Reading English books is important to increase one's vocabulary. It is imperative that students should read more books, because it will assist them in improving their English language proficiency. Parents in low socio-economic status families are unable to buy books for their kids because of their lack of financial resources, whereas parents from middle and/or high socio-economic status could afford to do so and hence the insignificant difference between the respondents who disagree with the statement and those who agree. This finding may therefore reflect the diversity of socio-economic status of the parents concerned.

Figure 26: My parents encourage me to speak in English



The majority of the respondents (74.32%) indicated that their parents encourage them to speak English. Only 14.87% indicated that their parents never encourage them to speak English. Parents' encouragement could assist students to practice their English communication skills. Most South African parents are of the opinion that it is important for their children to develop the ability to communicate effectively and to read and write well in English, mainly for instrumental reasons. This could be the reason why most parents would enrol their children in well-resourced schools with the belief that their children's command of English would improve for various reasons. Despite the fact that the percentage of parents who assist their children with school work, buy them books or encourage them to listen and watch the English news is not significantly high, parents do, however, encourage their children to speak English. This trend could be attributed to the belief that the ability to speak English well is a status symbol in many communities and also augurs well for the prospect of getting a good job.

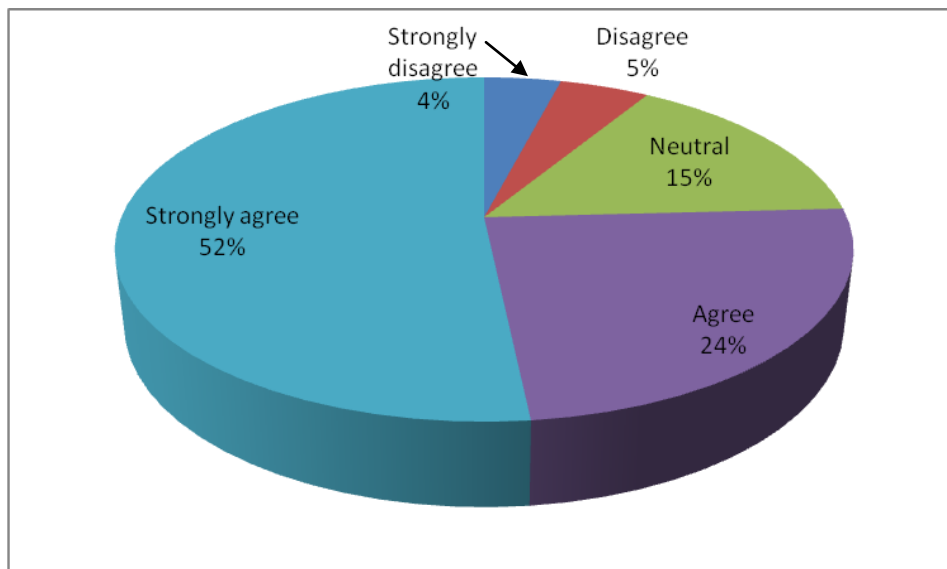
Figure 27: it is important to me that my parents should motivate me.



Altogether 76% of the respondents indicate that it is important for them that their parents should motivate them to perform well. Only 9% disagree with the statement, while 15% are neutral about their parents' motivation.

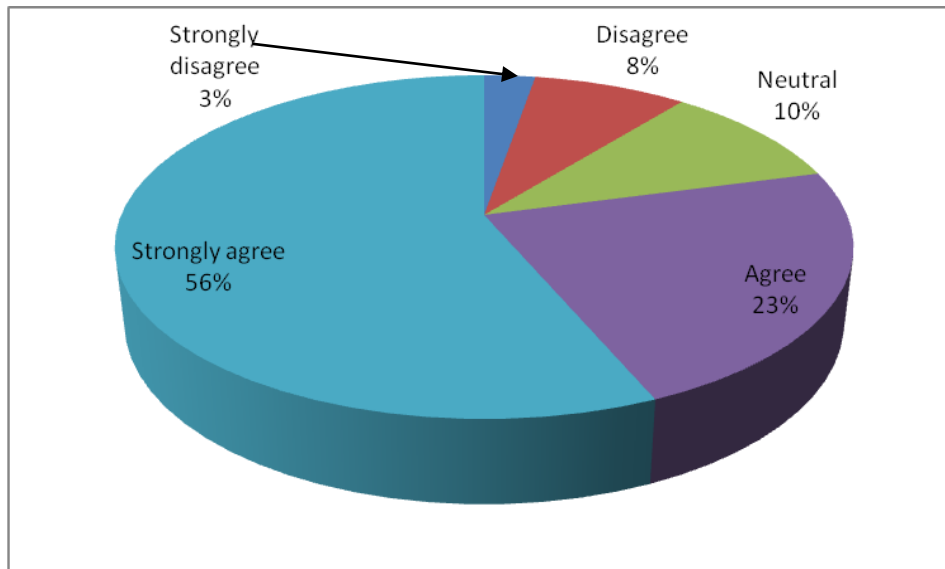
4.5 SECTION D: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE ACADEMIC ENGLISH LECTURER AND CLASSROOM SITUATION

Figure 28: it is important to me that my lecturer should motivate me.



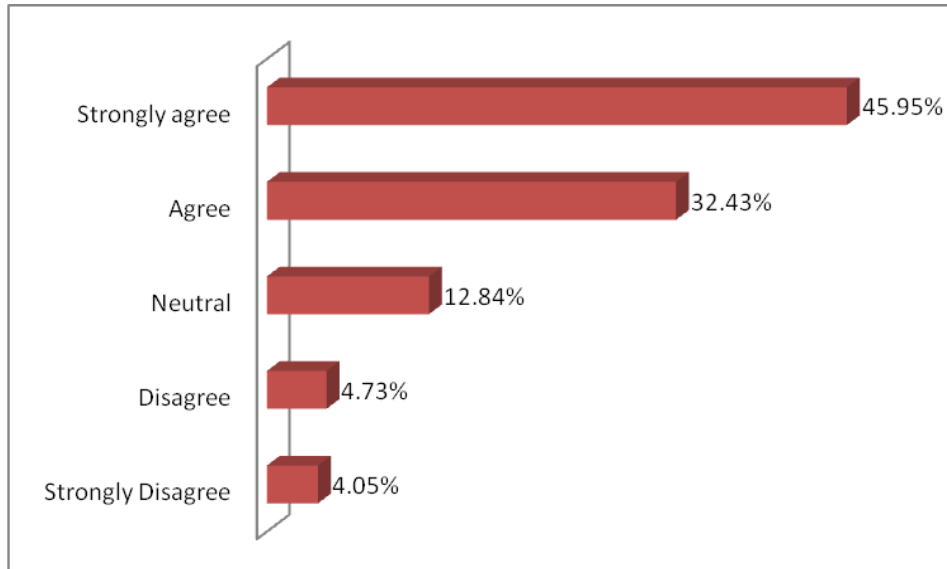
The majority of the respondents (76%) agree that it is important to them to be motivated by their lecturer, whereas 9% disagree. However, 15% of the respondents are neutral about the issue. The lecturer’s attitude, conduct, preparedness for the lessons, including the lecturer’s commitment and the variety of teaching methods used, are factors that could play an important role in developing the students’ motivation in the classroom situation.

