

Motivational Indicators Variances to Foreign Language Learning in a Demographic and Educational Context

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Abstract

Foreign language learning has become an increasingly important skill in Albania promoted from the very early childhood until adult age, especially when the most commonly used language worldwide such as English language is concerned. This research aims to measure the overall intensity of high school students' motivation to learn English language and find the variances of motivation impacted by the demographic and education context. The descriptive statistics procedure is used to find the mean values and the frequencies of the data gathered for a sample size, $N=650$. A two-way ANOVA procedure was conducted to find the variances of students' motivation impacted by three groups of schools included in this study: public urban high school, public rural high school and non-public high school. The results indicated that the mean value for overall students' motivation to learn English language in a Likert scale (1-6), is $M = 5.43$, $DS=.7$. Post Hoc Tukey HSD procedure for comparison of groups indicated that there existed a slight and insignificant difference between urban public high school and rural high school, the difference was: $(-0.41, p=1.000)$; A substantial and significant difference was found for urban public high schools and non- public school: $(-.8092, p = .019)$; non-public high schools compared to rural public high schools, insignificant difference: $(0.395, p = .934)$. In conclusion there exist variances of motivation to learn English between groups of school and the impact on motivation varies from the demographic and education context. The overall high school students' motivation to learn English language is high.

Keywords: Demographic context, Urban and rural high schools, Educational context, Public/non-public schools, Motivation to learn English

1. Introduction

Learning a foreign language is indisputably a valuable personal asset, a tool to use whenever in cross roads of the world and a further qualification to complete the personal performance. Being free learning one, makes it even more desirable to approach whether it is for instrumental reasons or integrative ones. Such initiatives require efforts and persistence; consequently the

personal affective aspect in foreign language learning is not excluded. On the contrary the affective traits in language learning process has been thoroughly explored and throughout the decades the researchers have found strong correlations between the variables of personal affective state and the language acquisition. It is beyond no doubt that empirical evidence for motivation playing a great role in language learning has only been enhanced by several studies, both in practical and theoretical aspect. The first theories date back more than a half a century ago when the Socio-educational theory that was first introduced by Gardner R.C. and Lambert W. (1958) and later by Gardner and Smythe (1974), who paved the way to the foundation of the Socio-educational Model for Foreign Language Learning, Gardner R.C. (1985). Ever since further and more thorough researches have been developed, yet not drifting away from the basic theory that affective factor of motivation is strongly related to language learning, Baker & Macintyre, (2000), Dörnyei Z. (1998). Clement, R., Dörnyei, Z. & Noels, K. A. (1994). Crookes, G. & Schmidt, R. W. (1991).

However, there are countries worldwide where studies on affective role on language learning are barely possible. A few are conducted either because it is an academic or research project for individual achievements or conclusions are drawn basically from the theories of motivation and language learning and been adopted into lectures in higher education or the most common scenario they have been simply translated into the country's respective mother tongue. This is definitely due to lack of a variety of capacities in the research field. Albania is a country that proudly has detached itself from this picture and has made great steps to enhance the importance of foreign language learning, especially with focus in English language. This is because of many educational reforms from the legislative level to the executive one. It can be stated that on the long run to European integration process, many recommendations from European Council have been fulfilled, and especially the importance of multilingual competence, stipulated in the Common European Framework of Reference for languages and in Albanian basic education system are offered two foreign languages, and one is compulsory. Consequently, English class has been introduced to the curricula from the first class, elementary education, as a pilot project for the academic year 2021-2022) till the 12th grade of pre university education system (English subject is a compulsory A-level exam). Albania has also participated in the European Year of languages and developed Foreign Language Portfolio¹.

Based on the socio education model which investigates the individual's affective aspect, this paper addresses the trait of motivation in foreign language learning, (English language). The subjects included in this research are high school students learning English as a first compulsory language at public and non -public Albanian education system, in urban and rural areas. It investigates the level of motivation of high school students to learn English language in a formal context.

