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MOTIVATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN TURKISH EFL PREP CLASSES BY GENDER AND ACADEMIC YEAR

(Research article)

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Abstract

This quantitative research examined the English language learning motivation of B1-level Turkish preparatory class students. The research also looked at whether there was any difference in motivational level based on gender or academic year. The participants were 103 university students who were in a university English preparatory program. Participants were consisted of first-year and second-year students. The quantitative data were collected by using Gardner's Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to check normality, and it was not met. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to examine gender and years of studying English in the preparatory program. The results revealed that students showed a moderately high motivational level for learning English. There were moderately positive attitudes shown by both male and female students, though male learners identified as being significantly more motivated than female students. Female learners identified as having a slightly higher desire to learn English, academic year, second-year students reported higher scores in 'desire', but more than half of the differences were not statistically significant. Overall, the study provided evidence that motivation, while present, differs according to subgroup. The study suggests that English instruction in Turkish preparatory programs needs to consider learners' emotional needs as well as offer support for sustained effort with more personal and collective awareness. Finally, the results also point to implications for curriculum, course and classroom practices.

Keywords: English language learning; motivation; gender differences; preparatory class

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1. Introduction

1.1 . Background Information

English has become much more than a foreign language in today's world of connectedness; it is a global lingua franca and an essential means to access scholarly knowledge, professional opportunities, and cross-cultural connections (Crystal, 2003). It is seen as the medium of dominance in science, technology, relations, and uncharted digital spaces, and for learners in non-native contexts, it is an increasing necessity rather than an option (Graddol, 2008; Seidlhofer, 2013). This has transformed how people see language learning across the world, including in Turkey where English is prevalent in higher education and position mobility (Alptekin, 2002; Bektaş-Çetinkaya & Oruç, 2010).

Preparatory class programs at Turkish universities provide foundational and introductory English instruction before beginning departmental studies. Many of these preparatory class programs aim to target B1 proficiency levels and provide students with communicative and academic skills to successfully participate in academic English as medium of instruction (Kırkgöz, 2007). However, while curriculum design considers linguistic input, students' motivation their internal drive and desire to invest effort in language learning remains an important factor in successful language learning (Gardner, 1985; Dörnyei, 2001).

Motivation is fluid and multi-dimensional, rather than a fixed characteristic. It affects learners' persistence, attitude and achievement (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), can be instrumental (e.g., passing an exam, career-oriented) and integrative (e.g., interest in a community where the target language is spoken) (Gardner, 1972; Noels, Pelletier, Clément & Vallerand, 2000). The 'Ideal L2 Self', a construct of Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2009), has advanced our thinking around motivation because it conveys a learner's motivation in relation to the identity they project or foresee in the future. Research indicates that when learners mentally envision themselves as successful English language speakers in vivid, personal terms, they are more motivated to pursue improvement (e.g., Taguchi; Magid; Papi, 2009).

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, there has been growing awareness among researchers that sociocultural factors, digital learning environments, and disruption during the pandemic will shape learners' motivational patterns in EFL contexts (Ushioda, 2013; Xu et al., 2022). In this regard, recent developments reflected a need for more support to learners' autonomy and emotional engagement in changing education contexts. In Turkey, the research indicates that the motivation of university students has increasingly been shaped by digital exposure, and intercultural aspirations where traditional classroom input played a lesser role (Cetindere & Shin, 2025).

In this larger motivational research paradigm there has also been some attention to individual differences in motivation for SLA based on factors such as gender and length of exposure to instruction in English (Kormos & Csizér, 2008, Mirzaei & Forouzandeh 2013). For instance, female learners may possess stronger integrative types of motivational

orientations along with higher levels of anxiety in the forums they use English in, whereas male learners tend to have more task-oriented types of motivation (Bernaus, Wilson, & Gardner, 2009; Munezane, 2016). Likewise, learners who have more exposure to language classrooms, such as second year preparatory students, may develop more stable and autonomous forms of motivation, especially captured across multiple time points (Kormos, 2008).

While the literature on English learning motivation is growing worldwide, very few studies have examined these factors in the context of B1-level preparatory class students in Turkey. This study aims to fill this gap by looking at motivational patterns with Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) and examining motivation in the aggregate and by class year and gender. It is hoped that the results will be valuable theoretical understanding and practical implications for EFL program design in universities in Turkey.