Figure 29: My lecturer is always prepared for the lesson



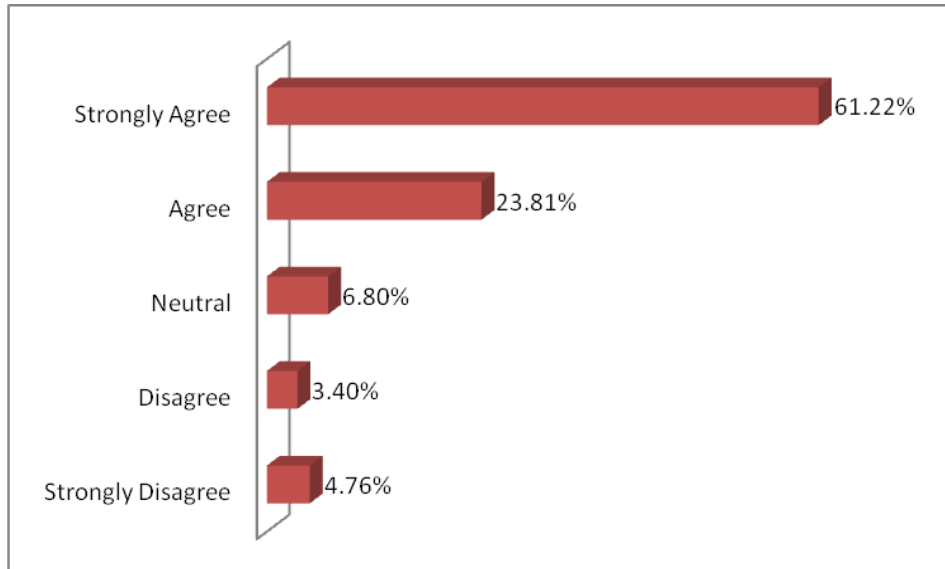
In total, 79% of the respondents are of the opinion that their lecturer is always prepared for the Academic English lessons. However, 11% of the respondents disagreed with the statement and 10% are neutral in respect of it. It is imperative that the lecturer should come to the lesson well prepared. The lecturer’s choice of method and teaching strategies is influenced by his or her approach to the lesson, ability to involve learners in performing various tasks and replies to questions asked by students. The lecturer’s involvement of students in all class activities could be an indication of his or her preparedness for the lesson and mastery of the subject content. Well-prepared lessons are worth attending and could also contribute towards students’ enjoyment of the module. The lecturer’s level of commitment, attitude towards his or her professional work and presentation of knowledge to students in a positive manner could enhance students’ motivation and academic competence.

Figure 30: My lecturer gives me feedback.



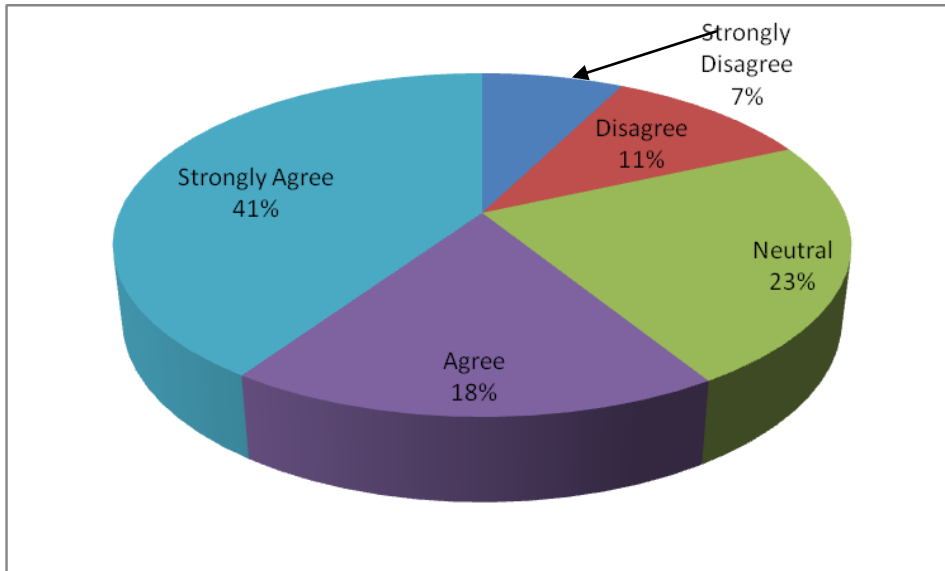
A total of 82.38% of the respondents indicate that the lecturer gives them feedback after every assessment. Only 8.78% of the respondents indicate the contrary. A total of 12.84% of the students take a neutral stance in this regard. Feedback enables students to determine where they have made mistakes and prepares them to answer questions in the examination. In figure 9, it was indicated that 68% of the respondents indicate that receiving feedback from their lecturer is important to them.

Figure: 31: My lecturer gives us an opportunity to ask questions.



It is clear from the above figure that the majority of respondents (85.03%) agree that their lecturer gives them the opportunity to ask questions, while 8.16% of them are of the opinion that they are not given sufficient time to ask questions. This finding is an indication of a sound classroom environment. It is important for both students and their lecturer to interact during the lessons in order to obtain clarifications where it is necessary. Asking questions during a lesson stimulate participation by both the lecturer and the students. What really determines how a student feels about what is learnt in class is how interested they are in the subject and how involved they are during the lesson. Students should not be passive recipients of the knowledge presented, but should be active learners who take responsibility for their learning.

