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EXPLORING THE QUALITY OF MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Abstract: *This paper explores the quality of motivational factors shaping English language learning among students enrolled at the Faculty for Education, University of Belgrade (Novi Pazar). Through a comprehensive exploration, the research aims to uncover the nuanced motivational dynamics that drive and sustain students' engagement with the English language. Drawing on self-determination theory and socio-educational models, the study examines how different qualitative dimensions of motivation (e.g. autonomous versus controlled orientations) influence students' engagement with English language learning. The research further investigates the impact of self-efficacy, socio-educational models, and self-determination theory on students' language learning motivation. By focusing on this specific cohort, the paper not only contributes to the understanding of motivational influences in language learning but also provides insights tailored to the unique context of the Faculty for Education in Belgrade, offering implications for educational practices and student support initiatives.*

Keywords: *quality of motivation, English language learning, student motivation, learning dynamics*

1. Introduction

In the globalized world of today, proficiency in the English language has become a vital skill, opening doors to diverse opportunities in education, employment, and communication. As the lingua franca of international discourse, English plays a crucial role in facilitating cross-cultural understanding and collaboration. Recognizing the significance of English language proficiency, educational institutions worldwide are increasingly focusing on enhancing their language learning programs to equip students with the necessary skills. Dornyei's seminal work, "The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition" (Dornyei, 2005), serves as a foundational resource that

delves into the intricate realm of individual differences in language learning. Through a comprehensive exploration of psychological factors influencing second language acquisition, Dornyei sheds light on the diverse cognitive, affective, and motivational aspects that shape learners' trajectories.

According to Lalić and Vucetić, the teacher-student relationship is considered a key determinant of the success of the teaching and learning process. (Lalić-Vučetić, 2015) The pivotal role of a teacher in cultivating motivation among students for language acquisition is underscored by their position as a facilitator and guide in the learning process. A teacher catalyzes shaping the educational environment, influencing students' perceptions, and fostering a positive attitude toward language learning. The teacher's

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motivational approach during academic activities constitutes a fundamental element in nurturing students' autonomy within the learning process, and in shaping the quality of students' motivational engagement. (Vansteenkiste et al., 2020) Through the judicious selection of instructional strategies and engaging pedagogical methods, educators can ignite students' intrinsic interest in language acquisition. They can use innovative and interesting methods to teach, such as comic books (Beko & Mićović, 2022), pictures, videos, music, etc. A diverse array of blended learning modalities can be implemented, leveraging a foreign language as the instructional medium. (Tanasijević & Janković, 2021) Moreover, a teacher's ability to provide constructive feedback and create a supportive learning atmosphere plays a crucial role in bolstering students' self-efficacy and sustaining their motivation throughout the language-learning journey. (Vergara-Morales, 2019)

The Faculty for Education at the University in Belgrade, Novi Pazar, stands as a testament to enhancing language learning programs, offering English language courses to students aspiring to navigate the linguistic demands of an interconnected world. This research endeavors to delve into the motivational factors influencing English language learning among students in this esteemed institution. By understanding the underlying motivations that drive students to engage in language acquisition, educators and administrators can tailor language programs to better meet the needs and aspirations of their learners.

The choice of this specific topic stems from a recognition of the unique socio-cultural context in Novi Pazar and the potential impact of regional influences on language learning motivations. By focusing on students within the Faculty for Education, this research aims to shed light on the intricacies of English language learning motivations in a localized setting, contributing valuable insights to both academic discourse and practical pedagogy.

The research is driven by a desire to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks of language acquisition motivation and the lived experiences of students. By exploring the factors that propel individuals to invest time and effort in learning English, this paper aspires to inform educational policies and instructional strategies that can enhance the overall effectiveness of language programs at the University in Belgrade, Novi Pazar.

Ultimately, this research aims to not only uncover the motivational factors shaping English language learning but also to provide a foundation for future studies and interventions that can optimize language education in diverse cultural and institutional contexts. Through this exploration, we hope to contribute to the ongoing dialogue on effective language pedagogy and support the educational journey of students in their pursuit of linguistic proficiency and cross-cultural competence.

Rather than focusing solely on the presence or strength of motivation, this study emphasizes the quality of students' motivational orientations, acknowledging that different types of motivation may vary significantly in their educational impact.

