

Review research paper

ESP STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATION BEFORE AND AFTER CROATIA JOINED THE ERASMUS PROGRAM

Višnja Kabalin Borenić

Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Abstract. *Results of our research study conducted before Croatia joined the Erasmus program in 2010 suggested that the experience of internationalization might affect ESP students' attitudes, learning priorities and motivation. To establish whether generations that participated in academic mobility programs differ from their pre-Erasmus peers, we repeated our original study from 2009: Business and economics students' attitudes to English, L2 motivation and invested effort were measured using the same questionnaire based on sociolinguistic and L2 motivation research rooted in social psychology. The same attitudes and motivation scales were used to compare the two groups. To ensure comparability, the data from the original and the present study were submitted to Coarsened Exact matching, which resulted in two subsets (N=98 each). T-test and correlational analyses revealed significant differences between the two groups, but the findings somewhat disappointed our previous expectations regarding the impact of university internationalization.*

Key words: *EFL attitudes, EFL motivation, international academic mobility, ESP*

1. INTRODUCTION

The status of English as a global language has a significant and well-documented effect on the affective basis of learning English as a foreign language (Gnutzmann, Jakisch, and Rabe 2015; Dörnyei and Ryan 2015; Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011). What still needs to be researched in more depth is how the status of English affects the attitudes, aims and motivation of ESP learners, and if these are “shaped by the NS centered ideology... or by the strong impulses of today's globalized world.” (Csizér and Kontra 2012, p. 2).

To obtain an insight into ESP learners' attitudes and motivation in Croatia, in 2009 we conducted research among business students at the University of Zagreb (Kabalin Borenić 2013, 2019). Amongst others, the research yielded some unanticipated findings:

1. Apparent preference for native English norms and pronunciation models.
2. Presence and effectiveness of integrative motivation.
3. Dual temporal focus and unequal effects of instrumental motives.

It seemed that these findings could be contextualised and explained within the framework of studies that emphasise the importance of first-hand experience with English in international communication (Csizér and Kontra 2012; Yashima 2009), in an authentic

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Corresponding author: Višnja Kabalin Borenić. Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Zagreb, Trg J.F. Kennedy 6, HR-10000 Zagreb, Croatia | E-mail: vkabalinb@efzg.hr

target community (Kim 2009) and with non-native speakers of English during student exchange (Jenkins 2005, 2009; Kimura 2017). These ideas motivated the present study.

At the time of our original research in 2009 (pre-Erasmus group), Croatia was not an Erasmus country and our students had little and sporadic experience with academic and/or professional international communication, including communication with non-native speakers. We could only speculate about the effects of internationalization resulting from academic mobility. Croatia finally joined Erasmus in 2010 and the growing number of outgoing students encouraged us to repeat our original study, compare the results and explore the possible effects of internationalization on students' attitudes to English, learning goals and motivation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Attitudes to English

English is generally perceived as important for the learners themselves and for their country (Björkman 2015; Gnutzmann, Jakisch, and Rabe 2015). Non-native speakers of English in different professional and educational contexts see it as a tool for global communication used primarily for economic reasons (Tardy 2004; Sinno 2008; Preisler 2003; Erling 2004; Bergroth 2008). It gives social prestige, increases employability, and enables access to information on the global scale. Moreover, the usefulness of English for connecting with the world overrides the more negative aspects of the spread of English: the supposedly adverse effects on local languages and cultures, social inequality arising from the user's non-native status, and the substantial costs related to language learning (Kaylani 1996; Knapp 2002; Erling 2007; Flowerdew 2001; Bergroth 2008; Sinno 2008).