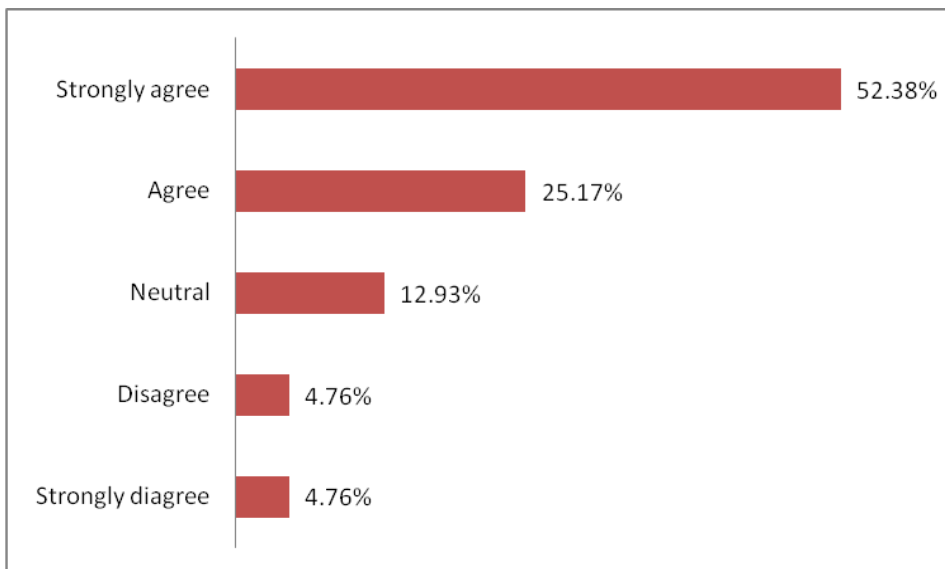
Figure: 32 My lecturer encourages me to read more.



More than half of the respondents (59%) agree with the statement that the lecturer encourages them to read. Only 18% of the respondents disagree with it. The more you read the more you become knowledgeable. Encouraging students to read could lead to their increased understanding of the English language module as well as their increased proficiency in the language.

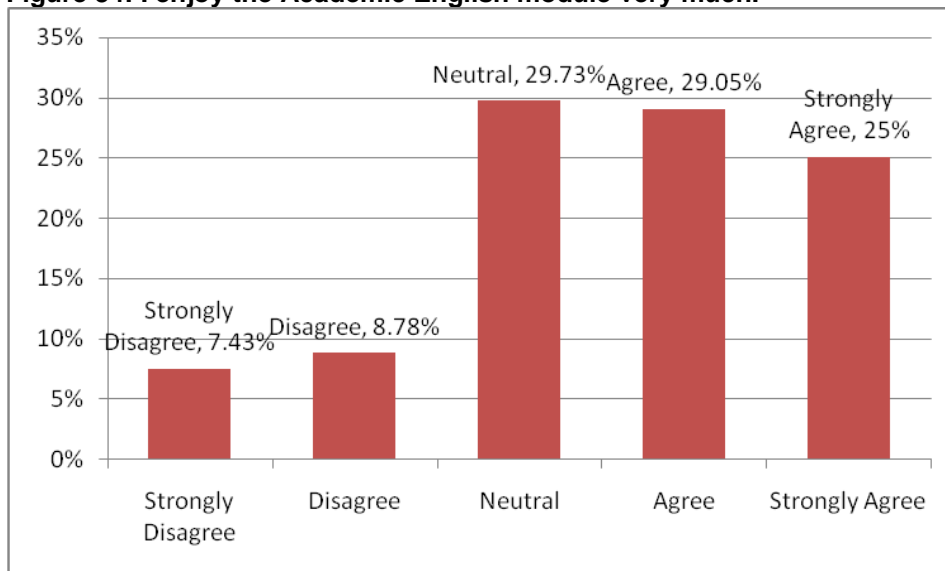
4.6 SECTION E: ATTITUDE

Figure 33: I feel good when my lecturer praises me.



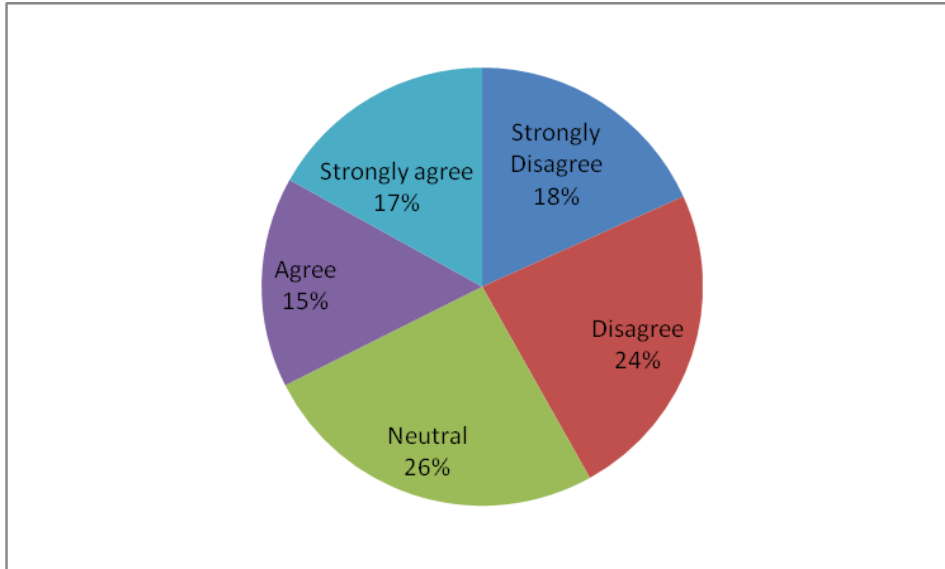
A total of 77.55% of the respondents indicate that they feel good when their lecturer praises them. Only 9.52% of them were neutral on the issue and appear not to care whether or not they are praised. In the discussion of figures 11 and 18, it is indicated that the majority of respondents agree that receiving a certificate and a voucher as well as the prospect of rewarding themselves for good performance contribute to their motivation to perform well.

Figure 34: I enjoy the Academic English module very much.