1.1. Research aims and questions

Building on established theories of second language motivation, particularly Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2017) and the socio-educational model of language learning motivation (Gardner, 1985), this study aims to explore how students at the Faculty for Education, University in Belgrade (Novi Pazar), perceive their motivation for learning English.

The primary objective of the research is to examine the relative prominence of higher- and lower-quality forms of motivational regulations, as well as instrumental and integrative tendencies, within this specific educational and socio-cultural context. In addition, the study seeks to identify students'

perceptions of the role of English language proficiency in academic, cultural, and professional domains. In this sense, the study approaches motivation not merely as a quantitative variable, but as a qualitative dimension of the learning process.

Accordingly, the study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What motivational orientations (intrinsic vs. extrinsic) characterize students' engagement in English language learning at the Faculty for Education in Novi Pazar?

RQ2: To what extent do students' motivations reflect instrumental and integrative orientations toward learning English?

RQ3: How do students perceive the relationship between English language proficiency and success in academic, cultural, and professional contexts?

RQ4: Are there observable patterns in students' motivational orientations in relation to demographic variables such as age and gender?

2. Methodology

This research employed a combined approach to comprehensively investigate the motivational factors influencing English language learning among 84 students in the Faculty for Education at the University in Belgrade, Novi Pazar. The participants, all of whom are students pursuing either bachelor's or master's degrees, were chosen through a stratified random sampling. This method ensured representation across various academic disciplines within the Faculty for Education, accounting for the diversity of experiences and motivations present in the student body. Accordingly, the questionnaire focuses on students' perceptions of the quality and regulation of their motivation, rather than on the measurement of motivational intensity.

2.1. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded primarily in Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2017), SDT conceptualizes motivation as a continuum that reflects differences in the quality of motivational regulation, ranging from autonomous to controlled forms.

While SDT offers a comprehensive explanation of the internal mechanisms of motivation, it does not fully account for the socio-cultural orientation of language learning goals. To address this dimension, the study also draws on Gardner's socio-educational model of second language acquisition (Gardner, 1985), particularly the distinction between instrumental and integrative motivation. Gardner's framework complements SDT by illuminating learners' orientation toward the target language community and the perceived social value of language proficiency.

In the context of this research, SDT is employed to examine the quality and regulation of students' motivation (intrinsic versus extrinsic), whereas Gardner's model is used to interpret the direction and purpose of that motivation (instrumental versus integrative). This combined theoretical approach enables a more nuanced analysis of English language learning motivation by integrating individual psychological processes with broader socio-cultural aspirations.

Furthermore, insights from Dörnyei's work on second language motivation (2005) inform the educational dimension of the study, particularly the role of classroom practices, teacher influence, and learners' self-concept in shaping motivational trajectories. Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a coherent framework for analyzing students' motivational orientations within the specific institutional and cultural context of the Faculty for Education, University in Belgrade (Novi Pazar).

To collect quantitative data, an online survey was administered to the selected participants. The survey was designed to capture demographic information, language proficiency levels, and self-reported motivation factors influencing English language learning. The choice of an online survey was strategic, considering the practical constraints of reaching a dispersed and busy student population. The digital format allowed for efficient data collection, enabling participants to respond at their convenience while also facilitating the timely aggregation of results.

The survey questionnaire incorporated both closed-ended questions, providing quantitative data for statistical analysis, and open-ended questions, allowing participants to express their motivations in their own words. This dual approach aimed to capture a nuanced understanding of the diverse motivations guiding language learning within the specific context of the Faculty for Education.

The survey utilized standardized motivation scales, drawing on established psychological frameworks, to assess motivational factors. These scales were chosen for their reliability and validity in measuring motivation in language learning contexts. By employing a structured survey, this research sought to quantitatively analyze patterns and correlations among various factors, providing valuable insights into the motivational landscape of English language learning at the University in Belgrade, department in Novi Pazar.

In addition to the quantitative data obtained through the survey, qualitative insights were sought through in-depth interviews with a subset of participants. This qualitative component aimed to complement and enrich the quantitative findings, allowing participants to elaborate on their motivations, experiences, and the contextual factors shaping their language learning journey. Together, these methodological choices aimed to provide a holistic understanding of

the motivational dynamics influencing English language learning among fifth-year students at the Faculty for Education in the University in Belgrade, Novi Pazar.

