

UCUENCA

Universidad de Cuenca

Facultad de Filosofía, Letras y Ciencias de la Educación

Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros

Personal Factors that Affect English Language Learners' Academic Performance

Trabajo de titulación previo a la obtención del título de Licenciado en Pedagogía del Idioma Inglés


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Cuenca, Ecuador

2025-10-20

Resumen

Personal Factors that Affect English Language Learners' Academic Performance

Esta síntesis de investigación se realizó para determinar los efectos de los factores personales de los estudiantes (motivación, personalidad del estudiante, identidad y relaciones familiares) en el rendimiento académico en inglés. Se analizaron veinte estudios empíricos para responder las preguntas de investigación. Los criterios utilizados para seleccionar los artículos incluyeron: 1) artículos digitales escritos en inglés o español, 2) artículos con diseño de investigación cualitativo, cuantitativo o mixto, 3) artículos enfocados en el impacto de la motivación, la personalidad de los estudiantes, la identidad y las relaciones familiares en el rendimiento académico, y 4) artículos publicados en los últimos siete años. Para el análisis de datos, los artículos se categorizaron según cada factor personal. Los resultados destacaron cómo diferentes variables personales influyen en el rendimiento académico en el aprendizaje del inglés, ya sea de forma positiva o negativa. Los hallazgos también mostraron que la motivación, la personalidad del estudiante, la identidad y las relaciones familiares están interrelacionadas. Finalmente, se sugiere que futuras investigaciones exploren cómo las relaciones familiares impactan en el rendimiento académico de los estudiantes al aprender un segundo idioma, ya que existe una falta de estudios enfocados en esta variable.

Palabras clave del autor: desempeño académico, motivación, personalidad del estudiante, identidad, relaciones familiares



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Abstract

Personal Factors that Affect English Language Learners' Academic Performance

This research synthesis was conducted to determine the effects of learners' personal factors (motivation, student's personality, identity, and family relationships) on English language academic performance. Twenty empirical studies were analyzed to answer the research questions. The criteria used to select the articles comprised 1) digital articles written in English or Spanish, 2) qualitative, quantitative, or mixed research approaches, 3) articles focusing on the impact of motivation, students' personality, identity, and family relationships on academic performance, and 4) articles published in the last seven years. For data analysis, the articles were categorized according to each personal factor. The results highlighted how different personal variables influence English learning academic performance, either positively or negatively. The findings also showed that motivation, student personality, identity, and family relationships are interrelated. Finally, future research should explore how family relationships impact students' academic performance when learning a second language since there is a lack of research focusing on this variable.

Author keywords: academic performance, motivation, student's personality, identity, family relationships



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Dedications

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, María Remache, and my brothers, Elvis and Franco Camuendo, who embarked on a journey of migration in pursuit of a more promising future. I also dedicate this work to my father, Wilson Camuendo, whose unwavering support, both emotional and financial, has been instrumental for me. Finally, I dedicate this accomplishment to myself, acknowledging the perseverance and dedication I have invested throughout this journey.

Lilibeth Camuendo

This study is dedicated to my whole lovely family and to my teachers and friends who have inspired me to become a better human being. I dedicate this thesis to my mom, Karla; my dad, Andres; my brothers, Daniel and Matias; my grandma, Diana; to all my aunts, especially Andrea and Susie, and to my cousins, especially Romina and Melina. I also dedicate this thesis to my boyfriend and best friend, Santiago, who has been my support during the whole process. Furthermore, I would like to dedicate this work to my best four-legged friend, Nico since he has given me (until now) the best ten years of my life. Finally, I want to dedicate this work to myself since I am the only one who knows how difficult it has been for me to work and study every single day from the very beginning to make all my aims and goals become reality. I consider myself a warrior who has managed to move forward despite adversity.

Nicole Heredia Bonilla

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful to my mother, María Remache, whose constant encouragement and commitment to my academic growth have been unwavering since my childhood. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my father, Wilson Camuendo, my brothers Franco and Elvis, my sister Lizeth Camuendo, and my brother-in-law José, all of whom have consistently provided me with steadfast support. I am indebted to my grandmother, Nicolasa Camuendo, whose prayers and constant wishes for the well-being of her grandchildren have been a source of strength. Special recognition is due to my stepfather, Ángel Gualán, for his invaluable support throughout my academic journey. Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my thesis partner, Nicole Heredia, for her patience, dedication, and collaborative spirit in the development of this work, which has required significant effort.