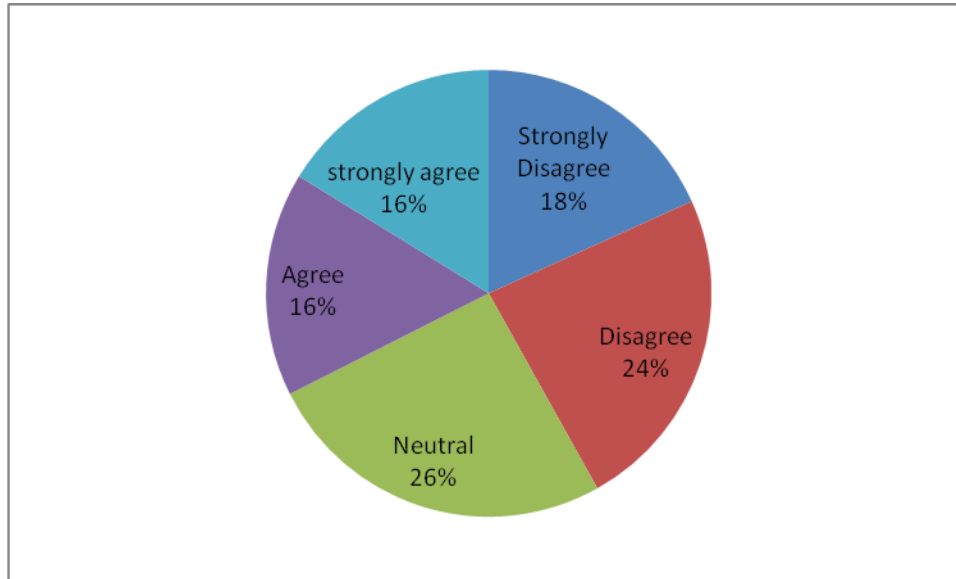
Slightly more than half of the respondents (54%) are of the opinion that they enjoy the Academic English module very much, whereas 16% of the respondents disagree with the statement and 30% are neutral towards it. The percentage of neutral respondents is not in line with the norm in most of the findings. In most instances the percentage of neutral respondents has been less than the percentage of respondents who disagreed. Enjoying the module is supposed to be one of the main factors that contribute towards the students' motivation.

Figure 35: The Academic English module is my favourite module.



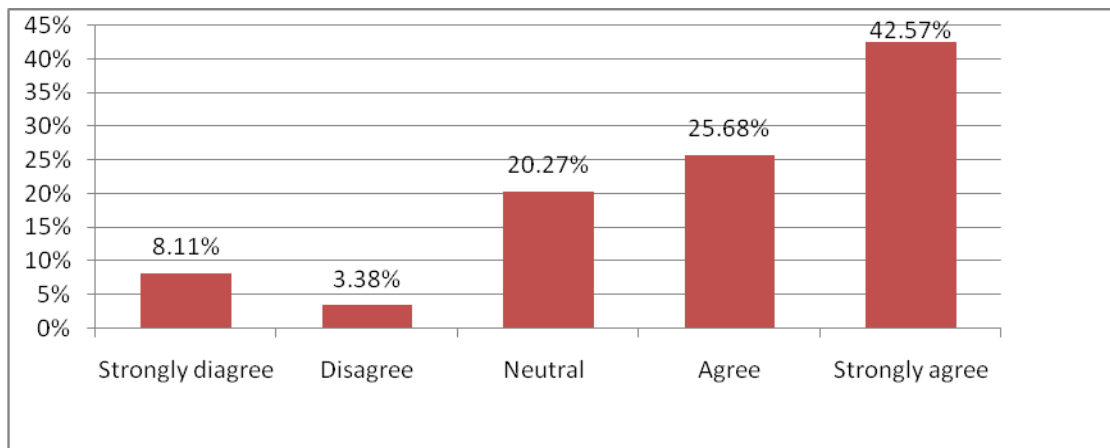
A total of 32% of the respondents agree that they like the Academic English module, while 42% of the respondents disagree with the statement that it is their favourite module. Altogether 26% of the respondents are neutral in this regard. This finding contradicts most of the preceding findings as the responses to the majority of the motivation-related questions point towards the respondents liking the module. Doing your favourite module is supposed to be one of the factors that contributes towards becoming motivated to do well in the module. For example, in the findings presented in figure 19, 77.34% of the respondents indicate that Academic English is their favourite subject, because it helps them to understand other modules.

Figure 36: Academic English is a waste of time.



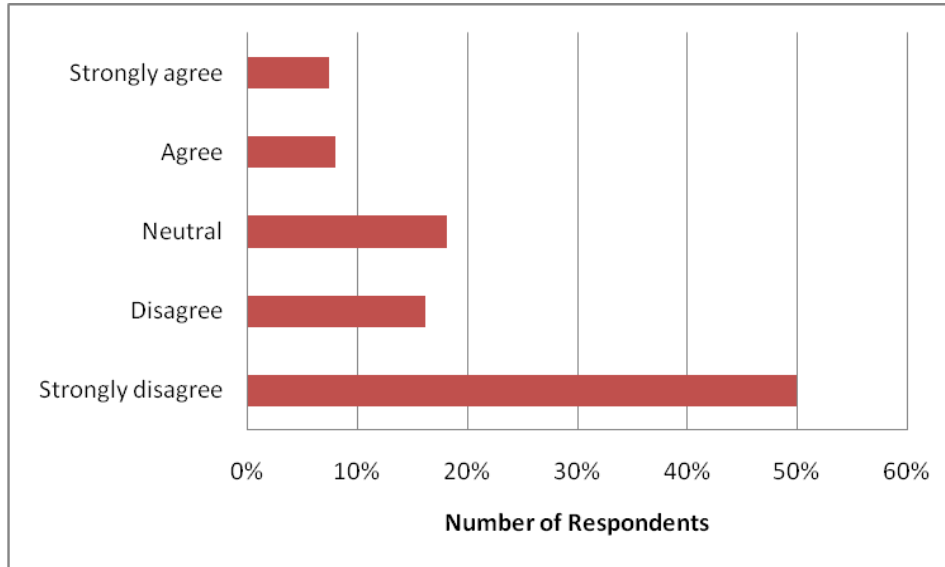
Less than half of the respondents (42%) indicate that they do not consider the Academic English module to be waste of time, while 32% think that it is. Considering the fact that 26% of the respondents take a neutral position in this regard, then 58% of the students give no clear indication that Academic English is NOT a waste of time. In the analysis of figure 6, a total of 71% of the respondents indicate that Academic English enables them to well in other subjects and in figure 34, 54% of the respondents are of the opinion that they enjoy the Academic English module very much. This finding gives some support to the fact that the learning of Academic English is not considered to be a waste of time.

Figure 37: I like people who can speak English very well.