Motivational factors driving language learning are often categorized into various types, offering insights into the diverse reasons individuals engage in the process. Intrinsic motivation, a fundamental internal drive, involves learning a language for the joy and personal satisfaction it brings. In this context, students may find intrinsic motivation in the beauty of the language, the pleasure derived from mastering its intricacies, or the sense of accomplishment associated with linguistic proficiency. Practitioners and policymakers recognize the pivotal role of intrinsic motivation in fostering lifelong learning habits and acknowledge the need to design educational environments that nurture and sustain this internal drive. (Dickinson, 1995) On the other hand, extrinsic motivation stems from external rewards or pressures, such as the anticipation of career advancements, improved job prospects, or societal expectations. Language learners driven by extrinsic motivation may view English proficiency as a practical tool to enhance their employability, navigate a globalized job market, or fulfill academic requirements. In a recent meta-analysis synthesizing longitudinal studies, significant declines were identified in intrinsic motivation, academic self-concept in language, as well as mastery and performance-approach achievement goals among students, with the most substantial reductions observed in these domains. (Scherrer & Preckel, 2019).

Integrative motivation centers around the desire to connect with a broader cultural or social context. Learners with integrative motivation may be drawn to English as a means of bridging cultural gaps, fostering international friendships, or immersing themselves in global communities. Contrarily, instrumental motivation is utilitarian, focusing on achieving specific practical goals, such as academic success,

professional advancement, or efficient communication in a particular context. By understanding these nuanced distinctions in motivation types, this research aims to unravel the intricate web of factors shaping the language learning experiences of fifth-year students in the Faculty for Education at the University in Belgrade, Novi Pazar. Through the survey and interview methodologies, the paper endeavors to identify and analyze the prevalence and interplay of these motivation types within the sampled student population.

2.2. Research instrument and methodological considerations

The research instrument consisted of a structured questionnaire designed to explore students' perceptions of motivational factors related to English language learning. The questionnaire included eight Likert-scale items focusing on perceived academic, cultural, social, and professional benefits of English proficiency, as well as students' personal interest in achieving high levels of language competence.

The items were theoretically informed by key constructs from Self-Determination Theory and Gardner's socio-educational model; however, the instrument was not intended to function as a standardized psychometric scale. Rather, it was designed as an exploratory tool aimed at capturing students' self-reported motivational orientations and beliefs within a specific institutional and socio-cultural context.

Due to the exploratory nature of the study, formal validation procedures such as factor analysis and internal consistency reliability measures were not conducted. Consequently, the results should be interpreted as indicative of general motivational tendencies rather than as precise measurements of latent motivational constructs. This methodological choice reflects the study's primary objective of mapping dominant motivational perceptions among students, rather than

testing causal relationships or validating an existing motivational model.

While this approach entails certain limitations, it is consistent with prior exploratory research in educational contexts where context-specific insights are prioritized over scale validation. The findings thus provide a preliminary empirical foundation for future studies employing validated instruments and more advanced statistical analyses.

3. Results

The survey consisted of 8 questions, most of them related to motivation in learning of English language. The results are presented with particular attention to differences in the perceived quality of motivational orientations, rather than to absolute motivational levels. Totally 84 students participated in the survey. The age distribution from the survey reveals that respondents are fairly evenly distributed across age groups. The largest portion falls within the 18-25 range, constituting 38.1%, as does the 26-30 age group. The 31+ range comprises 22.6% of the responses. Only a small percentage (1.2%) did not provide their age. The data suggests a relatively balanced representation of age groups among the respondents.

The survey shows a clear majority of female respondents, constituting 70.2%, while males make up 29.8% of the sample. No participants chose not to disclose their gender. The data indicates a significant gender imbalance, with a higher representation of females in the surveyed population. Further exploration may be needed to understand the potential implications of this imbalance on the survey results. This is very usual for the Faculty of Education since the majority of students are female.

The first question in the survey data indicates a strong consensus among participants regarding the relationship between proficiency in English and success in life. A

substantial majority (52.4%) strongly agree while an additional 41.7% agree, with no respondents expressing disagreement. A small proportion (6.0%) neither agrees nor disagrees. The mean rating of 1.536 and a median of 1 (Agree Strongly) suggest a skew towards positive perceptions. The low standard deviation (0.606) indicates minimal variability, highlighting a high level of agreement among respondents. In summary, the overwhelming sentiment is that being proficient in English is perceived as conducive to more success and achievements in life. The responses presented in Table 1 indicate motivational orientations that are

predominantly aligned with extrinsic considerations, particularly those related to perceived life success and external achievement. Extrinsic motivation is characterized by external factors that drive individuals to engage in a particular behavior for instrumental reasons, such as rewards, recognition, or achieving specific outcomes. In this case, participants' strong consensus on the positive correlation between English proficiency and success in life indicates that they see language learning as a practical means to attain external benefits or achievements.