Research on attitudes to varieties of English and learning goals has so far produced inconclusive results. For instance, regardless of the increasing use of English among non-native speakers, several large-scale empirical studies demonstrated that native norms retain a strong influence on teachers and learners alike (Murray 2003; Timmis 2002; Csizér and Kontra 2012), especially in Europe (Muir, Dörnyei, and Adolphs, 2019). Other studies, however, revealed that this may be changing in truly international settings (Erling 2007), among younger people (Ranta 2010; Chand 2009), as a result of academic mobility, passage of time (Adolphs 2005; Subtirelu 2013; Kimura 2017), and in relation to gender, field of study and self-described level of perfectionism (Stanojević and Josipović Smojver 2011).

2.1.1. Attitudes of Croatian business students towards English in 2009

Our earlier research (Kabalin Borenić, 2013, 2019) corroborated some of the findings from the literature: Our students perceived English as a welcome shared language rather than a threat to the Croatian language and culture. While most of our respondents expressed a preference for native English models (American English) and a desire to achieve native-like competence, we recorded a mildly positive attitude towards a culturally neutral variety of English. Our respondents also had a relaxed attitude towards the integrity of the national varieties of English. Taken together, the last two findings might signal a possible shift in our students' learning goals, a development already reported among non-English majors in other contexts (Erling 2004; Kontra and Csizér 2011; Stanojević and Josipović Smojver 2011).

2.2. Language Learning Motivation

The macro-perspective of the socio-psychological approach is useful for researching motivational patterns of whole communities (Dörnyei 2005; Sugita McEown et al. 2014). Thus, our interest in the motivation of Croatian business students in the context of globalization led us to focus on generalized and relatively stable motivational variables, i.e. integrativeness (Gardner, 2001) and its reconceptualization by Dörnyei (2005, 2010).

The decades-long domination of the field by integrative motivation ended as English became the primary language for international communication. In the contexts where English is learnt as a foreign language, integrative and instrumental motives merged (Clément and Kruidenier 1983; Noels et al. 2000; Dörnyei 1994; Mihaljević Djigunović 1998; Yashima 2000; Kimura et al. 2001) while the desire for integration with the global community of English speakers became a regular feature (Mihaljević Djigunović 1998; McClelland 2000; Irie 2003; Dörnyei and Csizér 2002; Lamb 2004; Yashima, 2000). Nevertheless, research continues to demonstrate that a latent factor which would traditionally be termed *integrativeness* still plays an important role in language learning success (Dörnyei 2009; Gardner 2012; MacIntyre, MacKinnon, and Clément 2009; Sugita McEown et al. 2014). Using structural equation modelling (SEM), Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) established that instrumentality is a significant and immediate antecedent of integrativeness. In Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005), instrumental motives, depending on the level of internalization, characterize both the Ideal and Ought-to L2 Self (Csizér and Dörnyei 2005): internalized instrumental motives have a promotional focus and belong to the Ideal L2 Self while extrinsic instrumental motives are associated with the Ought-to L2 Self and have prevention focus. The literature, moreover, suggests that first-hand, authentic experience of communication with the target community has a reinforcing effect on motivation, possibly through a process of internalization of extrinsic instrumental goals (Kim 2009; Yashima 2009).

2.2.1. EFL Motivation of Croatian business students in 2009

Principal components analysis performed in 2009 established the presence of four motivational dimensions in our original sample: integrative motivation, a demotivator stemming from the hierarchy of respondents' current learning goals and two types of instrumental motivation (Kabalin Borenić 2013, 2019). They were related to two temporal frames of reference: future (benefits for future career, travel, and education) and past/present (experienced benefits and self-confidence). The former, termed Expected benefits, was a typical blend of instrumental and integrative motives, characteristic of settings where English is learned as a foreign language for international communication (Dörnyei, Csizér, and Németh 2006; Lamb 2004; Mihaljević Djigunović 1998; Yashima 2000, 2009). Since it also included milieu and vitality of L2 community items and failed to contribute to motivated learning behavior, expected benefits could be likened to the concept of Ought-to-L2 Self. The latter type of instrumental motivation, Experienced benefits, involved positive examples from one's family, personally experienced benefits of using English and self-confidence. Unlike Expected benefits, Experienced benefits was a significant predictor of the invested effort.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Participants