1.2 . Statement of the Problem

It is widely acknowledged that motivation in English language learning is important to the success of foreign language education. At Turkish universities with an English preparatory program so that students achieve at least B1 level before proceeding to their academic program, motivation is key in influencing learners' involvement, persistence, and success. However, motivation and motivational patterns, as part of students' internal forces, are far less well-documented, despite the fact they are essential to meaningful, sustainable language learning. Normally curriculum and instructional design focuses on the linguistic curriculum rather than the motivation of learners involved in it. While motivation is well-researched in different EFL contexts, there is little understanding of whether B1-level preparatory class students in Turkey are motivated to learn English, and how motivation differs across student factors like gender and year in university. Some studies suggest that male and female learners may have different motivational profiles (for example different levels of confidence, anxiety or orientation) but we cannot say for sure what the findings mean for Turkish students just yet. The impact of more exposure to English as a result of taking a regular education preparatory year has also not been thoroughly researched. It is unknown whether second year students who had more exposure to English instruction develop stronger or weaker motivation than first year students.

Considering the ever-increasing demands to attain English proficiency for higher education and a wide variety of industry uses, it is essential to understand what students at different demographic levels motivated students to learn English in English preparatory programs. These connections are important as they can help inform teachers, curriculum designers or educational leaders in contributing toward more engaging and more supportive learning environments.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.To examine the overall motivation of Turkish preparatory class students (B1 level) learning English.
2.To determine whether there are significant differences in English learning motivation between male and female students.
3.To investigate whether the students' year of study (first-year vs. second-year) made a difference in their English learning motivation.
4.To add to the existing literature on second language learning motivation, by providing data from a Turkish specific learner population.
5.To provide knowledge that could help shape more learner-centred, motivationally supportive pedagogy and preparatory class curriculums in higher education.

1.4 Research Questions

1. Are B1 level prep-class students motivated to learn English?
2. Is there a difference between male and female students in terms of English learning motivation?
3. Is there a difference between first- and second-year prep-class students in terms of English learning motivation?

2. **Literature Review**

2.1. Core Theoretical Models of Language Learning Motivation

In second language acquisition (SLA) motivation is considered to be one of the most significant individual difference factors. In his early work, Gardner (1985) described motivation as a multifaceted construct incorporating effort, desire, and a positive affect towards learning the language. In Gardner's Socio-Educational Model, he described two types of orientations that focus on motivation: integrative motivation, which learners have in relation to the target language community, where their interest in the language community is something they identify with; and instrumental motivation, which focuses on a more pragmatic, utilitarian view of motivation, such as success in an academic context or job security (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

Although Gardner's framework initiated research in the domain for many decades, Dörnyei (2005, 2009) modified this conceptual framework with the L2 Motivational Self System, which has three main components: the Ideal L2 Self (the person that one would like to be as a successful language user), the Ought-to L2 Self (the responsibilities and obligations of one in relation to oneself), and the L2 Learning Experience (situated motives, which are harnessed in the immediate learning context). A number of studies have shown that these three components assess supported and predicted by a variety of contexts (Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009; Csizér & Kormos, 2009).

2.2. Motivation in EFL Contexts: Global and Turkish Perspectives

In situations where learners are learning a foreign language, particularly where authentic input to the target language is restricted, motivation is frequently the prime driver of learner success (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Research on learners of EFL in contexts like Iran, China, and Turkey have continually demonstrated that learners with good motivational beliefs-related learning have higher class performance, more proficiency, and more autonomous learning behaviours (Chen , 2012; Kormos & Csizér, 2014; Mirzaei & Forouzandeh, 2013).

In the Turkish context, numerous studies found evidence for an instrumental motivation prevailing, as learners situate English in terms of passing national exams, getting better jobs, or accessing academic content (Bektaş-Çetinkaya & Oruç, 2010; Kızıltepe, 2000). However, there was evidence for integrative motives, also. Students who had higher levels of exposure to the English language through the media or international exposure tended to have a more equal distribution between integrative and instrumental motivation (Alptekin, 2002; Genc & Kaya, 2010).

In the post-pandemic landscape, research has indicated that motivation in language learning has also become reliant on learner autonomy, emotional resilience, and access to digital technologies (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). For instance, studies conducted after 2020 showed that learners who successfully transitioned to remote and blended learning formats tended to demonstrate greater levels of motivation, especially if the online environments supported individuals' self-direction and social presence (Xu et al., 2022).

2.3. Individual Differences Affecting Language Learning Motivation

A relevant area of motivational research is the investigation of individual differences such as gender, age, socioeconomic status, and learning experience. A lot of research has focused on gender and motivation in L2 learning. For example, Bernaus, Wilson, and Gardner (2009) found that male learners tended to show a greater motivational intensity, while female learners reported a greater desire to learn and less confidence in production skills (especially speaking).

