



Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language

by Aleksandra Oletić, Stockholm University / Stockholm, Sweden

Nina Ilić, University of Novi Sad / Novi Sad, Serbia

Abstract

In the last few years, the topic of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation has raised a lot of interest in EFL learning. Intrinsic and/or extrinsic motivation and the correlation between motivation and success in learning a foreign language have been examined. The goal of this paper is to examine how the self-determination framework (Deci and Ryan, 2000) for L2 learning motivation extends to a group of Serbian language learners of English. The focus of our research is on examining intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of Serbian students of English, with the aim of answering the question whether or not the students are intrinsically/extrinsically motivated and to what extent. High school students and university students were given the Post-Experimental Intrinsic Inventory test and the method used for analyzing the results was descriptive statistics. The results obtained show that there are generally low levels of intrinsic motivation present among both high school and university students. It was expected that the results for Interest/Enjoyment would be more decisively in favor of university students, but this was not the case. The differences in motivation are minimal in relation to gender, even though female students show an increase of intrinsic motivation across the age variable.

Key words: motivation, intrinsic, extrinsic, students

Apstrakt

U poslednjih nekoliko godina interesovanje za temu intrinzične i ekstrinzične motivacije stalno raste u oblasti učenja engleskog kao stranog jezika. Istražuju se intrinzična i/ili ekstrinzična motivacija i korelacija između motivacije i uspeha u učenju stranog jezika. Cilj ovog rada je da istraži kako se teorija samoodređenja (Deci i Rajan, 2000) u okviru motivacije za učenje stranog jezika može primeniti na grupu učenika engleskog jezika iz Srbije. Naše istraživanje se bavi ispitivanjem intrinzične i ekstrinzične motivacije učenika srednjih škola i studenata engleskog jezika u Srbiji, sa ciljem dobijanja odgovora na pitanje da li su učenici intrinzički/ekstrinzički orijentisani i u kojoj meri. Učenici srednje škole i studenti su ispitani metodom posteksperimentalnog intinzičkog inventara ličnosti, a rezultati su obrađeni deskriptivnim statističkim tehnikama. Dobijeni rezultati pokazuju da je kako kod učenika srednjih škola tako i kod studenata prisutan relativno nizak nivo intrinzične motivacije. Očekivalo se da će rezultati za varijablu Interesovanje/ Uživljanje biti u značajnoj meri u korist studenata, ali ovo nije bio slučaj. Razlike u motivaciji su minimalne kada je u pitanju pol kao nezavisna varijabla, iako ženski studenti pokazuju malo veću sklonost ka intinzičkoj motivaciji.

Cljučne reči: motivacija, intrinzična, ekstrinzična, učenici

1. Introduction

In the last few years, the topic of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation has raised a lot of interest in EFL learning. The goal of this paper is to examine how the self-determination framework for L2 learning motivation extends to a group of Serbian language learners of English. The focus of our research is on examining intrinsic and

extrinsic motivation of Serbian students of English, with the aim of answering the question whether or not the students are intrinsically/extrinsically motivated and to what extent.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition and theories

In basic terms, motivation can be defined as the main incentive a person may have to perform a particular action. Motivation is what urges people to initiate an action and to persist in performing it (Topalov, 2011). As far as student motivation is concerned, it is based to a great extent on the students' subjective experiences, i.e. their willingness and personal motives to engage in the learning process (Brophy, 2004). This section will provide an overview of different theories of motivation, beginning from its early development under the influence of behaviorism to more dynamic current models based on cognition.

The first theories of motivation were developed under the influence of behavioral theory in the 1950's. At first, behaviorism emphasized the importance of human drives and needs. Later, the focus shifted to reinforcement as the primary means of shaping behavior (Brophy, 2004). In the classroom environment, various reinforcements are available: praise, high grades, extra points, competitions etc. To be precise, some behaviorists often talked about control rather than motivation. Stimulus control is what reminds learners that a certain kind of behavior will lead to reinforcement. If a desired behavior is not yet accomplished, gradual improvement is achieved by the means of approximations. Once it is accomplished, occasional reinforcement is what preserves it (Brophy, 2004). However, the subsequent phase of

motivation research moved away from the mechanical interpretation of motivation within the behaviorist framework.