Our research design included two matched groups of business students from the Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB), University of Zagreb: Pre-Erasmus and post-Erasmus groups. The pre-Erasmus group was derived from a subsample of 2nd year or older students (N=382) from the pre-Erasmus era who took part in our original study. The post-Erasmus group was derived from the group of 2nd year or older students (N=118) who had spent a semester abroad in a non-native English country and had used English primarily for communication with non-native speakers. Before taking part in the study, the participants had been learning English between 10 and 16 years and had attended at least two semesters of Business English (recommended proficiency level: B2 or higher).

A total of 118 students in the post-Erasmus group completed the questionnaire but a comparison with the subsample from 2009 (N=382) revealed that the post-Erasmus group was significantly better in terms of Business English grades and overall success. Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM) (Iacus, King and Porro 2011) method was employed to match the two samples in terms of size, Business English grades, and overall grade average. The method yielded two matched groups of 98 students each (Table 1).

Table 1 Participants

	Pre-Erasmus group	Post-Erasmus group
N	98	98
Gender	26 males, 72 females	18 males, 77 females, 3 N/A
Age	M = 21.34, SD = 1.3; range 20 to 29	M = 23.6, SD = 1.62; range 21 to 28
BE1 grade	M = 4.50, SD = 0.72; range 2 to 5	M = 4.50, SD = 0.72; range 2 to 5
BE2 grade	M = 4.44, SD = 0.77; range 2 to 5	M = 4.44, SD = 0.74; range 2 to 5
Grade average	M = 3.67, SD = 0.57; range 2 to 5	M = 4.11, SD = 0.46; range 2 to 5

3.2. Instrument

The same four-part questionnaire in Croatian was used in both groups. The attitudes section was based on the instrument used by Erling (2004, 2007) to establish the sociolinguistic profile of Berlin university students (both English- and non-language majors). It included 20 items dealing with attitudes to language globalization, the spread of English, its causes and consequences, preference for native vs. culturally neutral varieties of English, and respect for national linguistic norms (British or American). The motivation items were adapted from the instrument used by Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh (2006) to explore the effects of language globalization in Hungary, and from Mihaljević-Djigunović's L2 motivation questionnaire (1998) developed for the Croatian context. The questionnaire (36 items) covered eight well-established, generalized aspects of L2 motivation: the integrative dimension, direct contact with native speakers, cultural interest, the affective dimension, instrumental dimension, milieu, vitality of L2 community, and linguistic self-confidence. Both attitudes and motivation items were adapted for self-assessment on 5-point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The invested effort scale (11 items) was developed by the author. It used Likert scales ranging from no or very little effort (1) to a lot of effort (5), and measured effort invested in developing competences and skills required

for or taught in the programme (reading comprehension, business writing, business terminology, grammar, fluency, idiomatic language etc.). The average score for self-assessed invested effort served as a criterion measure of motivated behaviour.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The participants completed the questionnaire anonymously and voluntarily after learning about the study and its purpose. Completing the questionnaire took between 15 and 20 minutes. The attitudes and motivation factors from the original study were also used in the present study. The matched data for the pre-Erasmus and post-Erasmus groups were submitted to descriptive statistics. T-test was used to compare the differences between the pre-Erasmus and post-Erasmus groups. Both groups' data were also submitted to correlation analyses.

4. RESULTS

The results of statistical analyses comparing the findings from the pre-Erasmus and post-Erasmus groups are reported in four sections.

4.1. Attitudes towards English in the pre-Erasmus and post-Erasmus groups

The principal components analysis of the data obtained in 2009 yielded a four-factor solution explaining 44.5% of the variance: Attitudes factor 1 (AF1)–English as a threat, AF2–English as a shared language, AF3–Desirability of a culturally neutral variety, and AF4–Concern for the integrity of national varieties (Kabalin Borenić, 2013, 2019). The same attitudes scale was employed in the post-Erasmus study and T-test results revealed some expected and some unexpected developments (Table 2).