¹ Language Education Policy Profile, Albania, Country Report, 2016

1.1. Literature Review

Motivation is a very broad-based construct. It includes cognitive, affective and individual characteristics. The motivated individual demonstrates all these characteristics. Reason alone cannot be called motivation. One may want to learn a foreign language for reasons that may reflect their motivation to learn the language for integrative purposes but if it would not be associated with other features of motivation it could not be motivation`.(Gardner R.C. (2005). The relationship between language learning and affective variables has been emphasized by many studies (Alizadeh M., 2016, Mirhadizadeh, 2016). The findings revealed that there is a reciprocal relationship between attitudes/ motivation and foreign language achievement, in a way that having positive motivation and attitudes help learners to have successful foreign language achievement and learners' degree of success affects their feelings motivation and attitude, (cited at Ghonchepour M. Pakzadmoghaddam M ., Kalantari E., Khandani M., Farrokhi H .Barfe , 2020) In Robert Gardner's classic view, motivation to learn a foreign language is the combination of effort plus the desire to achieve the goal of language learning, plus positive attitudes towards language learning. In the definition that Gardner makes for the intensity of motivation he evaluates it as: "an amount of effort that the individual makes (or in some cases would be willing to make the effort) in order to learn a second language" (Gardner RC and Lambert W., 1959; 1972; Gardner and Smythe 1975a, cited in Gardner R.C.1985: 53). While motivation 'refers to the combination of efforts plus the desire to achieve the goal of language learning plus positive attitudes / approaches to learning it ', (Gardner R.C., 1985, pp.9-10).The Socio-Educational model has generated numerous predictions related to second language and foreign language learning. It has been suggested that age, personality, and motivation are the main factors which influence second language acquisition (Cook, 2000). Motivation is the most used concept for explaining the failure or success of a language learner (Cheng & Dornyei 2007; Bernaus and Gardner (2008) investigate language teaching strategies, and the effects of these strategies on students' motivation and English achievement. The revised version of the Socio-educational Model for Foreign Language Learning used in this Gardner (2001) research finds some generalizations in some parts of the world. As a result, of many empirical studies, the first completed model of Gardner et. al., was introduced in 1979, revised and published in 1985 and again in 2001 (Lovato C., 2011). The Socio-educational model for learning foreign languages is built on the original version of the Battery for Motivation Attitude Motivation Test towards Language Learning (Gardner R.C., Smythe P.C., 1974, Attitude Motivation Test Battery).Gardner R.C. (2001), revised the Socio-educational Model for second language learning, where unlike the first model avoided individual differences in language skills (intelligence and aptitude of language) and focused only on constructs of the Socio-Educational Model (Gardner, R.C., Spain Talk, p.16-17). Also, the model was resized by placing the anxiety construct, in relation to motivation, unlike the first model, where it was the factor that directly affected only the achievements Gardner R.C., and (2009.p.6). Rather than treating the Socio-educational Model as a model that introduces associations between key variables, it can be used to specify predictions about the role of these variables in foreign language learning. Thus, the model would predict that motivation would

be related more to achievement in language learning, rather than to integration drive or attitudes towards the context in which the language is taught. This is documented in the literature (Gardner R.C., 2005, 2006, 2009).

1.1.1. Paper Objectives

This paper has three objectives. The first objective is to measure the overall level of high school students (N=650) motivation to learn English language in formal education system. The second objective is to find the level of motivation for three separate groups of students and respectively set in: urban public high school, rural high school and non-public high school. And, the third objective is to investigate if there are significant motivational variances for these three groups and in which group the motivational variances exist.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Questions and Variables

This paper addresses three main research questions.

No.1. What is the overall level of motivation to learn English language in formal education, and according to the subscales for the conceptual construct of 'Motivation'?

No.2. How motivated are students to learn English in three different groups of schools: urban public high schools, rural high schools and non-public high schools?

No.3 What are the variances of students' motivation among three groups of schools: urban public high school, rural public high school and non-public high school and in which groups are the differences significant? (See table 1)

The variables included in the research are: 'Group of school' (independent variable). 'Motivation', (dependent variable). See Table 2.

Table 1.

Scale of 'Motivation' in Socio-educational Model for English language learning and Subscales

Scale	Subscales
Motivation to learn English (30 statements)	Motivation Intensity (10 statements)
	Desire to learn English (10 statements)
	Attitudes to language learning(10 statements)

Table 2.