Table 1.

Do you think being proficient in English can lead to more success and achievements in life?							
Agree strongly (1)		44 - 52.4%					
Agree (2)		35 - 41.7%					
Neither agree nor disagree (3)		5 - 6.0%					
Disagree (4)		0 - 0%					
Disagree strongly (5)		0 - 0%					
No answer (6)		0 - 0%					
Statistics	Responses	Mean	Median	Std.Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Quartiles
Rating scale	84	1.536	1	0.606	1	3	1,1,2

The second question indicates a strong consensus among respondents regarding the perceived connection between learning English and acquiring knowledge (Table 2). A significant majority, comprising 54.8%, strongly agree that learning English will make them more knowledgeable, while an additional 42.9% express agreement. With a mean rating of 1.476 and a median of 1, the data underscores a consistent inclination toward the belief that proficiency in English is associated with increased knowledge. The low standard deviation (0.545) indicates relatively little variability in responses, reflecting a high level of agreement among participants. The strong agreement observed in responses to this item suggests motivational tendencies consistent with intrinsic orientations, as students perceive English language learning as inherently valuable for personal intellectual growth.

Overall, the findings suggest a prevailing positive correlation between learning English and perceived knowledge enrichment among the surveyed individuals.

The third question (Table 3) was about whether students believe that the English language will make them appreciate arts and literature more. Learning English often involves exposure to a rich array of literature and artistic expressions from English-speaking cultures. By gauging participants' expectations regarding the impact of language learning on their appreciation of art and literature, the research can assess the perceived cultural enrichment that may come with language proficiency. The survey results indicate a positive association between learning the English language and an increased appreciation for arts and literature. A significant majority of respondents either

"Agree" (54.8%) or "Agree Strongly" (25.0%) with this proposition. Only a small percentage expressed disagreement, with 6.0% choosing "Disagree" and 1.2% selecting "Disagree Strongly." The mean response on the rating scale was 2.036, suggesting an

overall inclination towards agreement. These findings suggest that, according to the surveyed individuals, there is a perceived correlation between language acquisition (specifically English) and a heightened appreciation for arts and literature.

Table 2.

Do you think learning English will make you more knowledgeable?							
Agree strongly (1)				46	-	54.8%	
Agree (2)				36	-	42.9%	
Neither agree nor disagree (3)				2	-	2.4%	
Disagree (4)				0	-	0%	
Disagree strongly (5)				0	-	0%	
No answer (6)				0	-	0%	
Statistics	Responses	Mean	Median	Std.Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Quartiles
Rating scale	84	1.476	1	0.545	1	3	1,1,2

Table 3.

Do you think learning English will make you appreciate art and literature?							
Agree strongly (1)				21	-	25.0%	
Agree (2)				46	-	54.8%	
Neither agree nor disagree (3)				11	-	13.1%	
Disagree (4)				5	-	6.0%	
Disagree strongly (5)				1	-	1.2%	
No answer (6)				0	-	0%	
Statistics	Responses	Mean	Median	Std.Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Quartiles
Rating scale	84	2.036	2	0.852	1	5	1,2,2

The fourth question in the survey was about gaining people's respect (Table 4). The survey results suggest that a significant portion of respondents hold the belief that knowing the English language contributes to earning respect from others. The combined percentage of those who "Agree Strongly" and "Agree" stands at 55.9%, indicating a prevailing positive sentiment. Meanwhile, 20.5% chose "Neither Agree nor Disagree," and only 20.2% expressed disagreement, with 3.6% strongly disagreeing. The mean rating of 2.500 on a scale of 1 to 5 further supports the overall inclination towards agreement. This implies that, according to the surveyed individuals, there is a perceived connection between English language proficiency and

gaining respect from others. These findings point to motivational orientations associated with external validation and social recognition, which are commonly discussed within the literature as features of extrinsically regulated motivation. Extrinsic motivation is characterized by external factors that drive individuals to engage in a particular behavior for instrumental reasons, such as rewards, recognition, or societal approval. In this case, participants' responses to the question about gaining respect from others through English language proficiency indicate that they perceive language learning as a means to achieve external validation and acknowledgment.