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and t-test results for the attitudes to English subscale in the pre-Erasmus and post-Erasmus groups

	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
AF1-English as threat	Pre-Erasmus	98	1.73	.84	1.35	193	.18
	Post-Erasmus	97	1.58	.72			
AF2-English as shared language	Pre-Erasmus	97	3.66	.74	-3.80	188	.00
	Post-Erasmus	93	4.04	.64			
AF3-Pro neutral variety	Pre-Erasmus	98	3.28	.69	.48	191	.64
	Post-Erasmus	95	3.23	.67			
AF4-Integrity of national varieties	Pre-Erasmus	97	3.07	1.20	-2.12	190	.04
	Post-Erasmus	95	3.43	1.12			

In both groups, English was perceived as unthreatening to the Croatian language and culture while the post-Erasmus group had a significantly more positive attitude towards English as a shared language. At the same time, the unchanging mean score for AF3–Desirability of a neutral variety suggests that the post-Erasmus group had not developed a more positive attitude towards non-native English. Furthermore, the significantly higher score for AF4–Integrity of national varieties in the post-Erasmus group suggests that the group with international experience had a significantly greater concern for the integrity of the national varieties of English (e.g. British or American English).

4.2. EFL Motivation in the Pre-Erasmus and Post-Erasmus Groups

The principal components analysis of the data collected in 2009 yielded a four-factor solution explaining 39.15% of the variance. The four non-situation-specific dimensions of motivation were named as follows: Motivation factor 1 (MF1)–Integrative motivation, MF2–Expected benefits for future education and career, MF3–Demotivating effect of learning English at university, and MF4–Experienced benefits and self-confidence. The same EFL motivation scale was employed to explore the motivation of students in the post-Erasmus group. T-test results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Descriptive statistics and t-test results for the EFL motivation and invested effort subscales in the pre-Erasmus and post-Erasmus groups

	<i>Group</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
MF1 –Integrative	Pre-Erasmus	96	2.82	.58	-1.28	190	.20
	Post-Erasmus	96	2.93	.61			
MF2 – Expected benefits	Pre-Erasmus	97	4.31	.45	-4.54	187	.00
	Post- Erasmus	92	4.58	.37			
MF3 –Demotivator	Pre-Erasmus	96	1.90	.47	1.70	186	.09
	Post-Erasmus	92	1.78	.45			
MF4–Experienced benefits	Pre-Erasmus	98	3.33	.68	-2.32	193	.02
	Post-Erasmus	97	3.55	.64			
Invested effort	Pre-Erasmus	98	3.25	.70	-3.72	189	.00
	Post-Erasmus	93	3.60	.60			

The post-Erasmus group had higher scores for all motivation dimensions but the differences for MF1–Integrative motivation and MF3–Demotivator were not significant. The significantly higher score for MF2–Expected benefits in the post-Erasmus group suggests that participation in the Erasmus program strengthened the expectations that English will be a useful tool for future education and career. Finally, although the difference in the scores for MF4–Experienced benefits was somewhat less significant, the post-Erasmus group had significantly higher levels of motivation stemming from daily usage of English and self-confidence.

4.3. Invested effort in the pre-Erasmus and post-Erasmus groups

The significantly higher score for self-assessed invested effort in the post-Erasmus group suggests that participation in the Erasmus program was associated with investing more efforts into learning/using English in formal settings and otherwise (Table 3). T-test analysis of individual effort items revealed that the post-Erasmus group invested significantly more effort into mastering fluent and correct speech, professional and academic writing skills, idiomatic expressions and colloquial style, professional terminology and spelling (listed from highest to lowest score). Interestingly, the post-Erasmus group invested significantly more effort into skills that are relevant to a native-like mastery of the language and its professional use.

