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TERTIARY-LEVEL EFL LEARNERS' MOTIVATION AND CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT IN A POST-COVID ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

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Keywords:

motivation;
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pandemic.

Abstract. In the last few years, during and in the immediate aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the rapid development of technology has faced one of the greatest challenges yet, especially in the field of education. Even though traditional in-class activities may seem tedious, motivating students to actively participate in online classes occasionally poses an even greater challenge. Having the scarcity of research in the Serbian EFL context in mind, the present paper aims to explore the potential impact and outcomes of the pandemic, by investigating Serbian tertiary-level EFL learners' motivation and classroom engagement in an online environment. The primary instrument was a questionnaire consisting of three sections: a section related to motivation, which included four subscales (personal suitability, effectiveness, teachability, and study habits); a section on classroom engagement, which contained statements addressing behavioural, agentic, cognitive, and emotional engagement; and a section on the actual effects of the pandemic on students' motivation for online learning. A total of 82 English-major students participated in the study. The results indicate that, even though the pandemic has introduced new platforms and opportunities for online learning, students seem to be more motivated to learn in the traditional classroom, expressing particular doubts about the effectiveness of online learning. Students generally express positive attitudes towards personal suitability and teachability online; however, their study habits leave room for improvement. Students' cognitive engagement exhibits more positive tendencies than the other three types. The result that seems to have the most significant pedagogical implications is that the majority of respondents state that the pandemic made them feel tired of online learning, which underlines the need for reconsideration of the current practices and the importance of constant innovation of the teaching process.

Introduction

Defined as “a theoretical construct used to explain the initiation, direction, intensity, persistence and quality of behaviour” (Brophy, 2004, p. 3), motivation is one of the key factors closely related to achievement and desired outcomes. Motivated behaviour refers to an individual’s orientation towards a goal, the willingness to expend effort to achieve a goal, and persevering in that effort, despite the challenges and obstacles encountered along the way (Trebješanin, 2009).

Research on motivation is aimed primarily at examining the reasons why an individual takes an action, the intensity of involvement in it, the persistence in efforts to achieve a goal, as well as examining an individual’s thoughts and feelings during the process (Woolfolk et al., 2013). Given that the nature of motivation is rather complex, investigation of the phenomenon has generated several psychological theories and series of studies aimed at defining it and at determining its causes and effects. Despite decades of research, no motivation theory has managed to explain the full complexity of the issue. Although researchers have been selective in their focus on various aspects of motivation, most of them agree that motivation concerns direction and magnitude of human behaviour, including the choice of a particular action, persistence in it, and the effort expended on it (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 4). In other words, motivation explains why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they will pursue it.

The never-ending advancement of technology and the development of new learning tools have completely altered the teaching and learning landscape in the 21st century, especially in the aftermath of COVID-19. Over the years, computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has branched off into numerous options for both teachers and learners, making participation and engagement more flexible, particularly in the sense of physical presence in a formal classroom (Senffner & Kepler, 2015). The present paper is thus concentrated on investigating motivation and classroom engagement in an online learning environment, with a special focus on the period immediately following the pandemic, when distance learning was almost an exclusive form of education.

Learning Motivation and Classroom Engagement in an EFL Context

Learning motivation is believed to be one of the most significant factors predicting an individual's success in the process of learning (Gardner, 1985; Dörnyei, 2005; Визек Видовић et al., 2014). Woolfolk et al. (2013) claim that this type of motivation implies learners' serious attitude towards academic work, their efforts to gain benefit from the work, and the employment of adequate strategies in that process. Brophy (2004, p. 4) claims that the concept of learning motivation, used to explain "the degree to which students invest attention and efforts in various pursuits," is rooted in learners' learning experiences, affecting their willingness to participate in learning activities and the reasons for doing so. Seeking to define the role of motivation in the process of learning, Ormrod (2003) explains that motivation exerts positive impact on cognitive processes and academic achievement, encourages learners to put more effort in the learning process, directs their behaviour towards achieving goals, enables them to focus on the goals that will bring them some kind of reward, and helps them sustain the learning process. Ryan and Deci (2000) argue that motivated learners are able to participate in challenging learning activities while being engaged in discovering appropriate strategies to facilitate learning and persist in the learning process.

Since learning motivation is a complex, multi-layered concept, whose numerous aspects cannot be examined and measured simultaneously, research on this type of motivation has focused on its individual dimensions, that is, on its various quantitative and qualitative features. For example, an individual can be motivated to learn by rewards and punishments of parents and teachers, the person's interests and goals, previous achievements, peer behaviour, and the learning content (Визек Видовић et al., 2014). Furthermore, student motivation is a dynamic dimension whose intensity and structure fluctuate over time; thus, its temporal variations need to be considered as well.