Table 4.

Do you think knowing English will make other people respect you more?							
Agree strongly (1)		15	-	17.9%			
Agree (2)		32	-	38.1%			
Neither agree nor disagree (3)		20	-	23.8%			
Disagree (4)		14	-	16.7%			
Disagree strongly (5)		3	-	3.6%			
No answer (6)		0	-	0%			
Statistics	Responses	Mean	Median	Std.Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Quartiles
Rating scale	84	2.500	2	1.075	1	5	2,2,3

The fifth question (Table 5) was about the English language and academic, social, and professional activities. The survey findings strongly indicate that respondents perceive knowledge of the English language as a significant facilitator for enhanced participation in academic, social, and professional activities across diverse cultural groups. A substantial 96.5% of participants either "Agree Strongly" (56.0%) or "Agree" (40.5%) with this assertion. Notably, no respondents expressed disagreement. The mean rating of 1.476 on a scale of 1 to 5, with a low standard deviation of 0.566, underscores a high level of consensus and a

pronounced inclination towards agreement. This pattern of responses reflects orientations toward broader social and cultural engagement, which are conceptually compatible with integrative motivational tendencies described in socio-educational models of language learning. Integrative motivation in language acquisition theory reflects the learner's desire to connect with and understand a foreign culture, going beyond mere language proficiency. It emphasizes intrinsic interest in cultural immersion, fostering a holistic approach to language learning that encompasses linguistic competence and cultural understanding.

Table 5.

Do you think knowledge of English will enable you to participate better in academic, social, and professional activities among other cultural groups?							
Agree strongly (1)		47	-	56.0%			
Agree (2)		34	-	40.5%			
Neither agree nor disagree (3)		3	-	3.6%			
Disagree (4)		0	-	0%			
Disagree strongly (5)		0	-	0%			
No answer (6)		0	-	0%			
Statistics	Responses	Mean	Median	Std.Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Quartiles
Rating scale	84	1.476	1	0.566	1	3	1,1,2

In the sixth question, the survey results strongly suggest that the majority of respondents believe that knowledge of the English language correlates with better job opportunities (Table 6). A significant 83.3% of participants either "Agree Strongly" (33.3%) or "Agree" (50.0%) with this notion. Meanwhile, a relatively small proportion (16.7%) either remained neutral or disagreed.

Notably, no respondents expressed strong disagreement. The mean rating of 1.857 on a scale of 1 to 5, with a moderate standard deviation of 0.742, indicates a notable consensus among participants and an overall inclination towards the belief that English proficiency is a valuable asset in securing better employment opportunities. These findings suggest differences not only in

motivational orientation, but also in the perceived quality of students' motivation,

particularly with regard to autonomy and personal relevance.

Table 6.

Do you think knowing English will get you a better job?							
Agree strongly (1)	28	-	33.3%				
Agree (2)	42	-	50.0%				
Neither agree nor disagree (3)	12	-	14.3%				
Disagree (4)	2	-	2.4%				
Disagree strongly (5)	0	-	0%				
No answer (6)	0	-	0%				
Statistics	Responses	Mean	Median	Std.Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Quartiles
Rating scale	84	1.857	2	0.742	1	4	1,2,2

The seventh question (Table 7) was about the English language and being able to understand music, movies, and literature. The survey results indicate that a significant majority of respondents, comprising 70.3%, either "Agree Strongly" (27.4%) or "Agree" (42.9%) with the idea that learning English is driven by the desire to understand English movies, music, literature, and similar cultural content. A notable 19.0% remained neutral on this matter, suggesting a degree of ambivalence, while 10.7% expressed disagreement. Importantly, no participants

strongly disagreed. The mean rating of 2.131 on a scale of 1 to 5, with a standard deviation of 0.936, suggests a moderate level of agreement and some variability in responses. The motivation to understand English-language movies, music, and literature reflects students' engagement with cultural content associated with the target language. Such orientations may be interpreted as combining elements of personal interest and cultural affiliation, rather than fitting neatly into a single motivational category.

Table 7.