In a Turkish study, Mirzaei and Forouzandeh (2013) discovered the same gender differences, with females showing more integrative orientation but more anxiety. Munezane (2016) reiterated that anxiety can be detrimental to learners' Willingness to Communicate (WTC), an action strongly affiliated with motivation. Always-suggested gender-responsive strategies in the classroom include confidence-building activities for females and goal-setting structures for males, which open the door to potentially more equitable motivational outcomes (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Also, another individual variation is the time studying English instruction, which is significant in regard to preparatory programs. As Kormos (2008) argued, second-year preparatory learners tended to have patterns of more stable motivational orientations in orientation to previous classroom contexts and more obvious academic goals. In addition, Taguchi et al. (2009) provided corroborating evidence that learners with more

instructional time had better Ideal L2 Selves, thus really affecting their long-term motivation. In Turkey, Öztürk and Gürbüz (2013) found that female university students had a high desire to learn English, however, they were also more susceptible to anxiety, especially in speaking contexts, suggesting the importance of considering feelings and emotions in our plans and practices.

2.4. The Role of Educational Environment and Technology in Shaping Motivation

Preparatory classes at Turkish universities prepare students to learn English to a level appropriate for their departmental subjects, and are ultimately designed to achieve a B1 level of the CEFR. In terms of the various aspects of pedagogy that are addressed in these programs, the focus is often on grammar and reading comprehension. However, motivation can contribute towards their engagement and improvement. According to Bektaş-Çetinkaya and Oruç (2010), students who attend private universities tend to be more motivated than those students who attend public universities, fundamentally due to the better resources and environments in which they can study.

The relationship between classroom climate and motivation has also been documented by numerous researchers. Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) and Chen (2012) have found that when students feel emotional support, have a menu of learning activities to choose from, and can directly relate English to their future goals, then students motivation is more likely to remain high.

2.5. The Role of Educational Environment and Technology in Shaping Motivation

Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) is still one of the most commonly used instruments for measuring motivation in language learning. The AMTB has subscales measuring motivational intensity, desire to learn the language, and attitudes toward learning, as well as types of motivation: integrativeness, instrumental orientation, and attitudes toward the learning situation (Gardner, 2004). The AMTB has been validated in different cultural and linguistic contexts: Canada, Spain, Turkey, and Romania (Gardner, 2006; Masgoret et al., 2001).

In the Turkish context, studies that have used the AMTB or modified versions have consistently shown high reliability (Çelik & Erbay-Çetinkaya, 2020). These studies provide a helpful baseline so we can understand motivational trends across different learner populations, including among university populations in preparatory English programs. The literature has provided some understanding of the organization and impact of motivation on second language learning, but few studies have examined B1 level preparatory class students in the Turkish context specifically, and even fewer have employed comprehensive instruments like the AMTB. Extremely limited research examined the intersection of motivation and gender and class year. This study seeks to fill the gap by providing empirical data on motivational levels and demographic differences among Turkish EFL students, as well as pedagogical recommendations. Additionally, there have been a limited number of post-2020 studies in the

Turkish context that have examined how motivational constructs adapt to extended programs and changing socio-educational conditions. Increasingly, studies are now emphasizing the growing influence of digital learning environments, intercultural orientation, and identity-based motivation on student engagement. For example, Özer and Badem (2022) studied Turkish university students and revealed that students in online preparatory programs experience a significant drop in motivation, often driven by limited classroom interaction, disconnected emotions, and difficulty with self-regulation. The studies emphasize the urgent need for researchers to revisit motivational constructs that consider learners' emotional resilience, autonomy, and changing identity goals in both face-to-face and digital EFL classrooms.

3. Method

The study adopted quantitative research design, and the data were obtained from 103 Turkish B1 level prep class EFL learners by means of AMTB (Gardner, 2004) at a state university. Testing theories in quantitative research is done by establishing relationships between measurable variables. This kind of research usually employs surveys or experiments, and it collects data using instruments (Cresswell, 2017). Additionally, information about their gender, year of study, academic faculty, and high school graduation type was obtained.

3.1 Participants

The participants in this study were B1-level native Turkish-speaking adult learners of English at a preparatory class at a public university. A total of 103 students voluntarily participated and filled out the consent form to participate in the study. Among 103 participants, 58 of them were female, and 43.7% (n = 45) of them were male. While 84 of them were first-year students, 19 of them were second-year (repeat) students. Females constituted 56.3% (n = 58) and males 43.7% (n = 45). Most were first-year students (n = 84), with 19 repeating their preparatory year, which are called second-year students in the study.