In the field of applied linguistics, motivation has been considered as one of the most important factors that, besides other individual differences—such as age, language aptitude, or personality—accounts for successes and failures in foreign language learning. Defined as "the driving force in any situation that leads to action" (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 377), L2 motivation is claimed to be particularly significant because it initiates L2 learning and provides the driving force to sustain learning (Dörnyei, 2001; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). In addition, motivation determines the degree to which a learner is willing to expend effort to learn a foreign language (Oxford, 1996).

Since foreign language learning does not simply mean learning new content and skills, but it likewise implies the adoption of a new identity and rules of social and cultural conduct (Williams, 1994), it is clear that this type of learning comprises a number of unique psychological and behavioural patterns that the process of adopting new identities, habits, and elements of other

cultures entails. Dörnyei (1998, p. 118) claims that L2 motivation is a complex and unique process since language itself is at the same time a communication coding system taught as a school subject, an integral part of an individual's identity, and an important channel of social organisation rooted deeply in the target language community. In that sense, it can be argued that L2 motivation is simultaneously a cognitive, affective, and social dimension. All other factors involved in the process of foreign language learning presuppose motivation to some extent, as even students with exceptional abilities cannot achieve good results if they are not motivated (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). On the other hand, high levels of motivation can compensate for deficiencies in both an individual's abilities and learning conditions.

Some authors claim that the influence of motivation on learners' achievement is bidirectional, in the sense that just as motivation affects achievement, success may likewise lead to higher levels of motivation (Ellis, 1994; Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

In the last few decades, research on L2 motivation has evolved through several phases, each examining it from a different perspective—whether as a conscious or unconscious process, in relation to its cognitive and affective dimensions, or as a temporal and contextual construct. Gardner and Lambert (1972) suggest that the interest in researching L2 motivation arises from a desire to understand the factors, beyond cognitive ones, that influence achievement. Classifying motivation as an affective variable, together with learners' attitudes towards the target language community and culture, the authors emphasise the social and psychological aspects of L2 motivation. This social-psychological perspective evolved from the belief that L2 motivation should be distinguished from other types of learning motivation, since students are expected not only to acquire knowledge of a language but also to “identify with members of another ethnolinguistic group and to take on very subtle aspects of their behaviour, including their distinctive style of speech and their language” (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 135). Hence, a key issue in Gardner's L2 motivation theory is the concept of integrative orientation, which concerns a positive disposition to the L2 group and the willingness to be valued as a worthy member of a particular linguistic community (Gardner & Lambert, 1959, p. 271). According to the social and psychological perspective, learners' ethnocentric orientation and their attitudes toward the target language and its community exert a direct influence on their L2 motivation.

The 1990s saw a shift towards the cognitive and situated dimensions of the concept. The period was marked by two trends: the need to align L2 motivation research with cognitive theories in motivational psychology, and the desire to shift the focus from learners' attitudes towards language learning and ethnolinguistic communities to more situated and contextualised aspects of learning (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 46). Firstly, in view of the significant influence of

self-determination theory in educational psychology, the importance of drawing the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in the foreign language classroom was recognised and highlighted. While extrinsic motivation refers to performing a behaviour as a means to receive an external reward or avoid punishment, intrinsic motivation deals with behaviour performed for its own sake in order to experience pleasure and satisfaction (Noels et al., 1999; Ryan & Deci, 2000), which represents a type of motivation that should be strengthened in learners. Moreover, those who proposed a cognitive-situated perspective (Dörnyei, 1994; Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Williams & Burden, 1997) believed that sources of motivation connected to learners' immediate learning environment (e.g., their classroom) have a stronger impact on their L2 motivation than their attitudes towards a foreign language and its native speakers. Nevertheless, it is important to note that this theoretical shift primarily extends Gardner's framework rather than rejecting the social-psychological perspective.

The shift to the cognitive-situated perspective stirred up interest in the dynamic nature of motivation and its temporal variation, which in turn led to the development of process-oriented approaches to L2 motivation. This next phase was characterised by a focus on the dynamics of L2 motivation change both at the micro (e.g., task motivation) and the macro level (e.g., during a course). Treating L2 motivation as a dynamic, unstable concept rather than a constant, trait-like characteristic raised important questions about research methodology. It emphasised the need to study L2 motivation as a fluctuating process contextualised within a matrix of social and cultural factors. This perspective naturally led to the socio-dynamic phase, where current theoretical models examine motivation as a situated, dynamic component of foreign language learning in the modern globalised world, focusing especially on "its organic development in dynamic interaction with a multiplicity of internal, social and contextual factors" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 72).

