



"VIGILADA MINEUCACIÓN"

**UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA**  
**FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN Y CIENCIAS HUMANAS**  
**DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS EXTRANJEROS**



**A PERSONAL LEADERSHIP STATEMENT**

**ANA MILENA ACOSTA TORO**

**DANIELA EUGENIA MENDOZA TANO**

**ZUNILDA VELÁSQUEZ DE ÁVILA**



**UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA**

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME**

**DIPLOMA COURSE**

**Lifelong Professional Development: Empowering Foreign Language Teachers**

**MONTERÍA - CÓRDOBA**

**2020**



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**Statement submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of English  
Teaching Program**

**MENTOR**

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As future teacher leaders we should support students' capacities and motivate them to work hard towards achieving their proposed individual and group objectives. Likewise, we want to be better while helping others to be better as well, assuming the challenges with the purpose of making a change.

As teacher leaders, we see ourselves as role models for students to follow, leaders who are creative and empathic. We expect to be capable of recognizing other's skills, their goals and personal development, while seeking the members' welfare that can establish a good team relationship.

— *Ana Milena Acosta, Daniela Mendoza, & Zunilda Velásquez, Personal Leadership Statement*





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## 1. Introduction

Leadership has been defined in different ways throughout time. Sometimes it has been related with authority, however some authors have given it a positive connotation. Rost (1993) stated "Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes." (p. 102). Indeed, leadership indicates a purposeful relationship between the participants. According to Jackson and Parry (2008, p. 02), leadership is a process where the leaders apply their skills and capacities to lead and encourage a group of people to achieve common goals and objectives. In this sense, a leader is someone creative, supportive, self-confident, self-aware, responsible, has the capacity to lead, and encourages others and their abilities. (Mott, 2006, p. 01). Likewise, the context has a strong influence in the leadership process, because the leader must act appropriately depending on the current situation they have.

Consequently, as claimed by Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa (2005, p. 06), Authentic leadership theory consists of different characteristics, for instance, self-confidence, self-awareness, consistency and positivity, where the leader sticks to their ideals and has an honest relationship with the group, in such a way that the team members are empowered and support each other to achieve the goal established.

For us, leadership is a process that focuses in change, guidance and innovation, a leader is someone who encourages others, supports them and acts appropriately, considering





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the group's goals with a strong defined purpose, regarding the needs of the context. Therefore, what makes a good leader is the ability to use their strengths for a purpose and overcome the weaknesses they have, someone who accepts other's ideas and opinions while reinforces other's strengths in order to achieve a common goal. Hence, leadership plays an important and effective role in education.





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## 2. Our Assumption

Assumptions are a group of beliefs or ideas that someone considers true without having strong evidence, therefore they have not been proved through any type of research. Every person is capable of creating their own conclusions and thoughts, in fact, has the ability to develop their own assumptions about the leadership process, the context, the background, etc., to which the leaders unfolds action and decisions. Regarding leadership, we have the assumption that it is member-driven and with awareness of the member's weaknesses.

In the Educational context, a group of teachers can work as a real team in an institution to achieve common goals and solve problems. Thus, each member plays an important role in the team; everyone is in charge of something and helps each other. However, if this were different, there would not be a real team work, where someone else's ideas were unconsidered, rejected or forgotten. Due to the existence of disagreements within a team, it is pleasant that everyone can be listened, where every opinion allows everybody to be conscious about others, thereby an atmosphere of affinity is established.

Another main point to highlight is the awareness of the members' weaknesses because we are able to recognize the different aspects we have to work on. Besides, we would acknowledge the necessity and help that the other needs, in order to provide support while we, as a whole, become better every day. Furthermore, being acquainted with the members' weaknesses push us to focus on the strengths, for assigning or distributing the job according to them, which makes achieving the goal easier and quicker.





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We have asked ourselves: Are we managing a real team work? Are we behaving as true leaders? Are we considering every member's opinion? Are we really aware of our partners' weaknesses? Am I encouraging my partners to be better?