3.2 Setting

The study was conducted in the School of Foreign Languages at a state university (İzmir Democracy University). All of the students have to pass preparatory class proficiency exam at the end of the year in order to start their major degrees. In order to pass the exam, students must get minimum 70 points out of 100 points from the exam. The students who cannot pass the exam at the end of the first year, have to take preparatory class for the second year. Students take 23 hours of instruction per week, eight hours a week are allocated to skill based course, whereas fifteen hours were allocated to integrated skills aiming to improve general English language of learners. As for the assessment, preparatory class students take two midterm exams, four quizzes, four presentation assignments, online book assignments and a final exam throughout the whole academic year.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

To collect demographic data, students were asked about their gender, educational backgrounds, English learning duration, and their faculties. For the quantitative part of the study, the data will be collected through Gardner's (2004) The International version of Attitude/Motivation Test Battery. The reliability of the instrument for vary from 0.79 to 0.88. Gardner's (2004) international version of 'Attitude/Motivation Test Battery' (AMTB) to assess the participants' attitudes and motivation. The first part of AMTB consists of 104 items. Among these 104 items, 2 of the were adapted to Turkish context by getting two expert opinions. These items were: Original item 7 was "If Japan had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss." adapted as "If Turkey had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss. Original item 83 "I would feel comfortable speaking English where both Japanese and English speakers were present" adapted as "I would feel comfortable speaking English where both Turkish and English speakers were present".

Participants are expected to circle options from "Strongly Disagree'', "Moderately Disagree'', "Slightly Disagree", "Slightly Agree", "Moderately Agree'' and "Strongly Disagree''. It is a 6-point Likert-type scale. The second part of AMTB has 12 statements, participants are expected to share their feelings from 1 (very little) to 7 (very much). Attitude Motivation test battery has subscales and these are Integrative Orientation, Attitudes Toward the Learning Community, Interest in Foreign Language, English Teacher Evaluation, English Class Evaluation, Motivational Intensity, Desire to Learn English, Attitude Towards Learning Situation, English Class Anxiety, English Use Anxiety, Instrumental Orientation, Parental Encouragement.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

In order to collect quantitative data 103 preparatory class students from B1 level were selected by using convenient sampling method. These participants were given AMTB (Gardner, 2004) and filled the questionnaire by means of Google forms. It took 35- 40 minutes to finish. Besides, AMTB (Gardner, 2004) demographic information such as gender, type of high school they graduated from, the faculty and English learning duration were asked to the participants.

3.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained in this study were analyzed through IBM SPSS Statistics 25 with alpha established at $p \leq 0.05$. Descriptive statistics reporting means and SD were found. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed all participants did not meet the normality assumption ($p \leq 0.05$) so non-parametric tests were used. In order to examine gender and years of studying English in the preparatory program The Mann-Whitney U test was applied.

4. Results

103 students were involved in this study. Fifty-six-point three percent (56.3%, n=58) of the participants were female and 43.7% (n=45) were male. Eighty-four (81.6%) of the participants were in the first year of a preparatory class and 19 (18.4%) were in the second year (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution Statistics of Participants.

		N	%	Total [N (%)]
Gender	Female	58	56.3	103 (100%)
	Male	45	43.7	
Preparatory Class	First Year	84	81.6	103 (100%)

Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values) of the participants' responses to the different constructs measured using the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) are presented in Table 2. These statistics give an overall picture of B1-level preparatory class students' motivation to learn English.

Table 2. The Mean and Standard Deviation Values of AMTB of Overall Answers.

	Descriptive Statistics of Answers (N=103)				
Constructs	**Scales**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**
Integrativeness	**INT**	5.0243	0.98052	2.25	6.00
	AEP	4.4105	0.81273	1.00	6.00
Attitudes Towards to Learning Situation	**IFL**	3.6971	0.44709	2.50	4.90
	ETE	3.4699	0.50192	2.40	5.00
	ECE	3.3883	0.51398	2.10	5.20
Motivation	**MI**	3.4757	0.49457	2.00	5.00
	D	3.5786	0.45711	2.50	4.80
	ALE	3.5835	0.39929	2.60	5.10
Language Anxiety	**ECA**	3.4107	0.51960	2.20	4.90
	EUA	3.6029	0.48212	2.30	5.10
Instrumental Orientation	**INSO**	5.1456	0.83836	2.50	6.00
Parental Encouragement	**PE**	4.1626	0.95259	1.75	6.00
AMTB 2	**AMTB2**	5.0817	0.81866	2.17	6.42