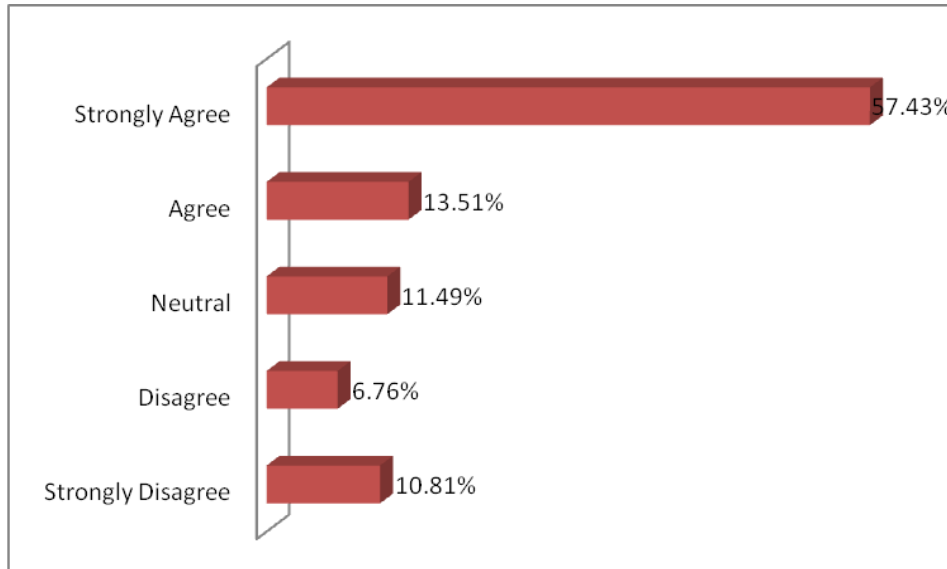
The majority of the respondents (69%) like people who can speak English very well while 11% of them take a neutral position in this regard. Students could have a positive attitude towards English mother tongue speakers and people who speak English very well for instrumental reasons, for example to improve their vocabulary in order to perform better academically, but not necessarily for integrative reasons.

Figure 38: I do not like people who do not speak English well.



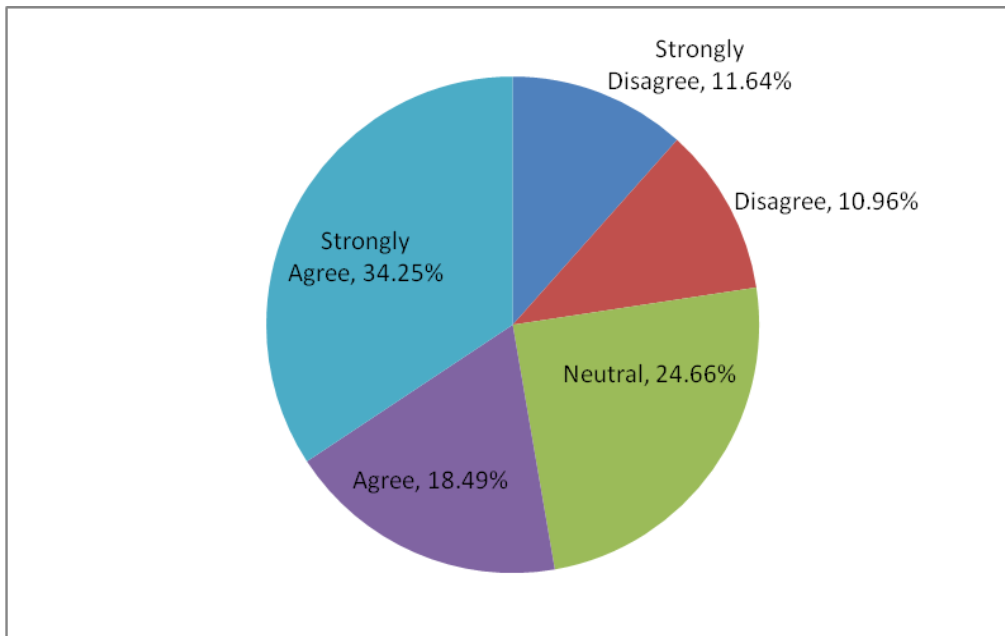
Altogether 66.22% of the respondents indicate that they do like people who cannot speak English well. Only 15.54% of the respondents indicate that they do not like such people. This finding leads to the conclusion that liking or disliking people is not dependent of their English language proficiency.

Figure 39: I want to speak English like a mother tongue speaker.



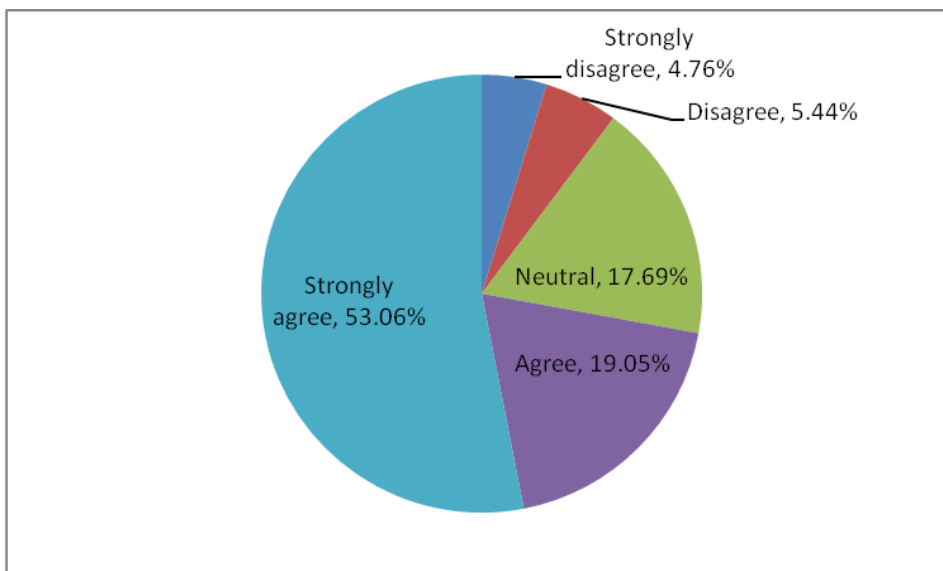
A total of 70.94% of the respondents agree that they want to speak English like a mother tongue speaker. Only 17.57% of the respondents do not endorse this ambition, while 10.81% of the respondents are neutral on the issue. The respondents could be aware of the fact that English is regarded as a *lingua franca* in South Africa and that it is important to learn the language for instrumental reasons. A student who is instrumentally motivated would learn English in order to increase his or her prospects of getting a good job that requires English language proficiency. This finding confirms Gardner and Lambert's conclusion (1972), as cited by Gardner and Lambert (1985:255-256).

Figure 40: I like English literature.