Research questions and Statistical procedures

No.	Research Questions	Variables	Statistical Analysis Procedure
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		Motivation	
		Motivation	
1.	What is the overall level of motivation to learn English language in formal education, and according to the subscales for the conceptual construct of 'Motivation'?	Intensity	Frequencies
		Desire to learn English	Descriptive Statistics
		Attitudes to language learning	
2.	How motivated are students to learn English in three different groups of schools: urban public high schools, rural high schools and non-public high schools?	Motivation (dependent variable)	Two way ANOVA Procedure
3.	What are the variances of students' motivation among three groups of schools: urban public high school, rural public high school and non-public high school and in which groups are the differences significant?	School groups (independent variable)	Post Hoc Tukey HSD Procedure

2.2. Procedures

2.2.1. Sample Size

The sample in this research includes public and non-public high schools in urban and rural areas of five main districts in Albania: Korçë, Vlorë, Durrës, Shkodër and Tirana. The technique based on the group, 'Stage and Cluster Sampling' was applied for the selection of the sample. The total sample size that derived from the sample calculation technique, Rao Soft sample size calculator is $N = 650$. To calculate the sample size according to the demographic variable 'group of schools', a list of urban/rural public high school / and non-public high school from the whole population of schools was provided. By calculating the sample with 95% confidence level, accepting the 5% error coefficient and the distributing response, it turned out that in this study participated 413 students from urban public high schools, 149 students of rural public high schools, and 87 students of non-public high schools. In a random selection, after distributing the total sample for the group of schools, the student sample was determined for each of the districts taken in the study. The size of each district sample is proportional to the respective total population (number of high school students per each district) is as follows: Korçë, $n = 63$, Vlorë, $n = 77$, Durrës $n = 105$, Shkodër, $n = 92$ and Tirana, $n = 312$. (See Table 3 and Graphic 1)

Table 3.

Descriptive statistics for the demographic sample distribution

District		Frequencies	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Korçë	63	9.78	9.78	9.78
	Vlorë	77	11.83	11.8	21.6
	Durrës	105	16.17	16.17	37.8
	Shkodër	92	14.22	14.22	52.0
	Tirana	312	48.0	48.0	100.0
	Total	650	100.0	100.0	

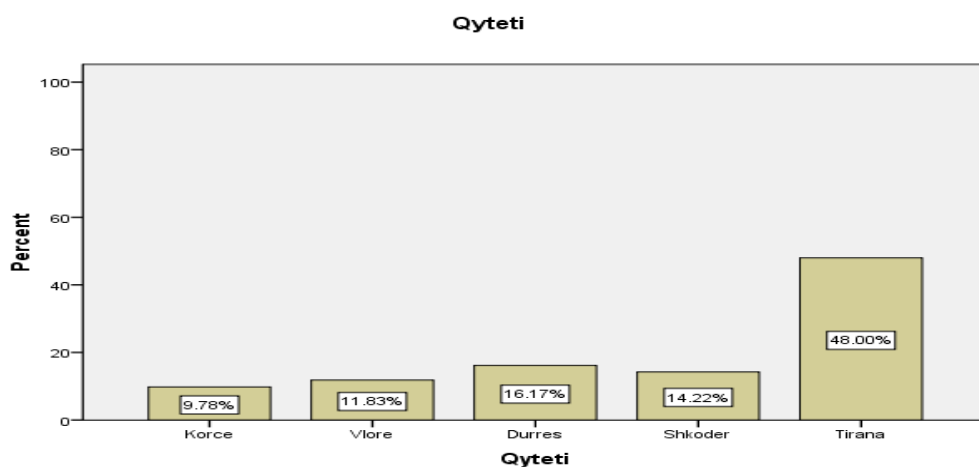


Figure 1. Graphic for demographic distribution of sample in percentage for the of variable `district`

2.2.2. Instrument Reliability and Preliminary Data Tests

Before the application of AMTB instrument, the coefficient of statistical significance was initially determined, at the value: $p = 0.05$. The internal reliability analysis was performed for each of the Socio-Educational Model scales. Cronbach's internal reliability coefficients were analyzed as by recommendation for test application in Albania, which is the same analysis conducted in a broad research in other countries in Europe, where the Socio Educational Model was applied (Gardner R.C., 2005, p.18). The values of the Alpha Cronbach coefficients for the internal reliability for `Motivation` scale was above 0.6, a value that shows that this construct is reliable to measure what it is designed to measure (Dörnyei Z., Taugchi, 2010). The value of Alpha coefficient for internal reliability of the scale: `Motivation to learn English` results. 78. (See Table 4)

Table 4.

