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University for Business and Technology (UBT) in Kosovo, "International Conference on Language and Culture" (2025). *UBT International Conference*. 7.

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PROCEEDINGS

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
LANGUAGE AND CULTURE



Proceedings of the 14th Annual
International Conference

International Conference on
Language and Culture

Edited by
Edmond Hajrizi

October, 2025

Conference Book of Proceedings

International Conference

Pristina, 25-26 October 2025

ISBN 978-9951-982-49-8

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International Conference on Business, Technology and
Innovation

Pristina, Kosovo 25-26 October 2025

Editor: Edmond Hajrizi

Organizing Committee: Hajrizi E. (RKS), Trendeline, H. (RKS), Lisjeta,
Th. (RKS), Alma, L. (RKS), Eglantina, B. (RKS)

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Editor Speech of IC-BTI 2025

The International Conference on Business, Technology, and Innovation (IC-BTI 2025) is the 14th international interdisciplinary peer-reviewed conference which publishes the works of scientists as well as practitioners in the areas where UBT is active in education, research, and development. The UBT aims to implement an integrated strategy to establish itself as an internationally competitive, research-intensive institution, committed to the transfer of knowledge and the provision of a world-class education to the most talented students from all backgrounds. It is delivering diverse academic programs across science, management, and technology, fostering innovation and excellence in research. This year we proudly celebrate our 24th Anniversary as an institution dedicated to advancing science, education, and global collaboration. The main perspective of the conference is to connect scientists and practitioners from different disciplines in one place, make them aware of the recent advancements across research fields, and provide them with a unique forum to share their experiences. It is also an important platform to support new academic staff in conducting research and publishing their work at international standards.

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This conference is the major scientific event of UBT. It is organized annually and supported by an extensive network of regional and international academic, institutional, and professional partners, whose collaboration enriches the scientific quality and global reach of the conference. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all authors, partners, sponsors, reviewers, and the conference organizing team for making this year's event a truly international scientific gathering. In 2025, we have seen increased participation, submissions, and publications, demonstrating the growing relevance and impact of IC-UBT.

Congratulations! Edmond Hajrizi,
Rector of UBT and Chair of IC - BTI 2025

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Motivation for English Language Learning Among Macedonian Academic Staff: Analyzing Key Motivational Drivers

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Abstract. This In a world where academia is more connected than ever, English proficiency has become the master key for Macedonian scholars seeking to unlock international opportunities. This study investigates the motivation for English language learning among academic staff in North Macedonia, focusing on the identification of the most and least influential motivational drivers. Based on the data collected from 72 respondents across public and private universities, an adapted Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was used to measure both instrumental and integrative motivation. The results indicate a clear hierarchy of drivers i.e. the highest scores for international career advancement ("useful in getting better academic work position abroad," mean=4.58) and academic mobility ("help during study visits/mobility," mean=4.57). On the other hand, formal certification requirements (FCE, IELTS, TOEFL) emerged as the least motivating factor (mean=3.90). This points out to a compelling story, meaning it's not about passing a test, but about opening doors to global opportunities. The findings demonstrate a strong pragmatic orientation among Macedonian academics, emphasizing the need for university language support programs that should focus more on academic integration in the real world and career growth than on test preparation.

Keywords: English language learning, motivation, instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, academic staff, higher education

