

Motivation of Russian Students Towards the Learning of English

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This paper seeks to analyze the attitudes and motivation for learning English of students in the city of Surgut, in the Russian Federation. The investigation was carried out in November 2013 by means of self-completion questionnaires distributed to 30 students, aged 13 to 17, who had studied English for at least two years in private language schools (although all of them had studied at least one foreign language within the Russian national education system). The students were divided into two main categories: students who were citizens of the Russian Federation from bilingual families (BF), such as Tatar, Bashkir, Ukrainian or others, and students from Russian monolingual families (MF). The results were analyzed from different motivational viewpoints, namely, achievement, instrumental, integrative, extrinsic, and intrinsic motivations. This methodology allowed the researcher to acquire a multi-dimensional perspective of what impelled Russian students to learn English, what they expected of that knowledge, and whether there were differences between the two groups. The results showed a high level of motivation amongst both genders of bilingual students and among girls from Russian monolingual families, while the results for non-bilingual boys were much more discreet. Although this research was carried out according to concrete standards of age and education, the results can enhance the scientific understanding of motivation for second-language learning in contexts where that second language is not necessary, used or even known by the community in its daily life, as well as the perception of language learning by monolingual and by bilingual individuals.

Keywords: motivation, second-language acquisition, English; bilingualism, Russia

The language teaching industry has become one of the most important sectors in the globalized world. It involves not only teachers but also the creation of language schools and foreign language departments in regular schools and universities, and the production and marketing of language learning materials, such as dictionaries, course books, grammar books or computer programs. This industry is nurtured by a relatively high percentage of the world's population.

During the last decades of the twentieth century, English became a global language, displacing French as the international *lingua franca*. Currently, the English Teaching and Learning industry accounts for a minimum of 11 billion pounds annually (Press Association, 2004). Every year about 600,000 people travel to one of the 'native English speaking countries'

to enroll in different English language courses; however, the main market is in the home countries of these students, mainly from the European Union, the People's Republic of China, India, and East Asia (British Council, 2006, p. 8).

Motivation in Foreign Language Learning

Both teachers and researchers accept that motivation plays one of the most important roles in the success of second and foreign language learning. It provides the initial impetus to initiate the process of learning another language and it is also the driving force to maintain effort over the years, responsible for determining human behavior by energizing it and giving it direction (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 117). Although

motivation is a main factor, there is often a limited or superficial treatment of it with regards to second language learning in the literature.

Motivation is a frequent term used in psychology and a key concept in education. However, it is interesting to discover how little agreement there is in the literature with regard to the exact meaning of this concept (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 117). The modern English word *motivation* is derived from the Latin verb *movere* (to move). Thus, it could be concluded that etymologically, 'to be motivated' or 'to have motivation' means 'to be moved to action towards something.'

Although scholars agree that motivation is responsible for guiding human behavior by prompting and directing it, there are a variety of theories and perspectives on how this happens. The reason for this range of opinions has its basis in human complexity. Since those psychological theories seek to explain why humans behave as they do, it would be unrealistic to assume any simple and single answer. Therefore, basically every different psychological perspective on human behavior is associated with a different theory of motivation (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 117).

Materials and Methods

Different Types of Motivation. Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

According to Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (1985), motivation can be categorized as 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic'. Intrinsic motivation is, "the energy source that is central to the active nature of the organism." It implies that not all human behaviors are a consequence of external control (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 11). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is that which is controlled by external factors where, obviously, the individual's internal forces are less determinant. Intrinsic motivation is related to academic performance since it improves the quality of learning; the conditions created by the process will promote more effective learning as well as enhanced intrinsic motivation and self-esteem (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 256).

Integrative and Instrumental Motivation

Another viewpoint related to motivation is the distinction outlined by Wallace E. Lambert (1955) between integrative and instrumental aspects. In order to define what those concepts mean, he provided two real-life examples of Americans who had learnt French. The first one was a man who reported to do more thinking in French. He had spent a year in France and was planning to return. The individual reacted against anything that was non-European

and only read French materials. He provided, then, a clear example of *integrative* motivation, since for him the language was much more than a code. He was determined to integrate, to become a part of the French culture. The other person was a woman who had been teaching French in a school. By that time she was working towards a graduate degree in French. For her, French was only an *instrument* to achieve her purpose (Gardner, 1991, p. 44).