Alpha Cronbach coefficient for internal reliability of AMTB scale of 'Motivation'

Scale	Alpha Cronbach Coefficient
Motivation	.78

The overall reliability expressed with Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items coefficient of the Socio-educational Model used in this research results to be .77. The model is 77% reliable, a result that confirms the overall reliability of the Model, which according to Brown et al., 2001, p. 264, (cit. at Hashimoto Y., 2003, p.46), should be over .5. (See table 5)

Table 5.

Alpha Cronbach's coefficient for the Socio-educational Model in foreign language learning

Alpha Cronbach Coefficient	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Number of variables
.777	.746	1

In order to conduct the two way Anova procedure for the comparison of school groups the dependent variable of 'motivation' was subject to preliminary analysis to meet the condition of variance homogeneity, Pallant J. (2010). Levene test for homogeneity of variances indicated that the dependent variable is homogeneous as the statistical significance for the variable of 'motivation' was: $p = .369$, $p > .05$. (See Table 6)

Table 6.

Homogeneity test of the variable of 'Motivation'

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Motivation	.997	2	650	.369

2.2.3 Data Analysis

The Descriptive Statistics and Frequencies analysis were conducted for the first research question. Based on all the preliminary analysis and their results, as explained above, some preconditions for the conduct of the two-way ANOVA procedure were met for the second question. The sum of squares, degrees of freedom, distribution F and level $p = .05$ of statistical significance were used. The post-hoc, Tukey HSD test for comparison of groups of schools, was used to answer to the third research question and determine which groups of schools the differences were found at, and to examine the statistical significant differences between the means of each subgroup.

3. Results

The descriptive data for overall level of 'Motivation to learn English' includes a total sample of N=650 students. Scores from 1-3 indicate negative motivation values and scores from 4-6 indicate increasing positive values to motivation. In a rating Likert scale from 1-6, the mean value of the Motivation scale is: $M = 5.43$ and $SD = .70$. The minimum value of the scale is 2

and its maximum value is 6. High school students (N = 650) are highly motivated to learn a foreign language (See Table 7).

Table 7.

Descriptive data for the scale: Overall motivation to learn English

	N	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Mean	DS
Motivation to learn English	650	2.00	6.00	5.43	.7012

Only 1.1% of high school students, at the national level are moderately not motivated to learn English language; 8.7% of students are slightly not motivated. In total, a minimal figure of 6.5 % of students at the national level are slightly motivated; 48.8 % of students are highly motivated and 35% of them are moderately motivated to learn the language. In total, a great majority 90.2% of students turns out to be motivated to learn English language and only 9.8 are not motivated. (See Table 8)

Table 8.

Frequencies for scale: Motivation to learn English

		Frequencies	percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid percentage	Moderately disagree	7	1.1	1.1	1.1
	Slightly disagree	57	8.7	8.7	9.8
	Slightly agree	42	6.5	6.5	16.2
	Moderately disagree	227	35.0	35.0	51.2
	Absolutely agree	317	48.8	48.8	100.0
	Total	650	100.0	100.0	

The mean values for the subscales which comprise the scale 'Motivation to learning English': 1. 'Motivation Intensity M = 5.3, SD = .72, and 2. 'Attitudes to English language learning', M = 5.1, DS = .99. 3. Desire to learn English M = 5.9, SD = .74. (See Table 9).

Table 9.