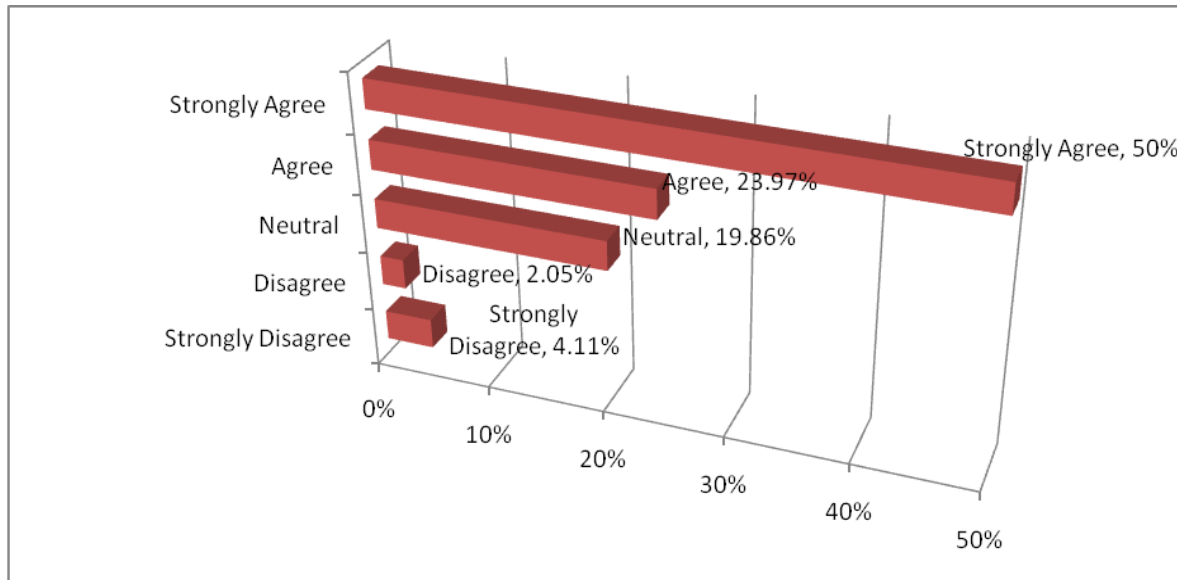
A total of 52.74% of the respondents indicate that they like English literature and 22.6% of the respondents indicate the opposite. Liking English literature is linked to intrinsic motivation. According to Lepper (1988:46), a student who is intrinsically motivated, undertakes an activity for its own sake, the enjoyment that it provides, the learning that it permits, or the feelings of accomplishment that it evokes. English literature fulfils those requirements.

Figure 41: I think that English is the most important language.



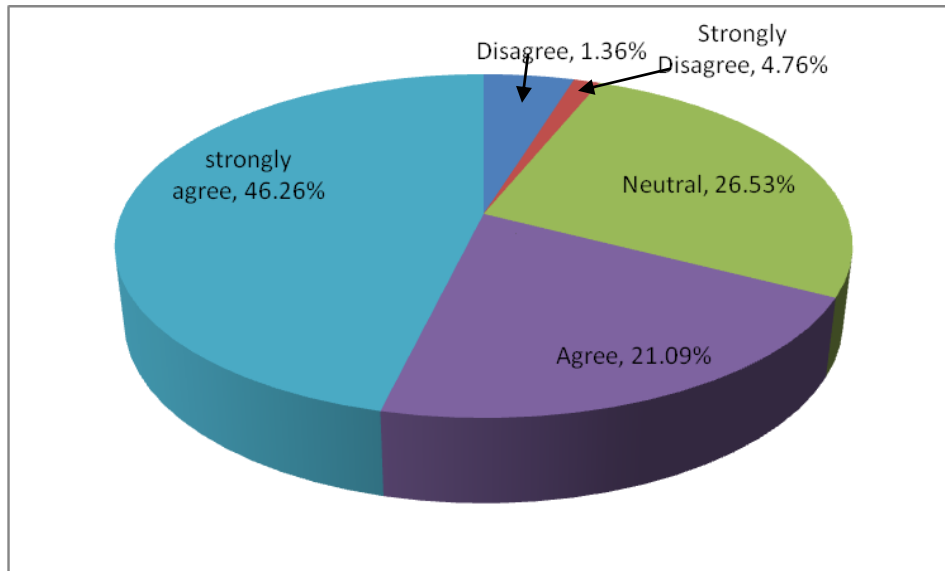
It is clear from figure 41 that most of the respondents (72%) consider English to be the most important language, while only 10% disagree with this position. English is regarded as international language. It is possible that students believe that knowing the language well will assist them in achieving their dreams.

Figure 42: I like my Academic English lecturer



Altogether 74% of the respondents indicate that they like their English lecturer, while 20% of them are neutral towards the lecturer. This finding could be a reflection of a sound atmosphere in the classroom. The finding is in line with the responses received to related questions. The majority of the respondents also indicate that their lecturer is always prepared for the lesson, provides them with feedback and gives them an opportunity to ask questions (and these factors contribute towards students liking their lecturer).

Figure 43: Is it good that English is the dominant language in South Africa?



A total of 67.35% respondents agree that it is good that English is the dominant language in South Africa. Only 6.10% of the respondents disagree with this position and 26.53% of them are neutral on the issue. Students could be aware that English is used in all aspects of life, be it in the political, economic or social sphere. People use the English language to accomplish their goals.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The aim of this research, as stated on page 5, was to investigate the nature of students' motivation (or lack thereof) in respect of and their attitude towards the ELP course in the Foundation Programme at Monash South Africa.

The conclusions that follow are based on the preceding summary of the findings of the investigation. In presenting the conclusions below, each of the research questions is stated and thereafter the findings with regard to that question are briefly explained.

- **How do students rate their motivation to improve their English language proficiency?**

The empirical investigation reveals that the majority of the students who participated in the research study agree that they are extremely motivated to improve their English language proficiency. The findings of figures 6, 7 and 12 reveal that the majority of students agree that they are extremely motivated to do well, academic English enables them to do well in other subjects and it is important to be motivated to improve their proficiency. Students need to master the English language in order to perform well at the university level. Competence in English could make it easy for them to understand the content of Academic English and other subjects. This explains why the majority of students are of the opinion that it is important to be motivated to improve their English language proficiency.