Introduction

Motivation is one of the most important factors in foreign language learning, moreover seen as a driving force that stimulates and sustains one's attitude towards a set goal or objective [1,2]. While cognitive and biological factors provide the foundational capacity for acquisition [7], this is particularly critical among academic staff, where English proficiency is essential for academic advancement, research dissemination, and international collaboration [4]. In North Macedonia, English is the primary foreign language within academia, therefore it is of an utmost importance to understand what drives academic staff to learn or improve their English skills. While previous known research has often focused on student populations or demographic subgroups, therefore this study takes a different approach by examining the broader motivational picture among higher education staff. This led the author to a central question: If we listen closely to Macedonian academics, what reasons do they give themselves for learning English, and which of these reasons push them the hardest? The author assumed that the answer would reveal a deeply practical mindset. Therefore the guiding hypothesis was that their motivation would be dominated not by the requirement to pass a test, but by the powerful, intertwined ambitions of building an international career and integrating themselves into the global academic community. To test this, the present study re-analyzes the dataset from Prodanovska-Poposka & Todorova (2023) [8] to identify the most and least powerful motivators, providing a clear ranking of priorities. Investigating these specific motivational factors is therefore not merely an academic exercise; it is a prerequisite for designing effective institutional strategies that can empower academics, enhance research output, and ultimately strengthen the global standing of Macedonian universities.

Literature Review

Foreign language learning motivation has often been seen and analyzed through Gardner and Lambert's (1972) [3] framework, distinguishing between integrative and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation reflects the desire to connect culturally with the target

language community, while instrumental motivation emphasizes pragmatic goals such as career progression or academic achievement [1, 4]. Among adult learners, and academics in particular, professional demands often create a complex motivational profile where both types can coexist and interact [5]. Within the specific context of academia, the pressures of international collaboration and research dissemination are posited to heighten the significance of certain motivational drivers [5]. Yet, the weight of these drivers is not universal, because it is shaped by local academic cultures and opportunities. For a country like North Macedonia, where the academic community is relatively small, ensuring every researcher can compete globally is not just an individual goal but a national imperative. Despite this need, the relative power and hierarchy of these drivers within the Macedonian context remains unexamined. The findings therefore offer valuable insights for university policymakers seeking to boost English proficiency among HE staff through tailored language support solutions.

3. Methodology

This study re-analyzes the survey dataset originally collected and published by Prodanovska-Poposka & Todorova (2023) [8]. The dataset comprises responses from 72 academic staff members at public and private universities in North Macedonia, gathered using an adapted Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The questionnaire consisted of 20 Likert-scale items divided into instrumental motivation (Part A) and integrative motivation (Part B). To ensure authentic responses the survey design highlighted respondent anonymity focusing exclusively on motivational factors. The analysis for this study focuses on identifying the order of importance of the motivational drivers based on their mean scores. Consequently, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) to rank the motivators from most to least influential.

Results and Discussion

4.1 Comprehensive Hierarchy of Motivational Drivers

Analysis of the mean scores reveals a clear pattern of motivational drivers among Macedonian academic staff. The complete list with ranking of all survey items is presented in Table 1, providing a comprehensive overview of range of motivators. The data show a clear trend. The highest-scoring motivators are all linked to international engagement and career utility. Their mean scores fall within a tight range of 4.58 to 3.90 on a 5-point Likert scale.

Table 1. Comprehensive Ranking of Motivational Drivers by Mean Score

Rank	Statement	Type of Motivation	Mean Score
1	it will be useful in getting better academic work position abroad	Instrumental	4.58
2	it will help me during a study visit/ mobility	Integrative	4.57
3	it will help me publish articles in English and be more visible on scientific research platforms	Instrumental	4.53
4	it will enable me to participate in international academic events/seminars/ conferences	Instrumental	4.51
5	I will be able to search for information and materials in English for my future research projects/ studies	Instrumental	4.49
6	it will help me participate in formal/ informal discussions with foreigners	Integrative	4.46
7	it will help me introduce myself/ my areas of interests	Integrative	4.43
8	it will help me establish or maintain international cooperation with fellow colleagues abroad	Instrumental	4.43
9	it will help me when traveling abroad	Integrative	4.42
10	it will allow me to be more at ease with English-speaking fellows/ people	Integrative	4.40
11	I will be able to participate freely in activities of other cultural groups	Integrative	4.35
12	it will help me make friends with people from abroad	Integrative	4.32
13	I enjoy conversing with people/ colleagues who speak English as well	Integrative	4.26
14	English language is a basic requirement for academic positions	Instrumental	4.24
15	It will enable me to understand foreign cultures and tradition	Integrative	4.21

4.2 Analysis of Highest and Lowest Drivers

The full ranking demonstrates that some motivators were far more powerful than others. But the most and least powerful motivators are especially revealing, as they effectively frame the entire spectrum of what academics prioritize. To understand these driving forces, Table 2 highlights the extremes. This sharp contrast helps clarify the underlying priorities shaping their motivation.