In the last few decades, more cognitive approaches to motivation were developed. They emphasized the importance of students' interpretation of certain events and the role of their beliefs, emotions and values in achievement situations. Therefore, motives were no longer looked for outside, but inside the individual (Topalov, 2011). The three important theoretical approaches within the cognitive framework are expectancy-value theories, goal theories, and self-determination theory.

Expectancy-value theories treat behavior as a function of one's expectancies and the value of the goal toward which one is working. Atkinson's achievement motivation theory holds that motivation to succeed depends on the motives, one's estimate of the degree of probability of succeeding in the task, and the degree to which one values the potential rewards (Topalov, 2011). According to this theory, the two essential parts of achievement motivation are motivation to succeed and motivation to avoid failure (Brophy, 2004). As opposed to achievement theory in which people orient themselves toward the future, attribution theory explains how people interpret their past behavior. Furthermore, attribution theorists focus on how those explanations influence people's future

motivation and performance (Topalov, 2011).

Goal theories are oriented towards the goals which individuals seek to fulfill. Two theories have been particularly influential in the last two decades: goal-setting theory and goal orientation theory. The former stresses the importance of goal existence for purposeful action and motivation, whereas the latter deals with success and achievement in the classroom. There are two tendencies that can be distinguished in relation to goal orientation: learning goal and performance or ego-involvement goal (Topalov, 2011).

Finally, self-determination theory was created by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan. According to self-determination theory, motivated actions can be either self-determined or controlled. Self-determined actions are those which individuals freely choose and want to do. This means that the only incentive for undertaking this kind of actions comes from one's enjoyment and interest in a particular activity i.e. intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, controlled actions are those which are determined by an external force. Therefore, they come as a result of extrinsic motivation (Brophy, 2004).

2.2. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation is related to an internal wish to do something. Deci (1975:23) defines intrinsically motivated activities as: "the ones for which there is no apparent

reward except the activity itself." Self-determination theory puts emphasis on three innate psychological needs which need to be satisfied in order for an individual to feel intrinsically motivated. Those needs are: autonomy (in deciding what to do and how to do it), competence (abilities and skills by which we manage to control our environment) and relatedness (relationships we develop through our interaction with others). This assumption has significant implications for students engaged in the learning process. Namely, students are more likely to experience intrinsic motivation in an environment that promotes the satisfaction of these needs than in the one which neglects them (Brophy, 2004). Moreover, according to some studies, intrinsically motivated learning tends to be more valuable than extrinsically oriented one (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

Intrinsic motivation was adeptly illustrated by the concept of flow, developed by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. Flow represents the feeling of complete absorption in the activities which we enjoy. For an artist, flow is most likely to take place while creating a certain piece; for a mathematician, while solving a math problem. At any rate, whenever it happens, people lose their sense of time. They stay focused on the task without letting any distractions keep them away from what they are doing (Brophy, 2004).

On the other hand, those who are extrinsically motivated perform a certain action not because they truly enjoy it, but because of a reward that is available in their environment (Topalov, 2011). Extrinsic goals can vary from short-term goals (good grades, prizes from the teacher and parents, participation in competitions, etc) to long-term ones (possibility of winning scholarships, better job opportunities, higher social status, etc). Certain studies carried out in the 1970s and 1980s showed that rewards can lead to a decrease in intrinsic motivation among people who are already doing something because of their own reasons (Brophy, 2004).