These findings are supported by Gardner (1995:206) when he states that motivation could be expected to play a direct role in the formal language training situation, because it would serve to keep the learners in the programme, influence their perception of the training situation and serve as the basis for many reinforcements that might be encountered in the classroom. Students who rate their motivation to improve their English language proficiency high, will be motivated to learn more and this will motivate them to improve their English language proficiency.

However, it should be noted that the research project reveals that 27.33% of the students indicate that they are neutral in regard to caring whether they pass the Academic English course or not (figure 20). A higher percentage of students' neutrality was also found in regard to the importance of being motivated in order to pass the Academic English course (figure 21). The high percentage of students' neutrality was also found in regard to Academic English being a favourite module and waste of time (figures 35 and 36).

The findings of figures 20, 21, 35 and 36 contradict the other responses provided by the respondents. The finding of figure 8, for example, indicates that the majority of respondents agree that achieving higher marks in Academic English motivates them to do well in the module. The finding of figure 34 indicates that more than half of the respondents state that they enjoy the Academic English module very much. The finding of figure 18 indicates that Academic English is the students' favourite subject because it helps them to understand other modules.

In general, the research findings reveal that students rate their motivation to improve their English language proficiency high. The findings of figures 20, 21, 35 and 36 contradict most of the other motivation-related findings as the responses to the majority of the findings point towards the students liking the module. There is therefore a need for further investigation of these contrasting findings.

- **How can their motivation best be characterised. Is it intrinsic or extrinsic/instrumental or integrative?**

Ehrman (1996:137) is of the opinion that extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation are mutually exclusive. The findings of figures 8, 10 and 11 reveal that the majority of students are of the opinion that getting a certificate or a voucher as well as getting high marks and a bonus mark motivate them to do well in Academic English. The finding of figure 18 indicates that students reward themselves when they perform well. These findings indicate that there exists a positive link between achieving high marks; getting a bonus mark; obtaining a certificate, reward and shopping vouchers and motivation.

The research project also reveals that students are motivated to learn the English language, because it is the language used most in South Africa, it is important for their careers, they cannot do their work at university if their English proficiency is lacking, English is used in job interviews and it enables fluent communication when socialising with other people. This is supported by the findings of figures 13 to 17 and figure 19. The findings of figures 13 to 17 and figure 19 indicate that students value English

language proficiency because of the importance of English in their every day encounters.

According to Lepper (1988:46), an extrinsically motivated student performs in order to obtain rewards or avoid punishment that is external to the activity. Deci and Ryan (1985), cited by Noels *et al.* (1999:38), state that intrinsic motivation refers to an individual's motivation to engage in an activity as a result of an innate need for competence and self-determination. The findings illustrated in figure 37 indicate that the majority of the respondents like people who are mother tongue speakers of English and people who speak English very well. This is an example of intrinsic motivation. It can therefore be concluded that the participants' motivation can be characterised as being both extrinsic and intrinsic.

- **Do students consider it to be important to be motivated?**

If so, why?

Students do consider it important to be motivated, because of the benefits associated with sound English language proficiency. The most important benefits in this regard are those mentioned above in the discussion of the two preceding research questions.

- **What are students' dominant attitudes towards English?**

The research findings indicate that students have, in general, a positive attitude towards English. Even though the findings of figures 20, 21, 35 and 36 reveal a negative attitude towards the compulsory Academic English module itself, the findings, in general, point to students having a positive attitude towards English.

- **What are students' dominant attitudes towards the status and importance of English in South Africa?**

The status of English, its importance as a language of instruction and its dominant position in South Africa clearly contribute to the students' perceptions regarding English, resulting in a positive attitude towards the language. Being a language of instruction, a good command of English enhances students' understanding of the content of other courses and subjects. They understand that proficiency in English could bear fruits for them in future. The positive attitude towards the status of English in South Africa is supported by the findings of figures 6, 13, 19, 41 and 43.

- **What are the students' dominant attitudes towards native speakers of English?**

The findings of figures 37 and 39 indicate that students like people who speak English well and that they want to speak English like a mother tongue speaker. Socialising with English mother tongue speakers and people who speak English well could contribute towards increasing their proficiency in the language. However, it should be noted that the majority of students indicate that they also do like people who cannot speak English well (figure 38). It should therefore be concluded that even though students have a positive attitude towards native speakers and those who speak English well, liking or disliking people is not dependent on their English language proficiency.

- **What are students' dominant attitudes towards speakers of ESL?**

The majority of the participants indicate that they want to be proficient in English in order to socialise with a variety of people (figure 16). The prospect of mastering the language in order to interact well with people who use English as a second language contributes towards the students' positive attitude towards the module. In situations that involve people who speak different languages, they resort to the use of English, the

dominant language, as a lingua franca in order to socialise and hence the positive attitude.

- **What are students' dominant attitudes towards the Academic English module?**

The findings, in general, point towards students having a positive attitude towards the Academic English module. However, it should be noted that the findings of certain of the questions indicate a higher percentage of neutrality in regard to, for example, Academic English being students' favourite course or subject. The conclusion that could be drawn from the findings is that, in general, students have a positive attitude towards the Academic English module in view of the benefits that are associated with being proficient in the English language.

- **What specific instances of motivation (e.g. encouragement by parents or lecturers, lecturers' own motivation in presenting the course, high marks, feedback, rewards etc.) are rated positively by the students in the research group?**

The majority of the respondents disagree that their parents help them with their assignments, and only a few agree. It therefore seems that students' lack of parental assistance does not affect their motivation to be proficient in English. The respondents do agree that they are motivated by encouragement by their parents (figures 26 and 27).

Despite the fact that most parents do not assist their children with their studies and do not buy them English books (figures 22 and 25), the findings reveal that parents do encourage their children to do well in the Academic English module (figure 23) . Parents play an important role in their children's education and it is important for parents to engage in their children's studies. The majority of respondents also indicate that their

parents encourage them to speak English (figure 26). Ferhmann *et al* (1987), cited by Mahlobo (1999:47), supports this notion by stating that parental involvement refers to parents assisting their children to achieve high marks; offering them academic guidance; providing resources for study-related tasks; managing and emphasising educational activities instead of pleasurable activities such as the watching of TV programmes; and advising them in respect of the choice of books and magazines.

Teachers' feedback is also important. It could be concluded that feedback is a strong motivating factor. Feedback is important for students to determine where they made mistakes and to avoid these mistakes in similar questions in the examination. The research findings confirm the importance of teachers' feedback (figures 9 and 30). The findings of figures 28, 29, 31, 32 and 33 indicate that the lecturer's attitude towards teaching Academic English as well as his or her various teaching approaches and involvement of the students in learning could also affect the students' attitude and motivation towards the Academic English course or subject. Dornyei (1994), cited by Noels (2001:112), states that teachers' motivation and attitudes, their style of learner control and their manner of presenting tasks and providing feedback are positively associated with students' motivation.