In order to define the idea of the integrative motivation, three broad categories were hypothesized. The first one, *integrativeness*, involves attitudes towards the second language community and towards other groups. The second category implies *attitudes towards the learning situation* itself. The third element involved *motivation*. In this proposal, integration and attitudes towards the learning situation are considered determinants for motivation, while motivation is a main factor in second language achievement (Gardner, 1991, p. 49).

Achievement Motivation

Another type of motivation that can be displayed by students is '*achievement motivation*.' In order to understand this concept, it is necessary to have in mind the key term '*better*.' As David C. McClelland (1987, pp. 227-8) stated, people can do better for a range of different reasons, such as wishing to please the teacher, avoid criticism, gain the approval of a loved one, or simply to get some time off work. However, it does not imply that their actions are governed by achievement motivation since the common factor that is involved in this type of motivation is "doing something better *for its own sake*, for the intrinsic satisfaction of doing something better."

Ethnic, Political and Educational Organization of the Russian Federation

Due to its area (more than 17 million km²) and its diverse ethnic composition, the Russian Federation is a highly complex country. It is home to more than 160 nationalities where Russians account for about 80 percent (Khaleeva, 2006, p. 321). The state is, in fact, a federation of 83 entities, 32 of which are described as ethnic (non-Russian) territorial divisions (Leprêtre, 2002, p. 4) and there is no necessary correspondence between the total number of nationalities to the number of regions. Often, some of those divisions are home to two or more indigenous groups, in addition to the immigrant population belonging to some other ethnic minorities.

The current study was carried out in the city of Surgut, in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug or Yugra, which is situated in central Siberia, about 2,000 kilometers East of Moscow (see Figure 1). Although

the region is as large as France, its population is only slightly over 1.5 million. Yugra is a territorial division based on the ethnicity of its original settlers, the Khanty (Ostyaks) and the Mansi (Voguls). Although those two nationalities are still titular of the Okrug, they have become a tiny minority accounting for only 2 percent of the total population following the arrival of thousands of immigrants from other parts of Russia and the former USSR. Surgut was founded in 1594 as a Slavonic bastion and a place for commerce with the Khanty hunters. Over time it became a small, unimportant wooden fortress situated within the confines of the Russian Empire, and its population had never been more than 3,000. With the arrival of thousands of immigrants, however, Surgut became the main center of the Okrug with more than 300,000 inhabitants in 2010. It is also considered the capital of the Russian oil industry, the base of Surgutneftgas, and one of the main quarters of Gazprom.



Figure 1. Situation of Surgut within the Russian Federation.

Linguistic Education in Russia: Foreign Languages

Foreign language study was always an important and desirable issue in the USSR. From the early 1920s, the Government saw possibilities to promote the ideals of socialism and communism through the use of foreign languages. Soviet children started their study of foreign languages in the 4th or 5th grade and continued for six years until the end of secondary school. Nevertheless, the level achieved by students was in general very low, mainly due to the shortage of qualified teachers and the teaching methodology used, usually one focused on low-intensity reading and translation. There were, however, some schools in Moscow and Leningrad (St. Petersburg) where the study of foreign languages started in the 2nd grade. Students not only learned the foreign language itself more intensively, but also had some subjects taught in it (Pavlenko, 2003, p. 322).

In 1991, the collapse of the USSR provoked profound reforms in all domains in its successor states. In the Russian Federation, the old Soviet education

system was substituted by a new Russian system and, consequently, the teaching of foreign languages was also altered. The changes in that particular school subject were not especially noticeable in structure or in number of hours devoted, but rather in the viewpoint about languages and the cultures related to them. The ‘Western world’ was no longer seen as an enemy and languages such as English became a tool not just for political purposes but also for personal and national advancement. By that time, Russians were also able to travel to countries where Russian was neither the main language nor the *lingua franca* and many Western tourists arrived in Russia for the first time. Some foreign countries also started to invest and to import from Russia and, in turn, Russia started to have commercial ties with the West. That climate favored the creation of some companies that became world leaders in their fields, while some old Soviet companies expanded their horizons towards Europe and the rest of what was once the so-called capitalist world. All these changes demanded bilingual Russian-English (or not so common, Russian-other foreign language) speakers.

It can be concluded that although foreign languages in the Russian Federation are mostly considered a valuable resource nowadays, and despite the initial boom, the knowledge of foreign languages is still not widespread, especially when compared with some other European countries (see Table 1).