Even though the distinction between the two types of motivation is still essential when discussing motivation, the attitude towards extrinsic motivation has changed. Today, it is thought that intrinsic motivation and extrinsic reward can work together toward motivated learning (Topalov, 2011). In line with this, Deci and Ryan (2000) have reconsidered their original theory of self-determination in order to include extrinsic motivation. This reviewed theory claims that even extrinsically motivated behavior can be self-determined if the process of internalization (transformation of external regulations into internal ones) takes place. Four types of extrinsic regulation can be identified in relation to the degree of internalization. The first type is external

regulation, which is connected to those actions purely motivated by external rewards or constraints. Therefore, the actions are fully controlled. The second type, introjected regulation, is responsible for those activities which are slightly more internalized, in the sense that we have learned how to behave in an expected way. If not, we feel guilty, which means that we no longer need an external factor which would control our behavior. However, the mechanisms we have adopted are in conflict with our sense of self. The next type of regulation, identified regulation occurs when an individual identifies a certain value that s/he has adopted as important. Finally, integrated regulation is the most self-determined type because of the complete integration of adopted values and one's sense of self (Brophy, 2004).

2.3. Related work

Noels, Clement, and Pelletier (2001) measured the intrinsic, extrinsic, and integrative motivation of French students in a summer immersion course. The questionnaire administered to the students measured their perceptions of autonomy and competence, learning effort, determination, and reasons for language learning with their achievement in the course. They analyzed the connection between different types of motivation (hierarchically ordered from extrinsic motivation and its subtypes as less self-determined to intrinsic motivation as the most determined type) and its expected antecedents and consequences. The variables they chose were students' perception of autonomy and English competence compared with their persistence in English studies (their intention to continue their studies), and motivation (the effort they exerted for studying language).

They hypothesized that perceived autonomy and competence were the antecedents of motivation and that persistence in learning, motivation in learning, and that final grades were the consequences. In their research, extrinsic and identified regulations were endorsed to a larger degree than intrinsic motivation and introjected regulation. Their findings suggest that amotivation (lack of any, both extrinsic and intrinsic, goals for learning

(2001, Noel)) is indicative of lack of effort in learning English. Greater identified regulation and intrinsic motivation correlated with higher intensity and persistence in learning English. In fact, both Anglophone and non-English learners of English showed high levels of identified and external regulation and low levels of amotivation. French students of English reported that they were motivated extrinsically (due to internal or external pressures) if the learning environment did not support their sense of autonomy. On the other hand, the presence of internal or external pressures did not predict the amount of effort a student would put into the learning process. The results of the research indicate that the amount of effort is influenced by the proximity of external punishment/reward, whereas intrinsic motivation correlates with higher levels of learning effort.

Bakar, Sulaiman and Rafeai (2010) explored motivation of Muslim learners of Arabic. The purpose of the study was to see if the 7-factor structure of motivational orientation, which accounted for the previous study of Anglo-French learners of English and French (Noels, 2000), would be appropriate for Muslim learners of Arabic as well. They used 45 items related on a 7-point scale. Items were based on the subscales which were adopted by Noels et al. (2000): intrinsic motivation-knowledge, intrinsic motivation-accomplishment, intrinsic motivation-

stimulation, extrinsic motivation-external regulation, extrinsic motivation-introjected regulation, extrinsic motivation-identified regulation and amotivation. Specific religious orientations were also incorporated into the existing scale.

The results of this study show that a difference should be made between the types of motivation, since no correlation between the subscales was found. However, the scales that proved to be important for Muslim learners are not identical to those found in the previous study by Noels (2000). Namely, intrinsic motivation-knowledge, intrinsic motivation-accomplishment, extrinsic-motivation identified regulation, amotivation and religious motivation surfaced as distinctive orientations. What should be pointed out is that Religious motivation appeared as a new dimension as a result of the religious environment in which the study was carried out. Since Arabic is the sacred language of the Muslim religion and Muslim students have very strong feelings about it, items which had a religious connotation could no longer be classified under the initial subscales, but ensured a special dimension. Although 5 out of 6 items in this newly established dimension were initially part of the Introjected Regulation construct, students' religious motives were so internalized that they surpassed the intrinsic/extrinsic boundary. All this shows that social and cultural factors are very

important when it comes to motivation orientations.