Table 2. Highest and Lowest Ranking Motivational Drivers

Statement	Type of Motivation	Mean Score
it will be useful in getting better academic work position abroad	Instrumental	4.58
it will help me during a study visit/ mobility	Integrative	4.57
I need English language to get certified with FCE, IELTS, TOEFL	Instrumental	3.90

4.3 Discussion of Key Findings

The comprehensive ranking in Table 1 reveals a clear pattern: Macedonian academic staff is primarily driven by goals with immediate professional relevance and international engagement. The top five motivators all relate directly to core academic activities, such as international career advancement, research visibility, conference participation, and access to scientific information. Notably, the highest-ranked motivator ("useful in getting better academic work position abroad") and the second-highest ("help during study visits/mobility") represent a powerful combination of instrumental and integrative motivations, suggesting that professional and social-cultural goals are deeply intertwined in the academic context. The strong performance of items related to research publication (rank 3) and conference participation (rank 4) highlights the pragmatic orientation of these academics toward concrete professional outcomes. Conversely, the certification requirement (rank 20) stands out as significantly less motivating, suggesting that external formal requirements are far less influential than the intrinsic professional benefits of English proficiency. This pattern indicates that academic staff members are motivated by authentic communication needs and career advancement rather than compliance with institutional requirements. This aligns with the concept of Willingness to Communicate (WTC), which suggests that motivation is ultimately expressed through a readiness to engage in authentic interaction [6]. The clustering of mean scores between 4.58 and 4.32 for the top twelve items indicates a strong consensus among respondents about the importance of English for both, professional advancement and international academic integration.

5 Implications

The findings from the second study about the FLL motivation of HE staff sheds light to the key motivators which have direct implications for institutional policy and program design. This, as the study reveals, is the missing piece for Macedonian academics: practical support for global engagement [8]. The respondents' motivation is not for test certificates, but for tangible results i.e. to publish, collaborate, and compete internationally. Other research studies also confirm that such goal-oriented support is far more effective for professional learners [5]. This clear mismatch suggests it's time to rethink traditional language training. Instead of generic courses, the universities as part of career advancement programs should offer a toolkit for global academia:

- Specialized coaching not on basic presentation skills, but on how to effectively communicate their complex research to policymakers, international funding bodies, and broader scientific audiences. This training would focus on crafting valuable narratives from complex data. The goal would be to maximize the practical application and visibility of their work.

- Network-building programs that create lasting partnerships with institutions abroad.

By aligning with what truly drives their staff, universities can transform language support from a formal requirement into a powerful engine for internationalization.

6 Conclusions

This study reinterprets prior survey data to provide a clear hierarchy of motivational drivers for English language learning among Macedonian academic staff. It demonstrates that motivation is dominated by a pragmatic blend of instrumental and integrative goals, a finding that aligns with modern understandings of L2 motivation as a complex, multi-faceted construct [1]. This fusion of career and integration aims reflects the trends of a globalizing world where such orientations are increasingly intertwined [5]. The comprehensive ranking reveals that the most

powerful motivators are a mix of these goals, with the top two drivers being nearly equal in importance. Formal certification, by contrast, is a notably weaker driver. Therefore the findings underline the importance of designing targeted, practical language support and solutions that resonates with these real-world needs, thereby more effectively supporting the internationalization of higher education in North Macedonia [8].

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