Classroom engagement includes three closely related components: behavioural, cognitive, and emotional; addressing all these components enhances effective learning (Fredricks & McColskey, 2012; O'Donnell et al., 2015). Reeve (2013) identifies one more component—agentic, claiming that all four contribute to active learning. Without engagement, there is often no meaningful outcome or real attainment. Simply attending class and behaving properly is not enough; students need to be actively connected to the learning process (Saeed & Zyngier, 2012). Conventional methods and strategies may seem repetitive and tedious for learners (Zhang & McNamara, 2018); hence, the online environment is claimed to provide more favourable conditions for learner engagement.

Methodology

Research Aims and Questions

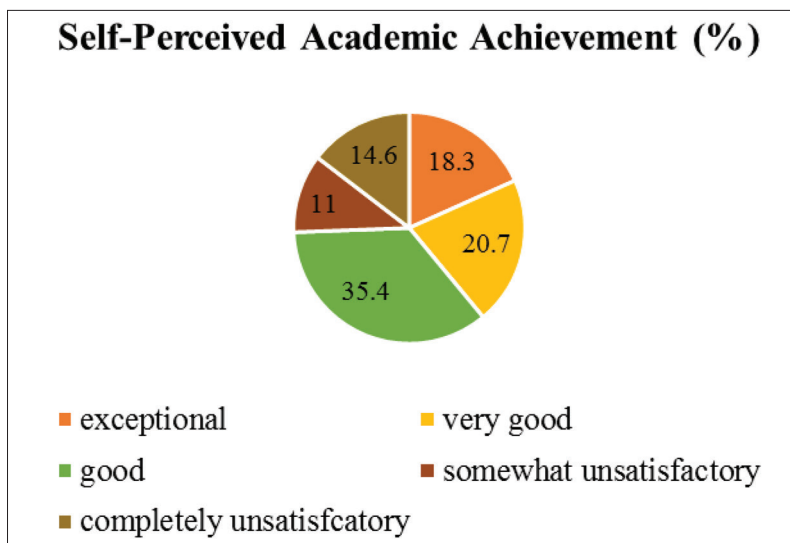
This paper aims at investigating English-major students' motivation and classroom engagement in an online environment. A particular focus was placed on factors of motivation for online learning because of the changing situational landscape of university education, as well as other levels of education, in the previous three years, with the traditional face-to-face classroom at one point completely shifting to distance learning. The goal was to explore the aftermath of COVID-19 and its potential effects on students' motivation and engagement.

Guided by the proposed aims of the study, the investigation was based on the following research questions:

- What is the current level of English-major students' motivation for online learning?
- What do the results reveal about the four subscales of motivation—personal suitability, effectiveness, teachability, and study habits—in an online environment?
- What is the current level of English-major students' classroom engagement in online environments?
- What do the results tell us about behavioural, agentic, cognitive, and emotional engagement?

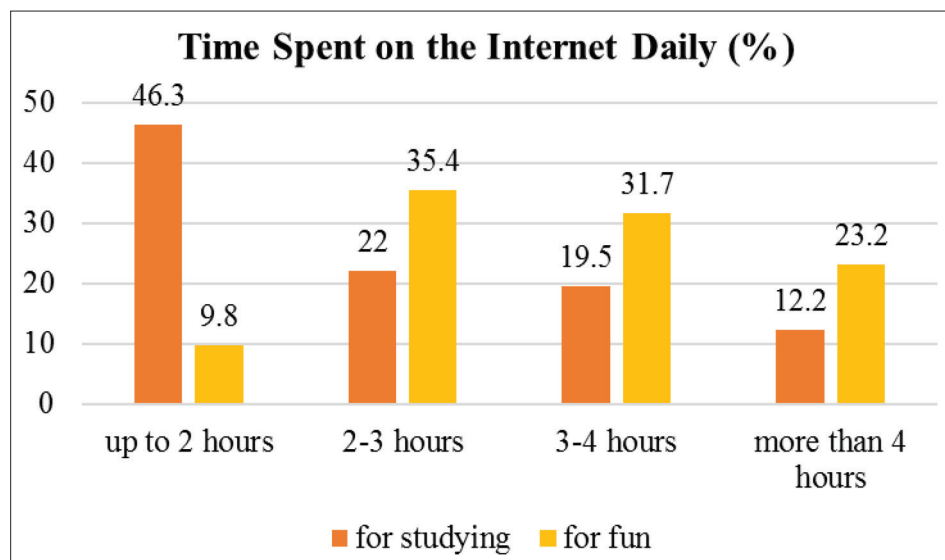
Participants

A total of 82 English-major students (average age = 22.05; 16 (19.5%) male, 63 (76.8%) female, 3 (3.7%) other) of the Faculty of Philology and Arts, University of Kragujevac participated in the study. At the time of the survey, they were all in their third or fourth year of undergraduate studies (English Language and Literature Study Programme). Graph 1 shows information on their self-perceived academic achievement, while Graph 2 provides data on the daily amount of time spent using the Internet for either recreational or academic purposes.