### 3. Leadership Empowerment and Implications for the Future

In Policarpa Salavarrieta High school, we noticed that a high number of students are very disinterested in learning and unmotivated for education, and teachers have not been capable of managing this situation. Despite applying some strategies and trying to make little changes in the teaching process, students' responses are the same, hence there is not an improvement in their learning process. A team of teachers in the school wants this to change due to the lack of development in the students, besides the environment inside the classroom is not the best, where there is low participation and attention from the students.

In addition, students in Policarpa Salavarrieta High school are not engaged enough to participate in class, which makes the process of learning more difficult to carry out by students, and at the same time, to achieve the learning outcomes established by the teachers. It is why our Leadership plan aims to identify the most appropriate strategies to boost students' motivation for learning, enhancing students' interest towards their whole learning process.

In this sense, it is necessary that we identify the possible factors that cause demotivation in students. It is really important because we need to determine if is a case of





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intrinsic or extrinsic motivation (Otero, 2014) in order to take the appropriate decisions to face the difficulty. It is possible that among the causes of demotivation there are health factors, personal problems or, besides, that students are not engaged because of the lack of creativity and dynamic of teachers to prepare and develop their lessons.

After analyzing the causes of demotivation, it will be needed to organize and carry out a propose that includes the most suitable activities and teaching approaches, making the adaptations required to the curriculum, in order to work on and face the causes found previously. Figuring out the best plan to follow is an essential step because it helps teachers determine the strategies that fit better the necessity of each student.

We are conscious that being a teacher leader requires to get involved in each process related to our performance, professional development and student's learning process. It is the main reason why we believe that all of us has an important role in the process of facing students' demotivation, because as teachers we have direct contact whit them and it makes us aware first, of what is probably wrong in the process, determining what circumstances are affecting students' engagement; and then, establishing and applying the best strategies that take into account their needs and enhance their learning process.

The findings will be shared by the use of different means such as journals, campaigns, the use of social media, in order to transmit the information and, at the same time, to teach as many teachers as possible the knowledge obtained, so it can work as help for the ones who were not part of the team.







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Educational leaders are in a constant search to make education more effective and successful, and they have had to face many challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to Shields & Sayani (2005) globalization and cultural blend have been one of the greatest challenges since there have been demands to adopt global curriculum in the field of education (p.03). Based on globalization and cultural blend, educational leaders have the need to understand and analyze all the cultural variety in a classroom.

In addition, Technology is another challenge faced by educational leaders. Luqman, et al., (2012) argued that “technology has been regarded as one of the vital change agents of the education sector today.” (p.04). Technology is constantly changing every day, so that carrying out continuous teaching and learning processes are a great challenging factor since institutions are not used to keeping up with technological advances.

Therefore, having a good educational leadership is a fundamental key to achieve the proposed goals of an institution or organization because a true educational leadership drives the productivity and quality of education, as well as improving students’ performance. This is a process that requires real leaders characterized by having a clear vision, capacity for innovation and authority to manage changes and transform education.





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#### 4. Conclusion

Different aspects have to be taken into account in order to obtain a successful Leadership plan. However, the main one lies in the team members, where each one of them must ensure and work towards achieving the main goal, supporting each other and respecting every one's opinions and ideas. Moreover, organization, conflict management, assertive communication, positivity, transparency and hard work have a strong influence regarding developing a successful leadership plan and process.

What schools need to do to innovate and ensure quality of foreign language education is to create an action plan that adjust to the students' needs without exceptions, which must help to solve the problems of learning a second language. Likewise, teachers must bring out the best in students; and motivate them to find a reason for learning the language, engaging their interest. In addition, teachers must work hard towards helping students to develop the 4 skills equally while, at the same time, students are in constant exposure to the culture and context of the foreign language.

Furthermore, it is important that institutions include technological tools and a variety of material in the teaching process, while ensuring students a comfortable environment for learning. Therefore, teachers should be trained to teach the language regardless of the adversities that may arise in the future. They need to promote the importance and positive opportunities that come with learning a foreign language and they should apply methods, strategies, techniques that contribute to the students' learning process.





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