The findings of figures 8, 10, 11 and 18 indicate that there also exists a positive link between achieving high marks; getting a bonus mark; obtaining a certificate, reward and shopping vouchers and motivation.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of chapter five is to demonstrate how the study addressed the research problem that was formulated at the outset of the research. In this chapter, the general conclusions are presented and discussed, recommendations are made and the limitations of the study are indicated.

The aim of this research project was to investigate the nature of students' motivation (or lack thereof) and their attitude towards the ELP course in the Foundation Programme at Monash South Africa.

The empirical study focused on the respondents' perceptions of their own motivation and attitude and identified possible motivational variables.

Various aspects of motivation and attitude as they relate to second language proficiency, as described in the relevant literature, are analysed in chapter 2. Different theories offering differing insights into aspects of motivation, attitude and ELP are discussed. An overview of the literature revealed that there is no single comprehensive theory about motivation and attitude or a particular motivational variable that can be made applicable to all aspects of ELP, but rather that the different theories offer their own singular insights.

The findings of both the literature review and the empirical investigation indicate that according to the respondents themselves, motivation and a positive attitude play a role in English language learning (specifically regarding the Academic English module at Monash South Africa) in some cases, but not in all.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This section is divided into two sub-sections, namely the findings of the literature review and the findings of the empirical study. These sub-sections are presented separately below.

5.2.1 The findings of the literature review

The detailed findings of the literature review have been discussed in chapter 2 in terms of motivational variables and models, attitudes, ELP and the learning and acquisition of a language. The literature study revealed that motivation could be regarded as a desire to achieve a goal together with the energy expended to achieve that goal (MacIntyre *et al* 2001:463). Furthermore, the literature review indicated that there are two types of motivation, namely, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the most desirable form of motivation. This type of motivation could sustain learning, because it concerns internal satisfaction that stems from the individual wanting to do something. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation arises as a result of an external stimulus. A student is extrinsically motivated when an action that he or she performs emanates from or produces external rewards.

The literature review also revealed that there are contrasting findings regarding whether there is a significant relationship between motivation, attitude and ELP. Some studies indicate that there is a positive correlation between these variables, whereas others indicate a weak correlation or no correlation at all. The same contrast applies to intrinsic motivation. Some investigations indicate a strong correlation between intrinsic motivation and ELP whereas others indicate an insignificant correlation. The absence of a significant correlation is supported by the South African study conducted by Coetzee-Van Rooy (2002), which is mentioned in Chapter 2. Coetzee-Van Rooy found that, in South Africa, English is mainly learnt to communicate with and better understand speakers of South African languages other than English across language boundaries.

Coetzee-Van Rooy (2002) furthermore found that integration with the South African English L1 group is not a prime reason for learning English and that successfully mastering English is not sufficient reason for acceptance into the English-speaking community in South Africa.

Madileng (2007) investigated the relationship between motivation and English at a Further Education and Training (FET) College. She found that the development of ESL proficiency could be influenced by several motivational variables, some of which might not have been included in her investigation.

5.2.2 The findings of the empirical investigation

The findings of the empirical investigation (as discussed in Chapter 4) reveal that motivation and a positive attitude may play a role in English language learning and in the desire to improve proficiency in the English language. However, in some instances the investigation revealed contradictory findings.

The general findings of the empirical investigation indicate that students are motivated to improve their English language proficiency because English is a dominant language in South Africa and is used as a medium of instruction for all the other courses. A command of English therefore contributes towards the mastering of the course material and therefore enables students to perform well in their courses. The empirical investigation also revealed that respondents are of the opinion that a positive attitude contributes towards the improvement of English language proficiency.

As pointed out in 4.6.1, in a few instances the empirical investigation revealed a high percentage of neutrality in regard to the importance of being motivated in order to pass the Academic English course and regarding their attitude towards the Academic English module itself. These findings contradict the general findings, which point towards students being motivated to improve their English language proficiency and having a

positive attitude towards the English Language module. Because of these contradictory findings, there is clearly a need for further investigation.

The research findings further reveal that parents and teachers play a critical role by contributing towards students' motivation and their positive attitude towards the English language course as well as towards their desire to improve their English language proficiency.

According to the results of the questionnaire, extrinsic motivation, which represents the desire for some kind of external benefit, as well as intrinsic motivation, which arises when people are motivated to learn a language for their own reasons and for internal satisfaction, both play a role in encouraging students to do well in the English language course.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As pointed out in Chapter 4 and above, the empirical investigation revealed some inconsistencies and contradictions that need to be looked into. An important recommendation is therefore that more research is needed to identify possible reasons for the inconsistencies and contradictions found in the present research.

It is recommended that future research in this field should include the use of qualitative methods (such as interviews and focus groups) to collect more and richer data. An interview provides an opportunity for the further clarification of issues that are not clear to the investigator. In a focus group setting, respondents can react to opinions held by other students that they might not have been aware of.

The research sample can be extended in future research to include more Monash South Africa students. Such an extension of the research could, among other things, determine whether the findings of the extended investigation are consistent with the findings of this study.

In this study the researcher did not seek to relate the research findings to the respondents' progress in the Academic English module, in other words to their ELP, since this was considered to be outside the scope of a mini-dissertation. To closer align the findings of the study to actual ELP performance, student records could be consulted in order to examine the role of motivation and attitude in improving their ELP. The data obtained in the analysis of students' records could then be integrated with the data obtained in interviews and focus groups.

In addition to the motivation and attitude related variables, future research could also include other variables, such as self-concept, teaching styles and learning strategies.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following limitations were found to apply to this study;

The sample of students that was used comprised students in the Foundation Programme at Monash South Africa. Therefore, the findings of this study should not be generalised to other students in other programmes at the university.

A random selection of the research sample was not used in this study. The researcher implemented non-probability convenience sampling.

The study was limited to a period of 12 months.

Only 150 students participated in this research project instead of the 382 participants initially targeted. This limitation had an effect on the amount of information gathered in the study.

In conclusion

Despite its limitations, this investigation does add to the growing body of research done in South Africa on motivation, attitude and ELP. Lecturers of the Academic English

course at Monash South Africa should take note of the findings, which could help them to develop new and innovative strategies to improve motivation and attitude amongst students, thereby possibly helping them to improve their ELP.

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