Finally, we would like to mention a study that comes from another field of education (Physical Education). The reason for mentioning it is to show the distribution and usefulness of Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI), which we used in our research. McAuley and Duncan (1988) claim that IMI is a flexible assessment tool and that neither inclusion nor exclusion of one of the factors negatively affects other dimensions. Moreover, they state that IMI is a very useful instrument, because items can be easily paraphrased in order to adjust to different types of activities. This allows researchers to freely moderate the items in a most convenient way, which suits their needs and goals. This was the case with our study as well.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Two groups of students completed the questionnaire: the first group consisted of 30 high school students (ages 17 to 18, average age = 17) and the second group were 30 third year university students at the English department of the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, Serbia (ages 21-27, average age = 22). Women comprised 74% of the study's sample, and men 26%. Even though the number of female students is much higher than of male students, the sample gathered is

representative of the prototypical classroom setting in which English is learned as a second language in Serbia.

3.2. Instrument

The instrument consisted of a set of 23 randomly ordered items of a Post-Experimental Intrinsic Motivation Inventory test developed by Ryan in 1982. Each item belonged to one of the following subcategories of motivation: Interest/Enjoyment, Effort/Importance, Perceived Choice, Value/ Usefulness. We adapted the instrument by completing the items in the Value/Usefulness category so that they would fit the purpose of research which was to examine the students' general motivation for learning language. Students were to select a number on a scale from 1 to 5 which represented the extent to which a given statement applied to them.

3.3.1. Interest/Enjoyment. Seven items of the questionnaire (1, 8, 12, 17, 20, 21 and 23) belonged to this sub-category, with two negative statements whose score was reversed. A high mean score for this item indicates a strong interest (intrinsic motivation) for learning activities.

3.3.2. Effort/ Importance. Five items of the questionnaire (2, 7, 11, 13 and 14) belonged to this sub-category, with two negative statements whose score was reversed. A high mean score for this item indicates a high amount of effort and

degree of perceived importance of learning English.

3.3.3. Perceived Choice. Five items of the questionnaire (3, 6, 10, 16 and 18) belonged to this sub-category, with three negative statements whose score was reversed.

3.3.4. Value/ Usefulness. Six items of the questionnaire (4, 5, 9, 15, 19 and 22) belonged to this sub-category. A high mean score for this item indicates a high degree of usefulness and perceived value (extrinsic motivation) of learning English.

3.4. Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to university students during regular class hours. The participants were informed that the data gathered were anonymous and used for the purpose of research. Only their age and gender was collected from personal information. The questionnaires were filled out at the students' own pace, but the average time of completing the data sampling was approximately 10 minutes.

For the purpose of this paper, we used descriptive statistics to quantitatively describe our results. We measured standard deviation and the mean and average value for the student's answers to different items of the survey and compared them across the variables of age and gender. The results reflect the students' general attitudes toward learning English and are to be interpreted as broad

generalizations rather than definite descriptions. However, the sample selected for this study is representative of the target group in a real-life situation and

thus the descriptions in the following can be used to pinpoint some tendencies that may be a possible course of future research.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Data

Table 1: Responses from all participants

ITEM	Student item responses (%)					Mean	SD
	1	2	3	4	5		
1	3.33	6.67	20	28.33	41.67	3.98	1.09
8	15	18.33	33.33	20	13.33	2.98	1.23
12	8.33	13.33	36.67	16.67	25	3.37	1.22
17	15	10	28.33	21.67	25	3.32	1.35
20	11.7	18.33	36.67	16.67	16.67	3.08	1.22
21	18.3	25	31.67	20	5	2.68	1.13
23	13.3	11.67	41.67	15	18.33	3.13	1.23
Total:						3.22	1.21

2	8.33	16.67	23.33	36.67	15	3.33	1.16
7	5	15	28.33	6.667	45	3.72	1.31
11	11.7	10	31.67	21.67	25	3.38	1.28
13	0	6.67	15	35	43.33	4.15	0.91
14	3.33	20	20	23.33	33.33	3.63	1.22
Total:						3.64	1.18