Mean and standard deviation values of the subscales: 1.Motivation Intensity, 2. Attitudes to English language learning. 3.Desire to learn English

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Motivation Intensity	650	2,00	6,00	5,315	,72105
Attitudes to English language learning	650	1,00	6,00	5,136	,99116
Desire to learn English	650	3,00	6,00	5,941	,74325
Valid N	650				

3.1. Mean and Standard Deviation Values for the Scale: 'Motivation to Learn English' According to Groups of Schools

The mean values of the scale: 'Motivation to learn English' for each group of school are: urban public high school students is M = 5.1, rural high school is M = 5.5 and non-public high schools the average value is M = 5.9. (See Table 10)

Table 10.

Descriptive data on students' Motivation to learn English` in relation to groups of school

School Groups	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% Mean Confidence Interval		Min	Max
					LowerBound	Upper Bound		
Urban public high school	1144	5,103	,77921	,02304	5,0583	5,1487	2,00	6,00
Rural public high school	414	5,517	,80780	,03970	5,4195	5,5756	2,00	6,00
Non -public high school	242	5,912	,77719	,04996	5,9136	5,9504	3,00	6,00
Total	1800	5,410	,78544	,01851	5,0737	5,8504	2,00	6,00

3.2. Differences of `Motivation` According to Groups of Schools

The procedure of two way Anova for the `motivation of students` according to the groups of school found that between the groups there is a statistical significance value $p = .038$, so $p < .05$, $F(2.648) = 3.621$ and degrees freedom, $df = 650$, (See Table 11).

Table 11.

ANOVA results on students' Motivation to learn English

	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	2.766	2	.383	3.621	.038
Within groups	1109.854	648	.617		
Total	1112.520	650			

Post Hoc comparison procedure, (Tukey HSD) indicated that the difference for urban public high schools compared to rural public high schools is: -0.4141 , $p=1.000$. The difference is statistically insignificant for these groups of schools, as the value (p) in the comparisons of groups with this procedure is $> .05$. The difference between the urban high school to the non public high schools is. $-.8092$, $p = 0,019$. The difference is statistically significant for these groups of schools, as the value (p) in the comparisons of groups with this procedure is $< .05$. The group of non-public high schools compared to rural public high schools has a difference of 0.395 , $p = .934$. The difference is statistically insignificant for these groups of schools, as the value (p) in the comparisons of groups with this procedure is $> .05$. (See table 12).

Table 12.

Results of the Post Hoc procedure for differences between the three groups for `Motivation`

Tukey HSD							
Dependent Variable	(I) School group	(J) School group	Mean Differences (I-J)	Std Error	Sig.	Confidence Interval 95%	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
`Motivation`	Urban public high schools	Rural public high schools	-.4141	.04506	1.000	-.1021	.1139
		Non-public schools	-.8092*	.05559	.019	-.1917	.0747

Rural public high schools	Urban public high schools	.4141	.04506	1.000	-.1139	.1021
	Non-public schools	-.395	.06357	.934	-.2167	.0879
Non-public schools	Urban public high schools	.8092*	.05559	.019	-.0747	.1917
	Rural public high schools	.395	.06357	.934	-.0879	.2167

4. Discussions

The motivation of high school students to learn English in this research reached the level, $M = 5.43$, (in a rating scale 1-6), which indicates that high school are highly motivated to learn English language at school. This is due to many motives. Learning English language has been declared a national priority in Albania over the last decade. Eager for European integration for a long time now, a continuous drive of Albanians immigration to foreign countries, becoming citizens in other states and Albania being a favorable country for international tourism and quite recently being a host country for certain categories of immigrants, the results of the research are quite consistent. Albanian people, especially the young age that this study was focused in has frequently encountered an English-speaking context. Also, Albania has consistently been open to the conditions of continuous promotion of English language use values (Language Education Policy Profile, Albania, Country Report, 2016, MAS, 2015, SZHAPU, Document of the Strategy for the development of pre-university education 2014-2020). Another reason why the motivation of Albanian students to learn English is high is that, in recent years, the English language exam has been defined as a mandatory exam in the State Matura, for university admissions (MAS, 2015, Instruction N.8, for the development of the State Matura exams).