Motivation is examined as related to three components: Motivational Intensity (MI), Desire to Learn English (D), and Attitudes toward Learning English (ALE). Generally, the scores were similar across the three subscales: MI (M = 3.48, SD = 0.49), D (M = 3.58, SD = 0.46), and ALE (M = 3.58, SD = 0.40). This suggests that the participants were moderately motivated to learn English. Notably, their scores for Desire to Learn English and for Attitudes toward Learning English were slightly higher than the score for Motivational Intensity. This indicates that the students were generally motivated, and had a positive attitude about learning English, but their intensity/sustained effort may vary.

The results of the participants' responses to the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), mean and standard deviation, are listed in Table 3, broken down by gender (female and male) and by preparatory class-level (first-year and second-year). This tailored presentation allows for analysis of variation in students' motivation relating to learning English across demographic aspects.

Table 3. Mean Values of Answers by Different Groups

	Gender				**Preparatory Class**			
	Female (N=58)		**Male (N=45)**		**First Year (N=84)**		**Second Year (N=19)**	
	Mean	**Std. Dev.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
INT	4.978	1.089	5.083	0.827	5.062	0.981	4.855	0.983
AEP	4.386	0.809	4.441	0.825	4.413	0.828	4.398	0.761
IFL	3.667	0.493	3.735	0.381	3.702	0.451	3.673	0.438
ETE	3.401	0.498	3.557	0.497	3.439	0.484	3.605	0.568
ECE	3.351	0.507	3.435	0.523	3.336	0.494	3.615	0.549
MI	3.394	0.470	3.580	0.510	3.477	0.459	3.468	0.642
D	3.624	0.468	3.520	0.440	3.536	0.453	3.763	0.437
ALE	3.550	0.397	3.626	0.401	3.553	0.371	3.715	0.495
ECA	3.475	0.510	3.326	0.524	3.397	0.483	3.468	0.667
EUA	3.691	0.468	3.488	0.480	3.558	0.471	3.800	0.489
INSO	5.099	0.915	5.205	0.733	5.139	0.874	5.171	0.677
PE	4.200	1.017	4.113	0.870	4.163	0.928	4.157	1.080
AMTB2	5.061	0.882	5.107	0.737	5.080	0.844	5.087	0.711

Std. Dev. (Standard Deviation); INT (Integrative Orientation); AEP (Attitudes Toward the

Learning Community); IFL (Interest in Foreign Language); ETE (English Teacher Evaluation); ECE (English Class Evaluation); MI (Motivational Intensity); D (Desire to Learn English); ALE (Attitude Towards Learning Situation); ECA (English Class Anxiety); EUA (English Use Anxiety); INSO (Instrumental Orientation); PE (Parental Encouragement); AMTB 2 (Attitude and Motivation Test Battery, Second Part). In the area of motivation, male students also showed slightly higher scores on Motivational Intensity (MI) (M = 3.58) and Attitude Towards Learning English (ALE) (M = 3.63), while female students had a higher Desire to Learn English (D) (M = 3.62; versus M = 3.52 for males). Also, regarding motivation, second-year students had a higher Desire to Learn English (D) (M = 3.76) than first-year students (M = 3.54), but the Motivational Intensity (MI) scores remained similar for both groups.

Table 4 provides results of the Mann-Whitney U test measuring whether significant differences existed between male and female students in their responses to some of the constructs from the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The analysis involved scores from 45 male students and 58 female students measured by the AMTB. Statistically significant differences were found for Motivational Intensity (MI) [$p \leq 0.05$] amongst all constructs.

Table 4. Mann-Whitney U Test Results- Differences Between Male and Female Students.