Table 1
Most widely known foreign languages. Comparison by country (percentage of the total population). Sources: Russian Census 2010 and Eurobarometer 386

Russian Federation	United Kingdom	Hungary	Germany
English (5.32%)	French (19%)	English (20%)	English (56%)
German (1.45%)	German (6%)	German (18%)	French (14%)

Methodology. Participating Schools

The study was carried out in seven language schools in the city of Surgut. The combined number of students in those schools represents about a third of the language students in the city besides those attending state institutions, such as schools and universities.

Sampling: Participating Students

The final sample consisted of 27 students, which represents over 2 percent of the students within the age group in Surgut. This comprises an acceptable number since it is generally recommended that the sample be between 1 and 10 percent of the total

population (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2012, p. 82). The main sampling criterion for this study was to find the most representative individuals, thus a stratified sample was used. Several factors were taken into consideration, such as:

- *Students' ages:* All participants were aged between 13 and 17. These ages were considered appropriate for the study of language attitudes since some scholars suggest that attitudes start to appear at the age of 10 and are clarified and consolidated during adolescence (Appel & Muysken, 1987; Siguan & Mackey, 1986 cited in Huget & Llorca, 2001, p. 271). A summary of the number and age of participating students is given in Table 2.
- *Representativeness of each sex according to the total student population:* Most of the language students were girls in a ratio of approximately 2:1, the same proportion as the participant sample.
- *Ethnicity:* No ethnic group was over-represented. The sample included representatives of the main ethnic groups of Surgut according to their proportion in the total population of the city.
- *Academic capability:* Participants were not selected according to their marks at school. The aim of the study was to observe motivation of students, independently of their qualifications.
- *Similar English language background and proficiency:* As previously mentioned, all the chosen students had a similar English language learning background. All of them had three weekly hours of English instruction according to the national curriculum at school and they had also studied English in private language schools for at least two years (about 150 hours per year).

Table 2
Distribution of students by sex and age

Ages	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Boys	-	5	-	2	2	9
Girls	2	5	8	3	-	18
Total	2	10	8	5	2	27

The Instrument: The Questionnaire

In order to accomplish this study, no official or pre-designed questionnaire was used since it was totally impossible to find any which would perfectly fit the research questions within the context given. The questionnaire used for this study was initially designed in English; however, due to the fact that none of the participants had English as their mother tongue, a Russian version was also produced.

Results and Discussion

Data Analyses

The following questions served as a basis for this study:

- a) What was the real motivation for students to pursue their English learning in a context where the knowledge of that language is basically irrelevant for daily life?
- b) Was there any difference in motivation and/or attitudes towards learning English among children who belonged to native bilingual families and children who belonged to Russian-monolingual families?

The results are based on the five-point Likert scale questionnaire (from '1' strongly disagree to '5' strongly agree). They were codified into two main categories: 'members of native bilingual families' (BF) and 'members of Russian-monolingual families' (MF). A third category, namely 'members of families where at least one of the parents speaks a foreign language' was dismissed due to the students' perception of having parents who 'speak a foreign language' meant very often that their parents knew a few sentences or had simply studied the language at school, but it did not imply a significant knowledge of that language, being fluent, or that it had any influence on family life. Each category was also divided into three minor subcategories: *boys*, *girls* and *total*. There was a considerable number of both boys and girls from Russian monolingual families. On the other hand, the results of members from bilingual families were analyzed as a compact group, due to the lack of a meaningful number of representatives of boys from bilingual families.

Student's Background

At first sight, the linguistic background of most students was quite uniform. Most of them, 21 students, came from monolingual native Russian families, while only 6 students belonged to native bilingual families from Ukrainian, Chechen, Bashkir, and Tatar origins. Nevertheless, it did not mean that other languages besides Russian were not present at all within the family since 12 students (5 boys and 7 girls) reported having parents with at least some knowledge of at least one foreign language, usually German, English, or French.

Although all the students had been abroad on holidays, any prolonged direct contact with foreign cultures and languages, excluding those of the former Soviet Union, within the family circle was almost negligible. Only one student reported having lived abroad for longer than three months, but it was in the Ukraine, where Russian is spoken by the majority of

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the population. Of the seven students who indicated having a member of their family living or studying abroad, only two declared that it was in a Western country where Russian is not spoken (see Table 3).