Graph 1. Students' self-perceived academic achievement

The majority of students view their academic achievement as good (35.4%), while 18% consider it exceptional, which is encouraging. The provided information is important because students' self-perception of academic success may affect their motivation.



Graph 2. Daily time spent on the Internet

According to the data in the graph, the largest percentage of students spend up to 2 hours a day studying on the Internet, while their recreational time is nearly evenly distributed between 2–3 hours and 3–4 hours. This information is relevant to the study, as the overall distribution of Internet use may also impact students' motivation to learn online.

Instruments and Procedure

The main instrument for collecting data on students' motivation and classroom engagement online was a questionnaire adapted from two earlier studies (Reeve, 2013; Altunay, 2019). The original statements were modified to meet the needs of this study, while the final six statements about the effects of COVID-19 were added by the authors of the paper to further support the findings. The questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part, an introductory section, included questions about the demographic data of the sample, self-perceived academic achievement, and time spent on the Internet. The second part focused on motivation and contained eighteen statements rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1—strongly agree to 5—strongly disagree), relating to students' motivation (Altunay, 2019). The third part addressed engagement and featured twenty-one statements rated on the same 5-point Likert scale, concerning learner engagement (Reeve, 2013). Additionally, it included six statements on the impact of the pandemic on learners' motivation to participate in online activities. The questionnaire comprised a total of 45 questions. The motivation section was divided into statements covering four subscales: personal suitability (1–6), effectiveness (7–11), teachability (12–15), and study habits (16–18). The engagement section included statements divided into four subscales based on type of engagement: behavioural (19–23), agentic (24–30), cognitive (31–34), and emotional (35–39).

The questionnaire was distributed in person on two occasions at the beginning of the winter semester of the 2023–2024 academic year. All the respondents agreed to participate in an anonymous survey by signing a written consent form provided at the end of the questionnaire. The collected data were analysed using SPSS version 20.0, including descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and independent samples t-test.

Results and Discussion

The results of the questionnaire related to the motivation for learning online are presented in Table 1. Percentage counts are provided for each of the levels separately. The results are presented in three tables for the sake of convenience and clarity.

Table 1. Results of the motivation questionnaire

Statement		Answers (%)				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Personal Suitability	1. It is convenient for me to learn through distance education.	37.8	28	11	9.8	13.4
	2. Learning in an online environment is suitable for my lifestyle.	42.7	28	14.6	7.3	7.3
	3. Distance education serves as an excellent mechanism to gain the academic knowledge I need.	23.2	42.7	22	8.5	3.7
	4. Online learning saves a lot of my time.	51.2	25.6	7.3	7.3	8.5
	5. I need the flexibility that participating in online lessons provides.	28	34.1	11	14.6	12.2
	6. I prefer learning from home rather than going to the educational institution.	2.4	3.7	14.6	34.1	45.1
Effectiveness	7. Distance education makes a student more active in terms of learning.	3.7	9.8	4.9	34.1	47.6
	8. Distance education offers the opportunity to do various activities.	25.6	51.2	11	9.8	2.4
	9. Distance education allows students to learn at their own pace.	24.4	45.1	14.6	12.2	3.7
	10. Distance education helps to learn more effectively with no distractions.	11	12.2	12.2	23.2	41.5
	11. Distance education is more effective than traditional education.	4.9	9.8	6.1	22	57.3
Teachability	12. Face-to-face interaction is necessary for academic achievement.	51.2	17.1	14.6	12.2	4.9
	13. Communication in face-to-face learning situations is more immediate and precise than in distance learning.	46.3	20.7	11	12.2	9.8
	14. English education is more effectively provided through traditional methods than through distance learning.	26.8	22	18.3	22	11
	15. I need face-to-face communication to learn English better.	35.4	47.6	12.2	4.9	/
Study Habits	16. I tend to procrastinate on assignments given online.	34.1	42.7	17.1	4.9	1.2
	17. Most of the time, I do not complete the homework or exercises assigned online.	13.4	26.8	9.8	29.3	20.7
	18. I wait until the last moment to complete my homework or study for exams.	32.9	24.4	12.2	17.1	13.4

When it comes to the personal suitability subscale, the majority of participants (65%) find distance education convenient, and a similar percentage view it as an excellent way to gain academic knowledge. Seventy per cent describe it as suitable for their lifestyle, while 76% believe that online learning saves time. Sixty-two per cent need the flexibility of online lessons; however, almost 80% disagree that they would rather learn from home than go to the educational institution. Overall, we can conclude that the personal suitability subscale indicated more positive attitudes and motivation ($m = 2$, $SD = 0.77$), though there was still a strong preference for face-to-face environments.