	Gender	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Test Result**	***p***
INT	Male	45	51.59	1291.0	0.925
	Female	58	52.24		
AEP	Male	45	53.84	1222.0	0.580
	Female	58	50.57		
IFL	Male	45	54.49	1193.0	0.455
	Female	58	50.07		
ETE	Male	45	58.03	1033.50	0.070
	Female	58	47.32		
ECE	Male	45	54.43	1195.50	0.465
	Female	58	50.11		
MI	Male	45	58.84	997.0	**0.040***
	Female	58	46.69		
D	Male	45	47.90	1120.50	0.219
	Female	58	55.18		
ALE	Male	45	54.61	1187.50	0.431
	Female	58	49.97		

ECA	Male	45	45.87	1029.0	0.066
	Female	58	56.76		
EUA	Male	45	44.98	989.0	**0.035***
	Female	58	57.45		
INSO	Male	45	52.87	1266.0	0.793
	Female	58	51.33		
PE	Male	45	50.31	1229.0	0.613
	Female	58	53.31		
AM2	Male	45	52.09	1301.0	0.979
	Female	58	51.93		

*$p \leq 0.05$; INT (Integrative Orientation); AEP (Attitudes Toward the Learning Community); IFL (Interest in Foreign Language); ETE (English Teacher Evaluation); ECE (English Class Evaluation); MI (Motivational Intensity); D (Desire to Learn English); ALE (Attitude Towards Learning Situation); ECA (English Class Anxiety); EUA (English Use Anxiety); INSO (Instrumental Orientation); PE (Parental Encouragement); AMTB 2 (Attitude and Motivation Test Battery, Second Part)

The Mann-Whitney U output for Motivational Intensity was significant (U = 997.0, p = .040) and male students had a greater mean rank (58.84) than female students (46.69). The finding is consistent with previous findings in Table 3, which also showed a slightly greater motivational intensity in male students. Thus, the findings indicate the presence of a gender-based difference in the amount of effort students put into learning the language.

Table 5 presents the results of a Mann-Whitney U test to determine whether significant differences exist in motivational, attitudinal, and affective orientations measured by the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) in first-year (N = 84) and second-year (N = 19) preparatory class students. The analysis revealed a significant difference only in English Class Evaluation (ECE) ($p \leq 0.05$).

Table 5. Mann-Whitney U Test Results- Differences Between Prep-Classes.

	Year	N	Mean Rank	Test Result	*p*
INT	First Year	84	53.37	683.0	0.322
	Second Year	19	45.95		
AEP	First Year	84	52.13	787.50	0.929
	Second Year	19	51.45		
IFL	First Year	84	53.22	695.50	0.382
	Second Year	19	46.61		
ETE	First Year	84	50.35	659.0	0.236
	Second Year	19	59.32		
ECE	First Year	84	49.09	553.50	**0.037***
	Second Year	19	64.87		
MI	First Year	84	52.09	790.50	0.949
	Second Year	19	51.61		
D	First Year	84	49.57	593.50	0.081
	Second Year	19	62.76		
ALE	First Year	84	51.09	721.50	0.512
	Second Year	19	56.03		
ECA	First Year	84	51.34	742.50	0.636
	Second Year	19	54.92		
EUA	First Year	84	49.45	583.50	0.067
	Second Year	19	63.29		
INSO	First Year	84	52.37	767.0	0.790
	Second Year	19	50.37		
PE	First Year	84	51.90	790.0	0.946
	Second Year	19	52.42		
AMTB 2	First Year	84	52.45	760.0	0.746
	Second Year	19	50.00		

*$p \leq 0.05$; INT (Integrative Orientation); AEP (Attitudes Toward the Learning Community); IFL (Interest in Foreign Language); ETE (English Teacher Evaluation); ECE (English Class Evaluation); MI (Motivational Intensity); D (Desire to Learn English); ALE (Attitude Towards Learning Situation); ECA (English Class Anxiety); EUA (English Use Anxiety);

INSO (Instrumental Orientation); PE (Parental Encouragement); AMTB 2 (Attitude and Motivation Test Battery, Second Part)

It was found that Motivational Intensity (MI), Desire to Learn English (D), and Attitude toward Learning English (ALE) did not show statistically significant differences between the two year groups ($p > .05$ for all variables). While no statistically significant differences emerged, it is possible to see some trends for the other variables; for example, English Teacher Evaluation (ETE) and Desire to Learn English (D) ranked slightly higher for second-year students (ETE: 59.32; D: 62.76).

5. Discussions

The purpose of this study was to explore the motivation orientations of English learning Turkish B1-level preparatory class students, including the motivational relationships with demographic variables which was mainly focused on gender and year of school. The primary data collection instrument to investigate the instrumental motivation intensity (MI), motivation to learn English (D), and attitudes to learning English (ALE) was the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB; Gardner, 2004), which assessed MI, D, and ALE as three subcomponents (along with language confidence, a secondary subcomponent) of motivation in Gardener's (1985) socio-educational model. These findings provide a degree of confirming studies in the second language acquisition (SLA) literature, and also have significance and implications for the Turkish EFL context.