Despite the almost general lack of direct contact with foreign cultures and the weak bilingual tradition within the respondents' families, most of the participants declared their interest in continued learning of other foreign languages besides English, the most popular being French (59.3 percent of the students), German (48.1 percent), Spanish (40.7 percent, mostly boys), and Italian (22.2, mostly girls).

Students' Motivation

Motivation to learn a second language cannot be taken as a general occurrence. Therefore, the following sections offer an analysis of the students' attitudes according to five types of motivation: achievement; integrative; instrumental; intrinsic; and extrinsic motivation.

Achievement motivation - Achievement motivation, or that which impels the students to "do something better for its own sake, for the intrinsic satisfaction of doing something better" (McClelland, 1987, pp. 227-228), seems to be high when learning English is a personal process, but not as high when the process is directed by the desire to gain the recognition of a third party, such as family or friends (see Table 4).

There were no extreme differences between BF and MF. However, boys from MF scored lower than the general results in all items, while BF students did the opposite, always scoring above the average. The most

observable difference was in the *challenge* that learning a language represented for each group (Question 4:4). While BF students seemed to accept and enjoy it, MF students had a tendency to enjoy the process, but not so much the challenge, as if their interest diminished when too much pressure was applied.

Interestingly, the general results of Question 4:1 and Question 4:2 showed a rather low level of motivation when pleasing family and demonstrating abilities were involved. Nevertheless, it seems that learning a language played a more important role in the family life of BF pupils. MF pupils, however, scored much lower on this item with slightly higher than a neutral answer. The reason for this difference may be found in the fact that language knowledge is more appreciated within the BF than within MF, who may simply view it as 'another school subject.'

Integrative motivation - The next issue analyzed was the perception of the English language and the culture of English-speaking countries by the students. Those results could be a point of reference for understanding their attitude towards learning the language or integrative motivation, in the terminology adopted by Lambert (1955).

The questions related to the language itself were formulated from a practical point of view to prevent students from giving their opinion *on the course* instead of *on the language*. The overall data showed that students did not perceive English and English-speaking/Western people as a negative factor (see Table 5). The first two questions from this section, Question 2:1 and Question 2:2, showed that most students perceived Western people (for most Russians, 'Western'

Table 3
Students' background

	Boys	%	Girls	%	Total	%
Russian monolingual family	7	77.7	14	7.7	21	7.7
At least one of the parents is native bilingual	2	22.2	4	22.2	6	22.2
Students with at least one of their parents with some foreign language knowledge (not necessarily fluent)	5	55.5	7	38.8	12	44.4
Russian monolingual siblings	1	10	1	10	2	10
Siblings with foreign and/or national language knowledge	9	90	9	90	18	90

Table 4
Achievement Motivation

	Bilingual Fam. (BF)			Monolingual fam. (MF)			General
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
Part 2:5. How much do you enjoy the process of learning English?	4	5	4.7	3.8	4.7	4.4	4.5
Part 4:1. I want to do well in this class because I want to show my abilities to my family/friends /teachers/others	3.5	4	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7
Part 4:2. I want to do well in this class because my family can be proud of me	4.5	4	4.2	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.8
Part 4:4. Learning English is a challenge that I enjoy	4	5	4.7	3.7	4.4	4.1	4.3
Part 4:5: I am sure I will be able to learn English well	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.1	4.5	4.4	4.4

and ‘English-speaking’ are basically synonyms) in a positive way and they especially seemed to enjoy the idea of having opportunities to meet some of them. As usual, BF students had the highest scores, while MF boys scored the lowest. Almost all of them thought that English is important these days (Question 2:9) and that English-speaking countries play an important role in the world (Question 2:6) with similar results in members of BF and MF. Moreover, most students from all groups would like to spend some time in an English-speaking country (Question 3:5).

Almost unanimously, students listened to music in English (Question 2:4). A notable difference was found in the amount of time they spent watching films or TV in English (Question 2:3) since it was considerably lower than the time spent listening to music. The explanation may reside in the fact that to enjoy music it is not necessary to understand lyrics, but to enjoy a film it is necessary to follow the dialogue, which is much more difficult. However, there were differences between BF and MF members, since BF members seemed much more inclined to accept the challenge of watching films or TV in English than MF members. Finally, it was generally admitted by most of the students that knowing the language is essential to fully understanding the culture of the English-speaking world (Question 2:8).