Do you learn English so that you can understand English movies, music, literature, etc.?							
Agree strongly (1)	23	-	27.4%				
Agree (2)	36	-	42.9%				
Neither agree nor disagree (3)	16	-	19.0%				
Disagree (4)	9	-	10.7%				
Disagree strongly (5)	0	-	0%				
No answer (6)	0	-	0%				
Statistics	Responses	Mean	Median	Std.Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Quartiles
Rating scale	84	2.131	2	0.936	1	4	1,2,3

The last question in the survey reveals that a significant majority of respondents, constituting 78.6%, either "Agree Strongly" (22.6%) or "Agree" (56.0%) with the notion that they learn English out of personal interest to achieve maximum proficiency (Table 8). A smaller proportion (13.1%) remained neutral on this topic, while only 6.0% expressed disagreement. Importantly, no participants

strongly disagreed. The mean rating of 2.024 on a scale of 1 to 5, with a standard deviation of 0.780, suggests a generally positive and consistent trend towards the view that English language learning is driven by personal interest and a desire for high proficiency. The emphasis on personal interest and the desire to achieve high proficiency suggests motivational orientations that are closely

aligned with intrinsically regulated forms of engagement, as described in self-determination theory. The motivation expressed in response to the question about

learning English out of personal interest and the desire to achieve maximum proficiency aligns primarily with intrinsic motivation.

Table 8.

Do you learn English just for your interest and you would like to achieve maximum proficiency?							
Agree strongly (1)				19	-	22.6%	
Agree (2)				47	-	56.0%	
Neither agree nor disagree (3)				11	-	13.1%	
Disagree (4)				5	-	6.0%	
Disagree strongly (5)				0	-	0%	
No answer (6)				2	-	2.4%	
Statistics	Responses	Mean	Median	Std.Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Quartiles
Rating scale	84	2.024	2	0.780	1	4	2,2,2

4. Discussion

The paper aimed to explore perceptions of English language learning among 84 students and assess the impact of age and gender on these views. A survey with 8 questions gauged beliefs about English's role in success, knowledge, culture, and career. Most participants agreed on English's positive link to success, knowledge, cultural appreciation, and professional opportunities. The study also revealed gender imbalances, prompting further investigation into their effects on language perceptions and motivations. These findings align with existing literature highlighting English's diverse benefits, emphasizing its role in social communication and globalized contexts. The consensus underscores English's significance for personal and professional growth in today's interconnected world.

4.1. Critical interpretation of motivational patterns

While the findings reveal a high degree of agreement regarding the perceived value of English language proficiency, such uniformity warrants careful interpretation. From a quality perspective, these results indicate that motivation characterized by internalization and personal meaning may be

educationally more sustainable than motivation driven primarily by external expectations. High levels of consensus may reflect not only genuine motivational engagement but also the internalization of dominant educational and societal discourses that position English as an unquestioned prerequisite for success. In this sense, students' responses may simultaneously express personal motivation and broader normative expectations associated with globalization and academic mobility.

From the perspective of self-determination theory, strong endorsement of externally framed benefits—such as career advancement and social recognition—does not necessarily indicate fully autonomous motivation. Rather, it may suggest forms of identified or introjected regulation, in which learners accept external goals as personally meaningful without complete internalization. This distinction is particularly relevant in educational contexts where English proficiency is institutionally framed as indispensable.

Moreover, the coexistence of personally oriented motives (interest, enjoyment, desire for proficiency) alongside strongly instrumental considerations highlights the hybrid nature of students' motivational orientations. Rather than fitting into discrete

categories, students' motivations appear to operate along a continuum, reflecting the dynamic interaction between individual aspirations and socio-cultural pressures.

The specific institutional context of the Faculty for Education further shapes these motivational patterns. As future educators, participants may perceive English proficiency not only as a personal asset but also as a professional obligation. This dual positioning potentially amplifies both intrinsic engagement and extrinsic expectations, reinforcing the complexity of motivational regulation observed in the data.