Examining the effectiveness subscale reveals a shift in attitudes. Namely, 81% of respondents disagree that distance education makes a student more active, whereas 76% believe that it offers the opportunity for various activities. This shows that students are aware of the options offered by online learning, but these options do not necessarily promote active learning. Almost 70% claim that distance education allows self-paced learning, yet almost 65% feel that it does not help them learn more effectively or without distractions. A somewhat surprising finding emerges from students' responses to Statement 11, where nearly 80% of them claim that distance education is not more effective than traditional education. The median value for the effectiveness subscale is 4 ($m = 4$, $SD = 1.09$), which suggests that students are not generally positive about the overall effectiveness of online learning, especially compared to traditional face-to-face interactions. This may be due to students' major and their belief that communication is essential for developing or enhancing their language skills, making immediate feedback critically important.

In line with some of the previous statements, 68% of participants find face-to-face interaction necessary for academic achievement, and 67% feel that communication in face-to-face situations is more immediate and precise. Interestingly, 18% of students are neutral about whether traditional methods are more effective than distance learning in providing English education, which may stem from their lack of familiarity with the latter. This statement exhibited a more equal distribution of answers than any of the previous ones. 83% of respondents need face-to-face interaction to learn English better. The teachability subscale showed a median value of 2 ($m = 2$, $SD = 0.73$), indicating a general positive attitude towards the traditional classroom.

When it comes to study habits, 75% of respondents agree that they procrastinate on assignments given online. Half of the students claim to disagree with the statement about not completing homework or exercises online. Fifty-seven per cent tend to wait until the last moment to complete homework or study for exams. Based on the results, it can be concluded that respondents tend to procrastinate on assignments and cram before exams, highlighting the need to improve study habits ($m = 2$, $SD = 1.10$).

The results of the questionnaire pertaining to learner engagement are presented in Table 2. The statements in the table are numbered as in the original questionnaire.

Table 2. Results of the classroom engagement questionnaire

Statement		Answers (%)				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Behavioural	19. When I'm in an online class, I listen very carefully.	19.5	15.9	7.3	34.1	23.2
	20. I pay attention in an online class.	22	18.3	12.2	26.8	20.7
	21. I try hard to do well in an online class.	25.6	13.4	29.3	18.3	13.4
	22. I work as hard as I can in an online environment.	12.2	34.1	8.5	28	17.1
	23. I participate in class discussions in online classes.	22	35.4	9.8	20.7	12.2
Agentic	24. I let my teacher know what I need and want.	13.4	17.1	19.5	32.9	17.1
	25. I let my teacher know what I am interested in.	7.3	14.6	11	46.3	20.7
	26. During an online class, I express my preferences and opinions.	26.8	23.2	8.5	26.8	14.6
	27. During an online class, I ask questions to help me learn.	20.7	30.5	23.2	18.3	7.3
	28. When I need something, I ask the teacher for it.	53.7	40.2	4.9	1.2	/
	29. I adjust whatever we are learning in an online class so I can learn as much as possible.	42.7	24.4	11	14.6	7.3
	30. I try to make whatever we are learning online as interesting as possible.	12.2	20.7	37.8	18.3	11
Cognitive	31. When I study in an online environment, I try to connect what I am learning with my own experiences.	22	54.9	8.5	7.3	7.3
	32. I try to make all the different ideas fit together and make sense.	42.7	29.3	9.8	8.5	9.8
	33. When doing academic work online, I try to relate what I'm learning to what I already know.	41.5	36.6	3.7	12.2	6.1
	34. I make up my own examples to help me understand the important concepts I am studying.	37.8	32.9	14.6	12.2	2.4

Emotional	35. When we work on something in an online class, I feel interested.	23.2	20.7	41.5	8.5	6.1
	36. Online learning is fun.	29.3	7.3	32.9	22	8.5
	37. I enjoy learning new things in an online class.	35.4	24.39	21.95	6.1	12.2
	38. When I'm in an online class, I feel good.	12.2	28	17.1	22	20.7
	39. When we work on something in an online class, I get involved.	14.63	24.4	35.4	18.3	12.2

Regarding the statements belonging to the behavioural subscale of classroom engagement, while 55% of respondents listen very carefully during online classes, it is concerning that less than 50% (40.3%) report paying attention. Half of the participants strive to do well in online classes, while 46% work as hard as they can. Fifty-seven per cent participate in online discussions, which may be linked to activities they find particularly engaging. The median value for behavioural engagement is 3 ($m = 3$, $SD = 1.04$), indicating a moderate level of engagement, neither too high nor too low.