4.4. Correlations among Attitudes, EFL Motivation Types and Invested Effort in the Pre-Erasmus and Post-Erasmus Groups

The results of correlational analyses are presented in Table 4 (pre-Erasmus below the diagonal and post-Erasmus above the diagonal). The most indicative findings are briefly compared in the text below. A positive attitude to English as a shared language in the pre-Erasmus group had no correlation with a positive attitude to a culturally neutral variety of English which, in turn, only correlated with the perception of English as a threat ($r=.26$; $p<0.05$) and the demotivator identified in our study ($r=.62$; $p<0.01$). Also, the perception of English as a threat and the demotivator were moderately negatively correlated ($r= -.26$ and $r= -.45$, respectively; $p<0.01$) with invested effort in the pre-Erasmus group.

While few correlations with attitudinal measures were recorded in the post-Erasmus group, a low positive correlation ($r=.27$; $p<0.05$) between the perception of English as a shared language and a concern for the integrity of national varieties appeared only in the post-Erasmus group. As to the motivation variables, Experienced benefits correlated with Integrative motivation ($r=.39$; $p<0.01$) and with Expected benefits ($r=.29$; $p<0.01$) only in the post-Erasmus group. Finally, the perception of English as a threat and the demotivator had no correlation with invested effort in the post-Erasmus group.

Table 4 Correlations among attitudes, motivation dimensions and invested effort.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 AF1 – English as threat	-	-.21*	.21*	-.09	-.03	-.19	.47*	-.14	-.04
2 AF2 – Eng. as shared language	-.42**	-	.18	.26*	.18	.49**	-.33*	.16	.27*
3 AF3 – Pro neutral variety	.26*	.03	-	.08	.05	.08	.03	.13	-.07
4 AF4 – Integrity of nat. varieties	.07	.10	.01	-	.07	.12	-.16	-.15	.07
5 MF1 – Integrative	-.08	.40**	-.01	-.00	-	.34**	-.35**	.37**	.39**
6 MF2 – Expected benefits	-.22*	.64**	.02	-.07	.52**	-	-.64**	.38**	.29**
7 MF3 – Demotivator	.62**	-.60**	.26*	.09	-.32**	-.57**	-	-.24*	-.19
8 MF4 – Experienced benefits	-.12	.19	-.02	.02	.11	.14	-.43*	-	.36**
9 Effort	-.26**	.44**	-.07	-.10	.45**	.47**	-.45**	.25*	-

Correlations above the diagonal refer to the post-Erasmus group and correlations below the diagonal to the pre-Erasmus group. * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$

5. DISCUSSION

The following discussion revolves around the issues which were identified in our original research (Kabalin Borenić, 2013, 2019) and which prompted the current study.

5.1. Apparent Preference for Native English Norms and Pronunciation Models

The data collected in 2009 suggested that Croatian business students generally preferred native English norms and pronunciation models, which is similar to findings from other contexts (Jenkins 2007; Timmis 2002; Hynninen 2010; Young and Walsh 2010; Csizer and Kontra 2012). Correlation analyses in the present study also revealed that pre-Erasmus students' positive attitude to a culturally neutral variety of English had no correlation with their perception of English as a useful shared language. A positive attitude to a neutral variety only correlated with the perception of English as a threat and the demotivator

identified in our study, suggesting that an interest in a neutral variety might have been associated with negative feelings about English or English language learning. The data collected in the post-Erasmus group revealed that the preference for native English norms and models might be even stronger among the students who took part in international exchange: First, there was no difference between the scores for Desirability of a neutral variety in the two groups. Second, the returning exchange students expressed significantly higher levels of concern for the integrity of the national varieties of English. Third, a positive attitude to English as a shared language correlated positively with an interest in upholding the integrity of national varieties, which was not the case in the pre-Erasmus group.