Gardner R.C., (2006), restated in a research in Spain, that the factor which best predicts students' achievement in English language is motivation, ($r = .49$). The findings that confirmed that motivation is the single best predictor of English achievement, all other things being equal was evidenced in later researches, Hojat J., Mahda Vi Zafarghandi A., Danaye Tous M., (2013). Albanian students in this research agree with the fact that English is a very important part of the school curriculum, ($M = 5.9$) and they plan to learn English as much as possible ($M = 5.8$) for instrumental reasons to help them find a better job and get better paid in the future. These findings go in line with the research that revealed that the students were mostly instrumentally motivated for professional needs, Tokoz Goktepe F., (2014). Albanian high school students express the utmost/great desire to learn English, $M = 5.9$, they perceive language learning as a very important objective in their life, also, they express a desire to learn the language well enough that it become natural, $M = 5.8$. All of this findings are coherent with the results found in the research of Ghonchepour M., Pakzad Moghaddam M., Kalantari Khandani E., Farrokhi Barfe H., (2020), that indicated more considerable interest in foreign languages, having greater and stronger integrative and instrumental motivation, expressing a positive

attitude towards learning English. Albanian high school students showed to have positive attitudes to learning English, $M=5.1$, rating scale (1-6).

In a nationwide study in Canada Masgoret and Gardner (2003) conducted a 75-item meta-analysis of 10,489 participants and examined the relationship among the three main constructs and two orientations, integrativeness and instrumentality to measurement for grades. On the role of motivation and the integrative role of language in student achievement, they again found that the motivation factor correlates better than other factors, language achievements score ($r = .37$), Gardner R.C., 2005, pp.12-13.

Studies in several European countries, Romania, Poland, Croatia and Spain, where the Socio-Educational Model was applied, Gardner, R.C. (1985), showed that the second best predictor of student language outcomes in a foreign language is motivation (cit. in Gardner, R.C., 2005, p.20). Correlation values between motivation and language achievement in these researches ranged from .28 to .49. This finding was reflected also in the research in Albania with correlation value between variable of motivation and achievement at $r=.361$, Softa V.,(2016) Dornyei, Nyilasi and Clement (1996) conducted a nationwide survey in Hungary with over 4,700 participants to examine their motivation to learn five foreign languages, which indicated that English had a primary role in their motivation compared to German, French, Italian and Russian (Dornyei Z., p.129).

Cheng & Dornyei 2007; Bernaus and Gardner (2008) investigate between 31 English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher and their students ($N=694$). They indicate that “integrativeness, attitude toward the learning situation, and instrumental orientation predict the motivation to learn English, and that motivation was a positive predictor of English achievement, whereas attitudes toward the learning situation and language anxiety were negative predictors of English achievement” (cited at: Hojat J., Mahda Vi Zafarghandi A., Danaye Tous M., 2013, p.387).

5. Conclusion

The overall motivation of high school students ($N=650$) to learn English language is high with a mean value: ($M = 5.43$) according to a Likert scale (1-6). Students had a great desire to learn English language, ($M = 5.9$); they had moderate favorable attitudes towards language learning, ($M = 5.1$); the intensity of motivation to work in a foreign language was higher than moderate ($M = 5.3$). Nationwide, 90.2% of students were motivated to learn English, and only 9.8% of students were not motivated to learn.

This study found that urban public high school students are moderately motivated to learn English ($M = 5.1$, $SD = .77$); high school students in rural areas are more than moderately motivated to learn English, ($M = 5.5$, $SD = .80$), and non-public high school students are absolutely motivated to learn English, ($M = 5.9$, $SD = .77$).

The Post Hoc, Tukey HSD procedure for comparison of groups of school indicated that there existed a slight and insignificant difference between urban public high school and rural high school, the difference was: (-0.41 , $p=1.000$); a substantial and significant difference was found

for urban public high schools and non- public school: (-.8092, $p = .019$); non-public high schools compared to rural public high schools, insignificant difference: (0.395, $p = .934$).

In conclusion, high school students in Albania are more than moderately motivated to learn English language. There existed variances of motivation to learn English between groups of school and the impact on motivation varies from the demographic and education context. The students in rural public high schools were more motivated to learn English than those in urban public high schools. Non - public high schools students were more motivated to learn English than the students in urban public high school and rural public high school.

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