When it comes to the agentic engagement subscale, it is disappointing that only 30% of students let the teacher know what they want and need. Even fewer—only 22%—tell the teacher what they are interested in. The results might have been different if primary or secondary schools had been included, where students possibly feel less socially distant from their teachers and classes are smaller and more intimate. Furthermore, the attitudes may be different depending on the lecturer. Nevertheless, half of the students expresses preferences and opinions during an online class, but the percentage is still lower than expected. Interestingly, 95% of participants feel comfortable asking the teacher when they need something, which seems to contradict the previous findings. This discrepancy may be due to students having different interpretations of needs, opinions, or interests. In face-to-face interactions with the students following the questionnaire, the authors of the paper asked for clarification. The majority of students said there were certain issues that were too personal to be shared with teachers and many also claimed to be introverted. Sixty-seven per cent of students adjust the material covered in an online class to be able to learn as much as possible, and only 32% of them try to make learning as interesting as possible. The median value for agentic engagement is 2.5, also showing a tendency towards the middle ground ($m = 2.5$, $SD = 0.81$).

Cognitive engagement seems higher than the previous two subscales, judging by the median value of responses ($m = 2$, $SD = 0.75$). Seventy-seven per cent of students try to connect what they learn in online classes to their own experiences, also attempting to make all the different ideas fit together and make sense (72%). Seventy-eight per cent connect online work to what they already know, while 70% make up their own examples in order to understand the concepts they are studying.

Emotional engagement has a median value of 3 ($M = 3$, $SD = 0.81$), indicating that students are generally neutral, lying between positive and negative extremes. Statement 35 is particularly intriguing because 41.5% of respondents claim to be neutral regarding interest in working on something online. In the conversation after the survey, the students said they were either disinterested or their interest depended on the specific activity. A similar explanation was given as to the next statement. Only 36% of respondents find online learning fun, but 60% of them enjoy learning new things in online classes. Forty per cent of students claim to feel good during online classes, while 42% say the opposite. The final statement on emotional engagement shows an almost equal distribution: one-third of participants are engaged when working online, one-third are not, and a similar percentage are undecided.

The final section of the questionnaire on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' motivation to learn online is presented in Table 3. The numbering of statements is preserved as in the original survey sheet.

Table 3. Results of the effect of COVID-19 on the motivation questionnaire

Statement	Answers (%)				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
40. The COVID-19 pandemic changed my attitude towards online learning.	51.2	30.5	8.5	8.5	1.2
41. The COVID-19 pandemic made my attitude towards online learning more positive.	9.8	28.05	17.1	23.17	22
42. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed new opportunities for online learning.	30.5	45.1	12.2	8.5	3.7
43. I believe my online learning was efficient during the COVID-19 pandemic.	11	17.1	14.6	42.7	14.6
44. I feel more motivated to learn online after the COVID-19 pandemic than I did during it.	6.1	8.5	23.2	34.1	28
45. The COVID-19 pandemic made me feel tired of online learning.	42.7	29.3	17.1	6.1	4.9

The last six statements were not a part of any subscale, but were formulated specifically to obtain information on a particular set of attitudes. Eighty-one per cent of respondents believe the pandemic changed their attitude towards online learning. However, the majority (43.17%) claim that the change was not positive. Seventy-five per cent agree that COVID-19 revealed new opportunities for online learning, yet only 28% believe their online learning was efficient during the pandemic. Only 14.5% feel more motivated to learn online after the

pandemic, while the majority (62%) disagree with the statement. The reason may be explained by the final statement: 72% of students feel that the COVID-19 pandemic led to fatigue with online learning.