When linking English to Russia as a country, rather than to the individual, the answers of the groups showed similar tendencies, but with notable differences. In fact, when asked about the need/obligation for every Russian to know English (Question 3:10), the answer was not so enthusiastic, although BF students were much more receptive to the idea. Finally, students did not see the knowledge of English as a threat to Russian

patriotism (Question 4:12). However, the difference between BF and MF became evident when the first group strongly disagreed (1.2 points) with the item, while the latter only disagreed (2.1 points).

Instrumental motivation - English was perceived as an auxiliary instrument much more than as a basic tool. In fact, it was considered *necessary* for both groups only for travelling abroad (Question 2:7). The rest of the results showed big differences between BF and MF members (see Table 6).

Although MF students were more likely than BF students (who did not seem very attracted by that idea) to admit that they learned English to enhance the possibility of studying abroad (Question 3:1), the language was much more valued by members of the BF. The answers to Questions 3:2, 3:3, 3:4 clearly showed the desire of respondents of the BF group to use English *in Russia* for academic achievement, while the other group perceived it more skeptically, always scoring under 4 (agree).

Trust in English as a means to a better professional life was also different depending on the group of respondents. BF children seemed to be sure of the value of English to achieve a better job and a higher salary. MF students also viewed English as a tool, although they did not seem to be convinced of it as the feature that could help them to improve or to make the difference between them and the rest of their future Russian colleagues (Question 3:6 and Question 3:7). Despite those facts, both groups agreed that their knowledge of English most probably would not add to their social life or status (Question 3:8, Question 3:9). Finally, BF students were more likely to admit that studying English might be an opportunity to meet new people (Question 4:3).

Table 5
Integrative Motivation

	Bilingual Fam. (BF)			Monolingual fam. (MF)			General
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
Part 2:1. How much do you like to meet foreigners from Western countries?	4.5	5	4.8	4.3	4.7	4.6	4.7
Part 2:2. How much do you like people from Western countries?	4.5	4.7	4.7	3.8	4.3	4.2	4.4
Part 2:3. How much do you watch films or TV programs in English?	3.5	4.2	4	3.1	3	3	3.3
Part 2:4. How much do you listen to music in English?	5	5	5	4.6	4.9	4.3	4.3
Part 2:6. How important are English speaking countries in the world?	3.2	4.7	4.2	3.8	4.6	4.3	4.3
Part 2:8. How important do you think learning English is in order to understand better the culture and arts of its speakers?	4.5	4.7	4.7	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.4
Part 2:9. How important do you think English is in the world these days?	5	4.7	4.8	4.4	4.8	4.7	4.7
Part 3:5. I am learning English because I want to spend time in an English speaking country	4.5	4.2	4.3	4	4.3	4.2	4.2
Part 3:10. Everybody in my country should be able to speak English	3	4	3.7	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.3
Part 4:12. Learning English makes people less patriotic	1	1.2	1.2	2.8	1.8	2.1	1.8

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Although Russian is one of the main languages on the Internet and there are all kinds of media in Russian or translated into Russian, both groups seemed to agree on the importance that English has in using new technologies and understanding media. The difference, however, between both groups was quite noticeable: the BF students being absolutely convinced about using English for those purposes, while MF students were always closer to being neutral than to strongly agreeing with Questions 4:9 and 4:10.

Intrinsic motivation - Intrinsic motivation was also discernible among the students from Surgut. However, once again, there were differences between BF students and MF students, especially between MF boys and BF students. While intrinsic motivation was very high among BF students, who always scored over 4.7, it was also relatively high among MF girls, but rather discreet among boys, who usually moved in a neutral zone instead of fully agreeing with the items

proposed (see Table 7).

The difference between those from bilingual and monolingual families was especially noteworthy when responding to item 4:4 about learning English as an enjoyable challenge. For BF students it was certainly such an activity, while MF students' answers were on the borderline between agreeing and neutrality (MF boys were clearly neutral to this item).

Extrinsic motivation - As a general rule, the students disagreed with Question 3:11, that is to say, that they learn English only to please their parents. They thus declared that learning the language was a voluntary activity. Nevertheless, family opinion (Question 4:7) and the influence of some celebrities (Question 4:11) seemed to have some weight in the students' decision. Interestingly, friends (Question 4:8) were the least important influence in this regard, especially among the MF girls (see Table 8).