The pervasive agreement among respondents regarding the facilitative role of English proficiency in diverse cultural engagements aligns with the intricate interplay between language and globalization. The globalized nature of academic, social, and professional environments, marked by increased cross-cultural interactions, necessitates a common means of communication. English, as a global lingua franca, emerges as a vital tool for individuals seeking active participation in these multifaceted spheres. The surveyed individuals' recognition of English proficiency as an enhancer of cultural integration and participation reflects an awareness of the interconnectedness of today's global landscape. The broader implications of such recognition extend beyond individual opportunities to encompass societal integration, as proficiency in English becomes a catalyst for effective communication, cultural exchange, and collaborative endeavors on a global scale. Lamb's examination of integrative motivation in a globalizing world (2004) likely contributes insights into the evolving dynamics of motivation in ESL, providing a valuable perspective on how learners' integrative motives are influenced in the context of globalized language learning environments. This underscores the pivotal role of English language skills not only in personal advancement but also in fostering harmonious coexistence and cooperation

within the increasingly interconnected fabric of contemporary society.

The prevalent agreement among respondents that they learn English driven by personal interest and a desire for maximum proficiency aligns with established motivation theories in language learning, particularly drawing parallels with Gardner's Socio-Educational Model (1985) and Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (1985). According to these theories, intrinsic motivation, often rooted in personal interest and the inherent satisfaction derived from language mastery, plays a pivotal role in sustaining individuals' commitment to language learning endeavors. The surveyed individuals' acknowledgment of personal interest as a primary driving force reflects an internalized motivation that extends beyond external pressures. Students usually show a positive attitude toward learning foreign languages (Marković et al., 2015) and personal interest not only serves as an enduring source of motivation but also contributes to language learning success by fostering a genuine curiosity, engagement, and willingness to invest effort in mastering the language. This alignment with motivational theories underscores the significance of intrinsic factors in sustaining the learning process, ultimately leading to the attainment of higher proficiency levels in English. Zimmermann (2000) argues that self-efficacy, serving as a fundamental motivator, plays a crucial role in the learning process, influencing individuals' beliefs in their capability to master challenging tasks and succeed in their educational endeavors.

Despite the valuable insights garnered from this research, certain limitations warrant acknowledgment. Firstly, the survey sample primarily consisted of students, potentially limiting the generalizability of findings to a broader demographic. Additionally, the gender imbalance within the sample, reflective of the Faculty of Education's composition, may introduce biases in the interpretation of results. Furthermore, the reliance on self-reported data poses inherent risks of social desirability bias and

subjectivity. To enhance the robustness of future research, a more diverse participant pool across age groups and professions could be considered. Moreover, investigating the impact of cultural context on language perceptions emerges as a promising avenue for future exploration. Analyzing how cultural influences shape attitudes toward English proficiency may provide nuanced insights into the socio-cultural dynamics influencing language learning motivations and perceptions.

4.2. Methodological limitations

Several limitations of the present study should be acknowledged. First, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of social desirability bias, particularly given the widely held perception of English as a key marker of academic and professional success. Second, the sample size and gender imbalance, while reflective of the institutional context of the Faculty for Education, limit the generalizability of the findings. Finally, the absence of a standardized motivational scale constrains the precision with which specific motivational constructs can be identified. These limitations highlight the exploratory character of the study and point to directions for future research.

5. Conclusion

This study set out to explore students' motivational orientations toward English language learning at the Faculty for Education, University in Belgrade (Novi Pazar), with particular attention to the interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic considerations, as well as instrumental and integrative tendencies. Drawing on self-determination theory and the socio-educational model of language motivation, the findings provide insight into how students perceive the value and purpose of English

proficiency within their academic, cultural, and professional lives.

The results indicate that students' motivational orientations cannot be reduced to discrete categories but instead reflect a dynamic combination of personal interest, perceived social value, and pragmatic aspirations. High levels of agreement regarding the importance of English suggest strong endorsement of its role in contemporary educational and professional contexts, while also pointing to the internalization of broader societal expectations surrounding language competence.

Given the exploratory nature of the study, the findings should be interpreted as indicative rather than conclusive. Nevertheless, they highlight the importance of recognizing motivational complexity in language education, particularly in teacher-training contexts where professional identity formation intersects with language learning. From a pedagogical perspective, the results underscore the need for instructional approaches that support autonomous motivation while remaining sensitive to the external pressures shaping students' engagement with English.

Future research would benefit from employing validated motivational instruments, larger and more diverse samples, and inferential statistical analyses to further examine the relationships identified in this study. Such work could deepen understanding of how motivational orientations develop over time and across educational contexts, contributing to more nuanced and context-responsive language education practices. Overall, the study contributes to discussions on educational quality by highlighting how the quality of motivational factors, rather than their mere presence, plays a crucial role in shaping students' engagement in English language learning.

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