3	5	5	31.67	40	18.33	3.62	1.02
6	6.67	8.33	11.67	13.33	60	4.12	1.28
10	15	21.67	26.67	10	26.67	3.12	1.40
16	0	8.33	13.33	20	58.33	4.28	0.98
18	13.33	8.33	21.67	11.67	45	3.67	1.45
Total:						3.76	1.23

4	0	3.33	5	21.67	70	4.58	0.74
5	0	3.33	3.33	15	78.33	4.68	0.7
9	1.67	1.67	10	31.67	55	4.37	0.86
15	3.33	3.33	15	36.67	41.67	4.1	0.99
19	0	1.67	18.33	28.33	51.67	4.3	0.82
22	0	5	16.67	31.67	46.67	4.2	0.89
Total:						4.37	0.83

In table 1, we present the results of all our participants. At first sight, it is apparent that the subjects are more extrinsically than intrinsically oriented, since the Value/Usefulness variable is the highest rated one (4.37). What is interesting is that the highest rated item is the item 5, which means that the majority of students believe they will have a long-term reward i.e. learning English will help them while traveling abroad. The variable with the lowest mean is Interest/Enjoyment (3.22). The only two items which were rated lower than 3 (items 8, 21) belong to this variable, which suggests students do not find activities they do in their English classes especially fun. However, this does not mean that students are not intrinsically motivated, since the mean of the both of the remaining two variables exceeds 3.5. It should be pointed out that it is important for students to do well (mean 3.64) and that they consider learning English to be their own choice to a large extent (3.76).

Table 2: Student responses in relation to age

ITEM	Male and female high school students		Male and female university students	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
1	3.47	1.18	4.5	0.7
8	2.8	1.28	3.17	1.2
12	3.17	1	3.57	1.4
17	3.03	1.43	3.6	1.2
20	3.03	1.2	3.13	1.2
21	2.57	0.96	2.8	1.3
23	3.07	1.21	3.2	1.2
Total:	3.02	1.18	3.28	1.2
2	2.7	1.04	3.97	0.9

7	3.3	1.29	4.13	1.2
11	2.97	1.28	3.8	1.1
13	3.87	1.02	4.43	0.7
14	3.13	1.15	4.13	1.1
Total:	3.19	1.16	4.09	1
3	3.2	1.05	4.03	0.8
6	3.87	1.23	4.37	1.3
10	2.83	1.27	3.4	1.5
16	3.73	1.09	4.77	0.5
18	2.63	1.28	4.7	0.6
Total:	3.25	1.18	4.25	0.9
4	4.6	0.84	4.57	0.6
5	4.77	0.5	4.6	0.8
9	4.2	0.95	4.53	0.7
15	3.83	1	4.37	0.9
19	4.5	0.72	4.1	0.9
22	4.27	0.89	4.13	0.9
Total:	4.36	0.82	4.38	0.8

What student responses in relation to age (Table 2) show is that there are differences in the students' perception of Importance/Effort and Perceived Choice. University students try harder and it is more important for them to do well in their classes. Moreover, they feel that learning English is their choice more so than high school students do. This was somewhat expected due to the fact that the university students participating in the study are professional learners of English. Having this in mind, it is a bit surprising that one item in the Perceived Choice variable was rated only 3.4 (item 10), which shows that a certain number of them feel somewhat obligated to learn English. As far as other two variables are concerned, the results are virtually the same. It was expected that the results for Interest/Enjoyment would be more decisively in favor of university students, but this was not the case.