The apparent preference for a native English model could be explained by research into non-native speakers' reaction to non-native pronunciation. It generally suggests that non-native speakers prefer native accents because they »have internalized the privileged status associated with L1... and the stigma associated with L2 varieties, including their own« (Lindemann, Litzenberg, and Subtirelu 2014, p 172). Such preference for native and natively-like accents may also be a reflection of learners' "lack of awareness of what constitutes natively-like speech..." and inability to "recognize natively-like speech when it is presented to them" (Lindemann et al. 2014, p 185). Research suggests that orientation to a native model is also strengthened by test designs, corresponding teaching materials (Csizér and Kontra 2012; Jenkins 2005, 2007), and teachers' preferences (Tsui and Bunton 2000; Xu, Wang, and Case. 2010; Zacharias 2005).

In the context of research on the attitudes of Croatian students towards expressing their national identity while speaking English, Stanojević and Smojver (2011) found that more proficient pronouncers in their subsample excluding English majors desired to speak like native speakers and preferred to be taught pronunciation by native teachers. Since our sample included only students with high Business English grades and, it would follow, rather efficient pronouncers, it is possible that our respondents also preferred to mask their national identity.

To conclude, the comparison of our descriptive and correlations data from the pre-Erasmus and post-Erasmus groups disprove our expectations. The data from the post-Erasmus group offer no evidence that a semester abroad might induce our students to adopt a more favorable orientation to culturally neutral accents and pronunciation models, at least as far as highly proficient students are concerned.

5.2. Presence and Effectiveness of Integrative Motivation

The score for integrative motivation was practically the same in the pre-Erasmus and post-Erasmus groups. The low moderate score signaled that this type of motivation, although present in both groups, was not strong. In the pre-Erasmus group, it moderately correlated with a positive attitude to English as a shared language and with instrumental motivation related to expected benefits. Finally, integrative motivation had the second highest correlation with Invested effort in the pre-Erasmus group. In the post-Erasmus group, integrative motivation correlated with both Expected and Experienced benefits, while it no longer correlated with a positive attitude to English as a shared language. The correlation with Invested effort was the highest among the motivation variables, suggesting that participation in the Erasmus program does not diminish the importance of integrative motives. Two conclusions can be made as a result. First, integrative motivation continues to play a role among our respondents, which is similar to findings from other contexts (Dörnyei and Csizér 2002; Gardner 2012; Sugita McEown, Noels, and Chaffee 2014). Second, a semester abroad may not have any impact in that respect.

5.3. Dual Temporal Focus of Instrumental Motives and Their Association with Invested Effort as a Measure of Motivated Behavior

As expected, and in line with relevant research (Kim 2009; Yashima 2009), the results of the current study confirmed that spending a semester in an international setting enhanced the strength of instrumental motives deriving both from experienced benefits and from expected benefits. We had expected, moreover, that the level of motivation stemming from experienced benefits of using/learning English in the post-Erasmus group would be even higher, but our expectations were somewhat disappointed. This could be explained by the wording of the items comprising the dimensions of Expected benefits and Experienced benefits in our questionnaire. The majority were adapted from instruments (Dörnyei, Csizér, and Németh, 2006; Mihačević Djigunović 1998) designed primarily for L2 motivation research in primary and secondary schools, meaning that the items reflecting instrumental motives mostly refer to the future benefits of knowing English (e.g., English will be useful in my future education.; English will be useful in my future career.). As a result, the instrumentality items in our questionnaire do not comprehensively explore the present uses of English and the questionnaire may not be sufficiently sensitive to the temporal frame of reference shaping senior students' instrumental motivation: the close temporal proximity of their present and future goals and needs. Our correlation analyses support this conclusion. In the post-Erasmus group, expected benefits had a moderate positive correlation with Experienced benefits, which may signal that the present-future goal distinction is difficult to capture. Amongst the post-Erasmus group, however, Experienced benefits correlated slightly stronger with Invested effort than Expected benefits. The correlation between Experienced benefits and Invested effort in the pre-Erasmus group was also lower. Overall, it seems that a semester abroad contributed to the internalization of extrinsic instrumental motives.