The data indicate that Turkish preparatory students are moderately to highly motivated to learn English. Data presented in Table 2 indicates the means for motivational intensity ($M = 3.48$), desire to learn English ($M = 3.58$), and attitudes toward learning English ($M = 3.58$), all suggest positive and consistent motivational profiles. These findings align with past research in Turkish and international EFL contexts (see Bektaş-Çetinkaya & Oruç, 2010; Masgoret, Bernaus, & Gardner, 2001). It seems that students are aware of English and its role as an important resource for achieving their instrumentally-oriented goals, which is consistent with the preponderance of instrumental motivation in many EFL contexts (Dörnyei, 1990; Ghazvini & Khajehpour, 2011).

Yet, the small difference between desire and effort shows that there is a common issue: many students show great interest in learning the English language but cannot sustain that strong effort over time. Dörnyei (2001) warned that learners can have strong motivational ideologies but can fail to mobilise their motivation into behaviour, though the primary obstacle seemed to be the fact that the learning experience was mainly exam driven or they had little or no contextual engagement. The inconsistency might also be a consequence of lack of opportunities to use English in life outside of education, as also highlighted in studies involving Turkish learners (Genc & Kaya, 2010; Kızıltepe, 2000). So while motivation does appear to exist, it seems to be forebodingly susceptible to the conditions of learning and added reinforcements.

Comparisons based on gender indicated many discrepancies between the male and female students, particularly when it comes to motivational intensity with male students having

significantly higher MI (U = 997.0, p = .040) where the male students tend to participate in efforts to learning to a far greater extent. This supports previous research exemplified in the work of Kormos and Csizér (2008) which found male students report stronger task-based learning and behavioral engagement, whilst their female counterparts have deeper emotional connections to instructional engagement and show an integrative orientation.

It is interesting to note, that female respondents in this study showed slightly higher mean scores in desire to learn English (M = 3.62) than male learners (M = 3.52), but not significantly different. This finding is consistent with Mirzaei and Forouzandeh (2013), who, in their qualitative study, concluded that females tend to be more emotionally engaged and invested in the language learning process, but that emotional investment does not always transfer into effort in the classroom, especially when learners experience anxiety. Females also had more English Use Anxiety, as seen in Table 4 (U= 989.0, p = .035), potentially limiting their willingness to practice and participate as active participants, especially for speaking tasks (Munezane, 2016).

The gendered motivational patterns observed have pedagogical implications: male students, for example, might benefit from structured tasks that focus on performance while female students may need emotionally supportive environments to reduce anxiety and encourage participation in classroom activities (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). As a result, motivational strategies must also be gendered: determining goal-setting and supporting emotions to allow equitable engagement in all learners.

In addition, results also indicated no statistically significant differences in motivational variables between first-year and second-year students, with English Class Evaluation (ECE). However, second-year students had higher mean scores in desire to learn English (M = 3.76), and attitudes towards learning English (M = 3.72) than first-year students. While not statistically significant, this difference may be educationally meaningful.

The results of this study can also be interpreted as an indication that longer exposure to English instruction could progressively enhance internal motivation (Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009; Gardner, 2006). Students in second preparatory year may have had enough time to establish self-regulatory strategies, build their linguistic self-confidence, and set personal goals—these are all factors related to achieving the Ideal L2 Self (Dörnyei, 2009). In addition, Masgoret et al. (2001) and Chen (2012) observe that motivation is likely to stabilize over time, especially when the instruction is seen as relevant, supportive, and engaging. The results also indicate a potential motivational cost of repeated study. It is important to note that students are also repeating a preparatory year because of prior failure and that unless adequately supported their self-efficacy could be hampered. As they note, autonomous learning strategies and positive feedback loops are more likely to sustain motivation in this situation. Again, this emphasized the role of personalized motivation-enhancement approaches.

In view of the findings from this study, we suggest a range of implication from a pedagogical standpoint that include varying practices for building motivation. Teachers need to consider motivating students to want to learn English and turning that desire into active motivation and effort through engaging classroom experiences. Practitioners might include elements such as vision-building tasks (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014), setting clear goals or encouraging meaningful opportunities to use language in global contexts (Crystal, 2003; Alptekin, 2002) as part of their class. Factors such as gender-awareness, anxiety-mitigation,

and individual feedback may help successfully navigate the disparities in motivation and emotional readiness.