Table 3: Gender variation in student responses

ITEM	Female student responses		Male student responses	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD

1	4.07	1.1	3.75	1.03
8	3.02	1.25	2.88	1.17
12	3.34	1.28	3.44	1.06
17	3.39	1.35	3.13	1.32
20	3.09	1.22	3.06	1.2
21	2.73	1.19	2.56	0.93
23	3.2	1.24	2.94	1.2
Total:	3.26	1.23	3.11	1.13
2	3.39	1.11	3.19	1.29
7	3.75	1.28	3.63	1.36
11	3.39	1.28	3.38	1.27
13	4.23	0.82	3.94	1.09
14	3.68	1.2	3.5	1.27
Total:	3.69	1.14	3.53	1.26
3	3.8	0.87	3.13	1.22
6	4.25	1.25	3.75	1.3
10	3.34	1.4	2.5	1.22
16	4.36	0.93	3.94	1.09
18	3.7	1.53	3.56	1.17
Total:	3.89	1.19	3.38	1.2
4	4.64	0.68	4.44	0.86
5	4.64	0.74	4.81	0.53
9	4.41	0.78	4.25	1.03
15	4.14	0.92	4	1.17
19	4.32	0.82	4.25	0.83
22	4.23	0.88	4.13	0.93
Total:	4.39	0.8	4.31	0.89

When it comes to gender variation (Table 3), we can see that women are more motivated than man regardless of the variable. However, differences between them are minimal. Therefore, a separate comparison of female high school and female university students and male high school and male university students was needed (Table 4). Indeed, this analysis provided some more relevant data. Namely, female university students are much more motivated than female high school students according to all the variables except Value /

Usefulness, where the results are the same (mean 4.4). The results of male high school and university students are more similar.

Female student responses				
ITEM	High school		University	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
1	3.4	1.2	4.6	0.56
8	2.7	1.27	3.3	1.17
12	2.9	0.89	3.7	1.43
17	2.8	1.44	3.9	1.05
20	2.9	1.11	3.3	1.27
21	2.6	0.97	2.9	1.33
23	3.1	1.24	3.3	1.21
Total:	2.9	1.16	3.6	1.15

Male student responses				
ITEM	High School		University	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
1	3.6	1.1	4	0.82
8	3	1.3	2.67	0.94
12	3.7	1	3	1
17	3.5	1.3	2.5	1.12
20	3.4	1.3	2.5	0.76
21	2.6	0.9	2.5	0.96
23	3.1	1.1	2.67	1.25
Total:	3.27	1.1	2.83	0.98

2	2.7	1	4	0.84
7	3.3	1.27	4.1	1.17
11	2.8	1.17	3.9	1.17
13	4	0.95	4.4	0.64
14	3.1	1.12	4.2	1
Total:	3.2	1.1	4.1	0.96

2	2.7	1.1	4	1.15
7	3.3	1.3	4.17	1.21
11	3.3	1.4	3.5	0.96
13	3.6	1.1	4.5	0.76
14	3.3	1.2	3.83	1.34
Total:	3.24	1.2	4	1.09

3	3.5	0.92	4.1	0.7
6	4.2	1.06	4.3	1.37
10	2.9	1.18	3.7	1.46
16	3.8	1.08	4.8	0.37
18	2.3	1.19	4.9	0.33
Total:	3.3	1.09	4.4	0.85

3	2.7	1.1	3.83	1.07
6	3.3	1.3	4.5	0.76
10	2.7	1.4	2.17	0.69
16	3.6	1.1	4.5	0.76
18	3.3	1.2	4	1
Total:	3.12	1.2	3.8	0.86

4	4.6	0.8	4.7	0.54
5	4.8	0.43	4.5	0.91
9	4.2	0.75	4.6	0.76
15	3.9	0.83	4.3	0.94
19	4.5	0.74	4.2	0.87
22	4.4	0.8	4.1	0.91
Total:	4.4	0.73	4.4	0.82

4	4.7	0.9	4	0.58
5	4.8	0.6	4.83	0.37
9	4.2	1.2	4.33	0.47
15	3.7	1.3	4.5	0.76
19	4.6	0.7	3.67	0.75
22	4	1	4.33	0.75
Total:	4.33	0.9	4.28	0.61

4.2. Discussion

Relatively low results for the Interest/Enjoyment variable can have practical applications for professors and teachers who could use the results as impetus to modify the existing curriculum. In particular, because the majority of students rated English learning activities as

not fun, efforts should be made to make learning English an inherently pleasant process by introducing elements of fun to the curriculum. However, it is a positive sign that university student answers indicate that they feel that learning English is their choice to a greater degree than high school students. At the same time, it is somewhat peculiar that they show a very

high degree of extrinsic motivation. A possible reason for this could be that they believe English will form the basis of their future careers, secure job opportunities, etc. In fact, one of the highest rated items of the survey was Item 5, which indicated that all survey participants judged English to be useful for traveling abroad.