5.4. Limitations

We should also mention the limitations to our study. All our respondents were highly proficient English users. This is primarily because most students who participated in Erasmus exchange and volunteered to take part in our study were high achievers. Consequently, our findings cannot be generalized to the whole population, but they are a good starting point for further research. Second, it is possible that business students do not have a very good understanding of sociolinguistic issues and this may have affected their responses. However, since the questionnaire was in Croatian and the wording of the items in the questionnaire was not strictly professional (e.g., “culturally neutral variant” instead of ELF or non-native variant), we believe that the impact of (possibly) unknown terminology was not decisive. Third, it appears that the questionnaire used in the study was not sufficiently sensitive to the close temporal proximity of our respondents' present and future uses of English.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Research studies on ESP learners' dispositions towards English(es) and motivation to learn English are still relatively rare and inconclusive (Csizér and Kontra 2012; Lindemann, Litzenberg, and Subtirelu 2014). Our own research (Kabalin Borenić, 2019) on attitudes to English and motivation to continue learning English in tertiary education resulted in several intriguing findings that could be explained by our ESP learners' lack of relevant, first-hand

international experience. Since the international mobility of Croatian students significantly increased when Croatia joined the Erasmus program in 2009, we repeated our original study with a group of exchange program participants who had spent a semester in a non-native speaker country and compared the findings. We expected that the post-Erasmus group would be characterized by a more positive attitude towards culturally neutral (non-native) English models, a lower score for integrative motivation, and a higher score for instrumental motivation deriving from experienced benefits than the group who did not participate in the Erasmus program.

Concerning the apparent preference for native English variants, our findings contradict our expectations. Namely, the data suggest a stronger preference for native accents and pronunciation models in the group with international experience. However, given that our sample consisted of highly proficient English speakers/users only, their disposition could be explained by the possibility that their accent afforded them social privilege and was therefore perceived as a valuable investment.

As regards the strength of integrative motivation, there was no difference between the two groups. It seems that the level and effectiveness of integrative motivation were not affected by living and working/studying in a community of non-native speakers while visiting a country where English is a foreign language. Given that our study was conducted among students of business and economics, we may hypothesise that the economic strength and prestige of native English communities has a lasting attractive influence on future business professionals regardless of their international experience or lack of it.

Finally, and in line with our expectations, both types of instrumental motivation (expected benefits and experienced benefits) were significantly stronger in the post-Erasmus group. We had also anticipated that the score for “experienced benefits” in the post-Erasmus group would draw nearer to the high score for motivationally ineffective “expected benefits”, but we were disappointed in that respect. This could be explained by the questionnaire design: It seems that our motivation items, although adapted from questionnaires used in well-known large-scale studies, could not capture the distinction between our senior business students’ present and future goals, i.e. experienced and expected benefits.

To sum up, our analysis revealed that students with international experience of using English in non-native contexts did not demonstrate a more positive attitude to culturally neutral English models than their counterparts without such experience. Rather, they had a stronger preference for native English accents and norms. On the other hand, the scores for integrative motivation in the two groups were similar, suggesting that a semester in a non-native speaker country neither increased nor diminished the attractiveness of native speaker communities. Next, as could be expected, the scores for instrumental motivation deriving both from expectations and from experience were significantly higher in the group with international experience.

Our research identified issues that are specific to the ESP context and provided directions for future research. First, as regards attitudes to variants of English it would be interesting to research the effects of internalization through student exchange in a stratified sample, using both quantitative and qualitative methods and with students majoring in other fields. Second, to explore the comparative effects and strength of instrumental motives deriving from expectations and from experience, we need to take into account that university students’ present and future goals overlap and employ a more sensitive instrument.

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