Table 6

Instrumental Motivation

	Bilingual Fam. (BF)			Monolingual fam. (MF)			General
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
Part 2:7. How much do you think knowing English would help you when travel abroad in the future?	5	5	5	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.9
Part 3:1. I want to learn English to have the possibility of studying abroad	5	3.2	3.8	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.1
Part 3:2. I want to learn English because I will need it at university in my country	5	4.2	4.5	3.7	3.7	3.7	4
Part 3:3. I want to learn English because I will need to read textbooks in English	5	4	4.3	3.1	3.5	3.4	3.7
Part 3:4. The main reason to learn English is to pass examinations	5	4.7	4.8	3.6	3.7	3.7	4.1
Part 3:6. If I learn English I will be able to get a better job	4.5	5	4.8	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.4
Part 3:7. Increasing my English proficiency will have financial benefits for me	5	4.5	4.7	3.9	3.6	3.7	4
Part 3:8. Being able to speak English will add to my social status	3.5	4	3.8	3.7	2.9	3.2	3.4
Part 3:9. If I can speak English I shall have a fantastic life	2.5	4.2	3.7	3.6	3.2	3.3	3.4
Part 4:3. One reason I learn English is that I can meet new people and make friends in the class	4	4.5	4.3	3.3	3.8	3.6	3.8
Part 4:9. I want to understand better English speaking films/TV programs/Internet videos	5	5	5	4	4.1	4.1	4.4
Part 4:10. I want to be able to read websites	5	5	5	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.5

Table 7

Intrinsic Motivation

	Bilingual Fam. (BF)			Monolingual fam. (MF)			General
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
Part 2:1. How much do you like to meet foreigners from Western countries?	4.5	5	4.8	4.3	4.7	4.6	4.7
Part 2:2. How much do you like people from Western countries?	4.5	4.7	4.7	3.8	4.3	4.2	4.4
Part 2:5. How much do you enjoy the process of learning English?	4	5	4.7	3.8	4.7	4.4	4.5
Part 4:4. Learning English is a challenge I enjoy in English	4	5	4.7	3.7	4.4	4.1	4.3

Table 8
Extrinsic Motivation

	Bilingual Fam. (BF)			Monolingual fam. (MF)			General
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
Part 3:11. I only learn English because my parents tell me to do so	2	2	2	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.8
Part 4:7. My family thinks that learning English is good for me	5	5	5	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.5
Part 4:8. My friends think that learning English is important	4	4.2	4.2	4	3.3	3.5	3.7
Part 4:11: Most of my favorite actors//singers/sportsmen speak English	5	5	5	3.7	4.4	4.2	4.5

Conclusion

First research question: “What was the real motivation for students to pursue their English learning in a context where the knowledge of that language is basically irrelevant to daily life?”

As stated in previous sections, Russian is not only the native language of the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of Surgut but also the *lingua franca* for the other groups. In fact, since the majority of the population are Russian monolinguals, all the local, regional, and national services are offered in Russian, there is a wide range of media and leisure possibilities offered exclusively in Russian, and the closest area where Russian cannot be used or understood is thousands of kilometers away, there is really no need to speak or even to know any other language on a daily basis. However, according to the results of the survey, a percentage of the students in Surgut seemed to be highly motivated to learn English.

Although most students did not lack intrinsic motivation - in fact, they almost unanimously declared that they learn English voluntarily - parents and English-speaking celebrities, such as sportsmen, actors, or singers, exerted a considerable degree of influence on their decision to learn the language. However, extrinsic motivation was the weakest variable of all probably due to the impossibility of using the language and the lack immediate need for it in the area. Nevertheless, an interesting point, probably related to the influence of their favorite celebrities, there was a rather strong desire to use English to be able to read websites and to understand films and videos in English.

Students declared that English is an important international language necessary when travelling abroad, especially to countries outside the former Soviet influence, such as Catalonia, Thailand or Turkey, where there are direct flights from Surgut. In fact, they felt at ease with foreigners from Western countries and they enjoyed Western culture, although they did not see the need for Russians in general to know (to be fluent in) English. Some students also considered English to be an asset for academic achievement and

for getting better jobs, however, they did not see it as a tool for acquiring a better social status.

Although both boys and girls followed a similar pattern of answers, it is noteworthy that girls seemed to be more motivated in all categories than boys, while boys scored higher on negative factors, such as relating the knowledge of English with lack of Russian patriotism.