Even though the distribution of students across the gender variable is representative of learning situations in real life, a possible venue of future research would be to collect a larger sample of male student responses in order to get a more precise picture of the nature and levels of their motivation.

Paper-and-pencil self-report scales have become the dominant method in studies of student motivation. Even though the structure of the self-report consisting of numerical scales offers the benefits of quick administration and inferential statistical analysis, this method is limited in focus. Namely, it considers only the cognitive aspect of motivation and neglects affect-related factors, possibly due to the definition of motivation in relation to the individual's character (Murphy and Alexander, 2000). Indeed, the main criticism of self-report scales is that it treats motivation as a stable trait because there are some lines of research that hold that motivation is a fluid concept that changes across situations (Hidi *et al*, 1992). A more general criticism of self-report

methodologies is that it is based on the assumption that students have conscious mental access to motivation, and Hannula showed that an individual has only partial access to motivation (2006). A criticism more specifically related to this research paper is that it is difficult to use the same self-report scale to measure motivation across different age groups due to developmental changes in students' self-concept and motivation. A longitudinal study of self-motivation may address these limitations.

The Intrinsic Motivation Inventory imposes certain limitations, as well. It contains items such as "I believe/think/... that learning is important", which measure values rather than intentional commitment of the students. Elliot and Murayama noted that these items contain complex constructs whose analysis goes beyond the scope of the survey method (2008). Another problem with these items is that different elements of them are subject to the individual's interpretation (Fulmer and Frijters, 2009). In addition, they observed that self-reports usually merge the goals of an activity with the reasons for performing an activity, even though different students may pursue the same goal for a different reason. Furthermore, different researchers use dissimilar subscales on self-reports to analyze same domains, and consequently, there are scales that appear to be equivalent but measure different domains,

as well. For example, for assessing students' general motivation, Gottfried examined students' curiosity, persistence, and desire to master challenging tasks (1986), and Harter assessed their preference for challenge, independent judgment, and other (1981).

Because there are no tests that have proven validity and robust measures, researchers tend to use non-published and modified self-report scales for assessing motivation. This causes another issue; namely, some researchers give a new name to a previously existing concept, which adds to terminological confusion and decreases construct validity of self-report scales. This is particularly true for the concepts of self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. A very specific criticism of the numerical scale is that students' select the middle value or the neutral response for various reasons such as indecision, disapproval, rebellion, and these may not be related to the construct the item is testing (Fulmer and Frijters, 2009). To

summarize, the self-report scale method may be improved by combining it with alternative methods (some of which are outlined in Fulmer and Frijters, 2009), but these are often time-consuming and significantly reduce the objectivity of the results.

5. Conclusion

The results of this research show that there are generally low levels of intrinsic motivation present among high school and university students. The results of this study should be used as indications of possible tendencies to be researched in the future and not as exhaustive data. It was expected that the results for Interest/Enjoyment would be more decisively in favor of university students, but this was not the case. The differences in motivation are minimal in relation to gender, even though female students show an increase of intrinsic motivation across the age variable.

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Nina Ilić was born in Novi Sad in 1991. She graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad with a degree in English language and literature in June 2014. She applied for master studies at the same college in October 2014. She is interested in teaching, theoretical and applied linguistics.

Aleksandra Oletić was born in Novi Sad in 1991. She earned her BA in English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad. She enrolled in the Master's Programme in Applied Linguistics at Stockholm University in Sweden, where she is pursuing her degree with a focus on interlanguage development, second language acquisition and inter-cultural pragmatics.