In order to gain more revealing insights into the relationship between factors of motivation and students' responses, additional statistical testing was performed, the results of which are presented here in brief. An independent samples t-test revealed that gender was not a statistically significant predictor of variations in responses across any of the subscales (personal suitability $t_{(80)} = 0.803$ $p = 0.424$; effectiveness $t_{(80)} = 1.568$ $p = 0.121$; teachability $t_{(80)} = 1.298$ $p = 0.198$; study habits $t_{(80)} = 0.782$ $p = 0.437$; behavioural engagement $t_{(80)} = 1.321$ $p = 0.190$; agentic $t_{(80)} = 0.796$ $p = 0.428$; cognitive $t_{(80)} = 0.071$ $p = 0.944$; emotional $t_{(80)} = 1.499$ $p = 0.138$; COVID $t_{(80)} = 0.175$ $p = 0.862$). One-way ANOVA was used to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between groups of participants in terms of academic achievement, hours spent studying online, and time spent on the Internet for leisure. Academic achievement was found to be a statistically significant factor affecting the impact of COVID-19 on motivation ($F_{(80)} = 3.581$ $p = 0.010$), indicating that the variation in responses was related to participants' academic achievement. No statistically significant difference was found for the other subscales (personal suitability $F_{(80)} = 1.529$ $p = 0.202$; effectiveness $F_{(80)} = 1.477$ $p = 0.217$; teachability $F_{(80)} = 1.956$ $p = 0.110$; study habits $F_{(80)} = 0.914$ $p = 0.460$; behavioural engagement $F_{(80)} = 0.381$ $p = 0.821$; agentic $F_{(80)} = 2.052$ $p = 0.095$; cognitive $F_{(80)} = 0.885$ $p = 0.477$; emotional $F_{(80)} = 0.366$ $p = 0.832$). The number of hours spent studying on the Internet likewise was not found to be a statistically significant predictor of variability of students' responses (personal suitability $F_{(80)} = 0.064$ $p = 0.979$; effectiveness $F_{(80)} = 1.259$ $p = 0.294$; teachability $F_{(80)} = 0.814$ $p = 0.490$; study habits $F_{(80)} = 0.266$ $p = 0.850$; behavioural engagement $F_{(80)} = 0.712$ $p = 0.454$; agentic $F_{(80)} = 0.098$ $p = 0.961$; cognitive $F_{(80)} = 0.861$ $p = 0.465$; emotional $F_{(80)} = 0.703$ $p = 0.553$; COVID $F_{(80)} = 1.536$ $p = 0.212$). The number of hours spent having fun on the Internet was not found to be statistically significant either (personal suitability $F_{(80)} = 0.852$ $p = 0.470$; effectiveness $F_{(80)} = 0.783$ $p = 0.507$; teachability $F_{(80)} = 0.185$ $p = 0.907$; study habits $F_{(80)} = 0.663$ $p = 0.577$; behavioural engagement $F_{(80)} = 0.509$ $p = 0.677$; agentic $F_{(80)} = 0.296$ $p = 0.828$; cognitive $F_{(80)} = 1.141$ $p = 0.338$; emotional $F_{(80)} = 0.180$ $p = 0.910$; COVID $F_{(80)} = 1.244$ $p = 0.299$). Based on the findings, it can be concluded that, for this study sample, students' motivation, engagement, and the impact of COVID-19 on online learning motivation do not correlate with gender, or the number of hours spent studying on the Internet or using it for leisure. However, academic achievement appears to be a significant factor in determining the variation in responses related to the effect of COVID-19 on motivation.

Finally, in order to connect the starting point of the research with the findings, the proposed research questions are addressed in more detail here. Namely, regarding the current level of English-major students' motivation for online learning,

it may be concluded that the selected sample of students understand the importance of online learning and find it suitable, but they seem to prefer traditional classroom settings. These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Altunay (2019). Pertaining to the question of the motivation subscales, the findings indicate a notable discrepancy between the personal suitability subscale and effectiveness, since the majority of students find online learning convenient, yet seem to believe that it does not make students more active. The scale related to students' study habits reveals a tendency to procrastinate on assignments and cram for exams. Regarding English-major students' classroom engagement in an online environment, the results indicate high levels of cognitive engagement, while agentic engagement shows a need for significant improvement. The latter is especially important for supporting autonomous learning (Reeve, 2013). Behavioural and emotional engagement appear to fall between the high levels of cognitive engagement and the need for improvement in agentic engagement.

Conclusion

The results of the questionnaire suggest that students find online learning suitable, yet they prefer the traditional face-to-face classroom. The effectiveness subscale was the most revealing, as it showed that students generally did not consider online learning to be more effective than traditional classroom instruction. The obtained results may be a consequence of the specific nature of the academic study programme the students are attending, because they realise the need for face-to-face interaction and its benefits for language skills enhancement. The study habits subscale is notably important because it highlights a common issue faced by EFL teachers: teaching students to take responsibility and accountability for their own achievements.

Examining the types of classroom engagement, we can conclude that students demonstrate high levels of cognitive engagement in online lessons, while their behavioural and emotional engagement show a more negative trend. Agentic engagement requires considerable improvement to enhance teacher-learner communication and promote better outcomes.

We are all overly aware that the COVID-19 pandemic has left an indelible mark on everyday lives, and education seems to be far from left out. Students report being aware of how the pandemic has changed their attitudes towards online learning; unfortunately, the majority of respondents believe this change was not for the better. As well as that, they say the pandemic has made them tired of online learning.

The unexpected survey findings have important pedagogical implications. Having in mind that students spend a substantial amount of time online, judging by their responses to the introductory questions in the survey, the results seem

rather surprising. The explanation may lie in the fact students like spending time online for leisure, while they feel learning is reserved for the physical, face-to-face, formal classroom. Of course, this perspective may change with appropriate adjustments made to both online and traditional classroom settings. While the study results suggest that online learning should be considered indispensable, it can be used as an additional tool in EFL teaching, complementing rather than replacing face-to-face interaction to achieve the best outcomes. Moreover, students may need time to rest and rekindle their motivation and enthusiasm for online activities, which can be effectively achieved by diversifying and complementing the learning material in face-to-face classroom.