Second research question: “Was there any difference in motivation and/or attitudes towards learning English between children who belonged to native bilingual families (BF) and children who belonged to Russian-monolingual families (MF)?”

It was found that there were important differences between students from bilingual families (BF) and students from Russian monolingual families (MF). While BF students seemed to be highly motivated in all the aspects considered, MF students were notably more skeptical about the process of learning and how English could be used. These differences were particularly accentuated when comparing BF students and MF boys. The first group generally scored between 4.3 (extrinsic motivation) and 4.7 (intrinsic motivation), but the latter never scored higher than 3.9, which implied ‘*neutral*’ answers never reaching to the level of ‘*agree*.’

The reason for these differences might be found in the fact that BF students consider English to be an asset for progressing in the world, in a similar way that their families use Russian to survive and progress in a Russian-speaking environment. MF students, however, might not clearly see the link between progressing and learning another language, since they had always lived in Russian, which is also the key to success in their country. For them, success is to be linked to speaking Russian. Moreover, *cognitive flexibility*, as for example the ability to generate multiple associations from one concept, may be another factor influencing BF students in having a higher motivation and better attitudes towards the learning of a new language, in this case, English (Chin & Wigglesworth, 2007, p. 61). For them, a new language means a new tool to be used, while for most MF students, Russian is and will be their almost exclusive tool.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire given to the students in Surgut (English version)

We would like to ask you to help us by answering the following questions concerning English language learning. Don't worry, this is NOT a test and you DON'T have to write your name. Moreover, there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. We are very interested in your personal opinion. Please give your answers sincerely. Thank you very much for your help!

PART 1

1 If you could choose, which foreign languages would you like to learn next school year?

(Please, mark the languages in order of importance)

- 1 _____
 2 _____
 3 _____

2 Sex: Boy Girl

3 Age:

4 Have you ever been abroad for longer than 3 months? If yes, where?

5 Besides Russian, my **mother** can speak

6 Besides Russian, my **father** can speak

7 Besides Russian, my **brother/s** can speak

- brother 1:
- brother 2:

8 Besides Russian, my **sister/s** can speak:

- sister 1:
- sister 2:

9 Does any member of your family currently live abroad?

10 Did/Does anybody of your family study abroad? If yes where?

PART 2

<i>Put an X in the correct box</i>	Very much	much	A little	Not much	Not at all
1 How much do you like to meet foreigners from Western countries?					
2 How much do you like people from Western countries?					
3 How much do you watch films or TV programs in English?					
4 How much do you listen to music in English?					
5 How much do you enjoy the process of learning English?					
6 How important are English speaking countries in the world?					
7 How much do you think knowing English would help you when travel abroad in the future?					
8 How important do you think learning English is in order to understand better the culture and arts of its speakers?					
9 How important do you think English is in the world these days?					

MOTIVATION OF RUSSIAN STUDENTS TOWARDS THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH

PART 3

<i>Put an X in the correct box</i>	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>agree</i>	<i>neutral</i>	<i>disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
1. I want to learn English to have the possibility of studying abroad					
2. I want to learn English because I will need it at university in my country					
3. I want to learn English because I will need to read textbooks in English					
4. The main reason to learn English is to pass examinations					
5. I am learning English because I want to spend time in an English speaking country					
6. If I learn English I will be able to get a better job					
7. Increasing my English proficiency will have financial benefits for me					
8. Being able to speak English will add to my social status					
9. If I can speak English I shall have a fantastic life					
10. Everybody in my country should be able to speak English					
11. I only learn English because my parents tell me to do so					

PART 4

<i>Put an X in the correct box</i>	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>agree</i>	<i>neutral</i>	<i>disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
1. I want to do well in this class because I want to show my abilities to my family/friends/others.					
2. I want to do well in this class because my family can be proud of me					
3. One reason I learn English is that I can meet new people and make friends in the class					
4. Learning English is a challenge I enjoy					
5. I am sure I will be able to learn English well					
6. I will never be able to use English in my country					
7. My family thinks that learning English is good for me					
8. My friends think that learning English is important					
9. I want to understand better English speaking films/TV programs/Internet videos					
10. I want to be able to read websites in English					
11. Most of my favorite actors/singers/sportsmen speak English					
12. Learning English makes people less patriotic					