6. Conclusions

The current research provides an informative exploration of the motivational orientations of a sample of English B1 level preparatory class students at a Turkish university. Overall, in light of desire to learn English, attitude in learning, and instrumental goals toward academia/career therefore, from an evidence-based approach, these students display moderate to high motivational levels. These noticeable attitudes suggest students are aware of the personal and professional value of English, albeit sustained effort (motivational intensity) featured different intensities, which were possibly caused by individual differences.

Upon reflection, the findings state that differences exist across the three motivational orientations (i.e., standardized variables of desire, intensity of motivation, and engagement). In particular, both aspects of Desire to Learn English and Attitudinal Engagement, scored mildly higher than aspects of Motivational Intensity. In a way, this could suggest that students' intention vs. effort to engage in productive and receptive language tasks do not line up. There may have been disguises, either in students' motivation, or broader variables like anxiety, unrealistic/personal engagement, or the focus of the curriculum and overwhelming aspects to assessment. Consequently, if teachers, can continue to define, as well as offer opportunities for: purposeful engagement, choice and alternatives, and some meaningful engagement with English both in and out of educational contexts, there is potential for success in filling the gaps observed.

The distinctions between male and female students appeared to be strongest in the area of Motivational Intensity (male students having scored higher), which indicates male students are engaged in a longer-term effort in their learning. Female students, on the other hand showed a bit more willingness to learn English and also felt a little more anxiety regarding language learning, especially with language use and speaking. These findings emphasised the value of differentiated motivated support: for example, male students may be motivated by achievement-type tasks that increase their effort while female students may more be motivated by emotionally-supportive, low-anxiety, and less-escalating contexts, where they can express themselves more freely and with greater confidence in English.

In regard to the comparison of first- and second-year preparatory students, apart from the comparison of structures in motivational choices were generally similar, the second-year students had a greater willingness to learn English and a more favourable opinion of their personal English teachers. Although there was no statistical significance in most constructs associated with motivation, the differences in motivation and classroom behaviour of the year groups, show a slow, steady impact of more exposure to English instruction will not only reassure students' intrinsic motivation, but also students' willingness to be active and involved in the classroom situation. Additionally, while there was much variance in the individual classrooms, the only statistically significant difference was in the Evaluation of English Class

construct. The second-year students had a more positive evaluation of their classroom than the first-year students. This trend would point towards the impact classroom instruction or possibly teacher-student relationships may have on motivation over a number of years.

In conclusion, this significant study has shown that motivation towards 'preparatory class' learners of EFL is not only there, it is complex, and stems from a learners' internal desire which has been shaped by recent informational classroom experiences, and demographic factors that were accounted for such as gender and year of studies. These findings demonstrated the possible use of flexible and learner-responsive pedagogies that promote learner motivation towards their goals (emotional, cognitive, and behavioral outcomes in learner learning motivation.

7. Recommendations:

The findings of this study suggest that English preparatory programs should embrace more flexibility and different pedagogical practices that are learner-responsive and consider the varying motivational profiles of their students. Educators should also recognize that there may be differences relating to gender that take their place into consideration. Some male students may be more motivated by tasks that allow them to be goal-oriented and allow for some competitiveness, while some female students may flourish in a supportive environment that amicably alleviates stress, allows them to self-express, and creates a sense of emotional safety. The positive motivational trends observed among second-year students indicate that long-term experience and better teacher-student relationships may be important in sustaining motivation, and thus English preparatory programs should provide students with ongoing language learning opportunities to help build relationships in a supportive classroom climate and to integrate relevant language learning opportunities that involve authentic real-life application of language learning (in-situ experience). They should ethically deal with any anxiety, especially with language production. Ensuring students regularly have language learning such as personalized and varied learning experiences (while considering their backgrounds and prior experiences) can help sustain motivation positively in the long-term. It is also important teacher training programs offer modules on motivation theory, and how to create space for practical classroom engagement with motivation theory, to sensitize teachers to the ever-evolving educational needs of their students.

8. Limitation of the study:

This research used survey data from 103 B1-level preparatory class students, by using Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). It found significant differences in motivation across gender and academic year. However, the sample was from one institution, so these findings may only apply to these students and not other universities or regions in Turkey. Another limitation is that self-reported quantitative data was used exclusively within the study. Although we know that the AMTB has been used in many studies, it does not capture the complexity and individual nature of the previous section of this current chapter on learners' motivation. Many elements including classroom interaction, personal learning histories, and actual cultures were not accounted for in substantial detail. Future research can employ qualitative methods including interviews or classroom observations to better understand the motivational dynamics within foreign language education contexts.

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