One limitation of the study may be the participants' specific academic orientation and educational focus. Students of philology, particularly foreign philology, often require immediate interaction as a prerequisite for effective learning. This can also be an advantage, since they recognise the importance of the issues investigated, and were thus committed to completing the questionnaire as truthfully as possible. Further research may focus on other educational levels and representatives of other study programmes in order to get a more objective perspective on the issues of motivation and learner engagement in online environments.

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Ангажовање и мотивација студената англистике за учење на даљину у периоду након завршетка пандемије ковида 19

Резиме

Вртоглаво брзи напредак и развој технологије показао је свој значај и постигнућа суочивши се са једним од највећих изазова до сада у последњих неколико година током, а и непосредно након пандемије ковида 19, посебно у области образовања. Наше истраживање имало је за циљ да испита мотивацију и ангажовање српских студената англистике у онлајн окружењу. Студију је најпре понукало свакодневно искуство у настави ауторки рада, које се срећу са све већим бројем студената који осећају недостатак мотивације и безвољност да обављају онлајн задатке сада када пандемије малтене више нема. Стога смо се фокусирали на истраживање степена мотивације и ангажовања студената, али и њихових ставова о утицају који је пандемија коронавируса имала на њихову мотивацију за онлајн учење. У истраживању је учествовало 82 студената англистике на Филолошко-уметничком факултету Универзитета у Крагујевцу. У време анкетања сви су похађали трећу или четврту годину основних студија. Главни инструмент за прикупљање података о мотивацији ученика и ангажовању у онлајн учионици био је упитник адаптиран из две раније студије (Reeve, 2013; Altunay, 2019). Већ постојеће изјаве модификоване су како би одговарале потребама наше студије, док је последњих шест изјава о утицају коронавируса на мотивацију за онлајн учење додато од стране аутора рада како бисмо додатно поткрепили постојеће налазе. Наиме, читав упитник састојао се од три дела: 1) уводног дела, који је садржао уобичајена питања која су у вези са демографским подацима узорка; 2) дела који је обухватао 18 изјава са Ликертовом скалом одговора (1 – потпуно се слажем, 5 – уопште се не слажем), које су се односиле на мотивацију ученика; 3) дела који је садржао 21 тврдњу са истом Ликертовом скалом и шест изјава које су се односиле на утицај пандемије на мотивацију за онлајн учење.

Када је у питању мотивација за онлајн учење, резултати упитника показали су да студентима одговара начин учења онлајн, али да преферирају традиционалне учионице. Подскала учинковитости учења од нарочите је важности јер је показала да ученици не сматрају онлајн учење ефикаснијим од традиционалног које се одвија уживо у учионици. Добијени резултати могу бити последица специфичности студијског програма који студенти похађају, јер они схватају важност непосредне интеракције и увиђају њене користи за унапређење језичких вештина. Подскала навика у учењу чини се посебно важном, јер наглашава свеприсутан проблем са

којим се наставници енглеског као страног језика свакодневно суочавају, а то је подстицање ученика да прихвате одговорност за сопствена достигнућа.

Посматрајући типове ангажовања у учионици, могли бисмо закључити да ученици показују висок ниво когнитивног ангажовања онлајн, док њихово понашање и емоционално ангажовање указују на нешто негативније тенденције. Чини се да је ангажовање везано за самоиницијативу у наставном процесу потребно знатно побољшати како би се уједно унапредила и комуникација између наставника и ученика, а тиме и коначни резултати.

Сви смо апсолутно свесни да је пандемија ковида 19 оставила неиздбрисив траг у свакодневним животима, те да образовање није изостављено. Ученици наводе да су свесни да је пандемија променила њихов став према онлајн учењу, али, нажалост, већина испитаника не сматра да промена води ка позитивнијем ставу. Испитаници такође сматрају да су се услед пандемије уморили од онлајн учења.

Помало изненађујући резултати анкете подвлаче неке важне педагошке импликације. Имајући у виду да студенти проводе доста времена онлајн, судећи по одговорима на уводна питања у анкети, резултати указују на неопходност активног рада и ангажовања у наставном процесу. Ипак, објашњење за овакве резултате додатно можемо потражити у чињеници да ученици више воле да проводе време на интернету да би се забавили, док сматрају да је право учење резервисано за физичке, формалне учионице. Дата перспектива се, наравно, може променити одговарајућим изменама, применљивим и на онлајн и на традиционалне учионице. Чини се да резултати нашег рада указују на неопходност онлајн учења у XXI веку, које не сме бити једина могућност, већ тек додатно средство у настави енглеског као страног језика, које ће допунити непосредну интеракцију у традиционалној учионици са циљем постизања жељених резултата. Такође, можда је студентима потребно мало времена да се одморе и поврате мотивацију и ентузијазам за онлајн активности, што им се може релативно лако омогућити освежавањем наставног садржаја у формалним условима.

Кључне речи: мотивација; ангажовање; учење на даљину; енглески као страни језик; пандемија.



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