Lilibeth Camuendo

This has been a long and hard process. I have fallen but learned how to get up with more strength. This would not be possible without all the people who have been by my side during this long process. I want to thank my tutor and guide, Monica, who has been really supportive and patient during all the process. I also want to thank my mom, Karla, because she inspired me to follow my dreams and she helped me to become who I am. I also want to express my whole gratitude to Santiago, my boyfriend, who always reminded me how capable I am. He always taught me to not give up during the process, even when I was too close to surrender, he held my hand and pushed me up. In addition, I want to recognize how thankful I feel with my dog Nico, who has been the most loyal partner from the very beginning, accompanying me until the latest hours. Last but not least, I want to thank Lilibeth, who has been very helpful. I know this work would not have been possible without her.

Nicole Heredia Bonilla

Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has become essential for accessing educational, professional, and social opportunities (Seven, 2020). However, EFL learners face challenges beyond academic performance, involving personal factors such as motivation, personality, identity, and family relationships. Despite their significant influence on the learning process, these individual factors have often been overlooked in favor of academic variables in previous research (Shih & Chang, 2018).

Motivation, for example, is a key element in language learning. Halimi et al. (2020) highlighted that individual differences such as the level of motivation directly influence success in language acquisition. Moreover, Seven (2020) identified globalization as a main source of motivation since students see English as an important tool in a connected world. Personality deeply affects language learning since according to Sun (2019), extroverted individuals tend to achieve more success due to their willingness to practice and socialize.

On the other hand, as Tamimi (2017) has stated, identity relates to how people perceive themselves with certain groups or cultures. In the context of learning a new language, Bailey and Fahad (2021) found that social identity plays an important role because it is closely connected to motivation and the sociocultural context of learning. While some students consider learning English an opportunity to redefine their identity, others only view it as an academic tool, resisting a deeper cultural change. Finally, family relationships are a determining factor in academic performance. Al Saud (2021) stated that the family environment contributes to children's mental, social, and linguistic development, especially at an early age. For instance, positive family relationships can lead to successful academic performance, while conflictive familiar relationships can generate negative impacts.

Consequently, this research aims to analyze the effects of motivation, personality, identity, and family relationships on English learner's academic performance, addressing a critical dimension that has been underestimated in previous studies. Khonbi and Sadeghi (2017) argued that personal factors have been understudied in teaching English as a foreign language, limiting teachers' ability to understand students' learning challenges. This research provides insights

into the personal variables affecting English learning as well as a humanistic perspective to promote an educational environment that considers students' differences.

Chapter one introduces the study, focusing on how personal factors (motivation, personality, identity, and family relationships) affect EFL students' academic performance. It highlights the gap in research regarding personal variables, as most studies emphasize classroom factors. The rationale emphasizes the importance of understanding these personal influences to improve language teaching practices. This chapter also presents the research questions and objectives, aiming to analyze the impact of these factors on learners' academic outcomes and provide insights for more tailored and effective pedagogical strategies.

The second chapter provides the theoretical foundation for the study, exploring the main definitions of motivation, personality, identity, and family relationships and their influence on English language learners' (ELLs) academic performance. It emphasizes the challenges faced by students from diverse backgrounds and examines existing literature to highlight how these factors impact second language acquisition and learning outcomes.

In the next chapter the methodology is presented, describing the study as a research synthesis that gathers and analyzes empirical studies to generalize findings. It highlights how this approach facilitates the classification and analysis of diverse data, offering a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing English language learners' academic performance.

The fourth chapter presents the data analysis and results, examining the findings from twenty empirical articles. The studies were classified according to the four personal factors with five articles analyzed for each factor. A table is provided for each variable, summarizing the key insights and results from the five articles reviewed and offering a clear comparison of how each factor impacts English language learners' academic performance.

Finally, the last chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the analysis of the four personal factors in relation to academic performance. It is emphasized that these factors play a significant role when learning a second language and that they interrelate with one another. Some recommendations for further research are also included.

Chapter I: Description of the Study

Background

Students' personal lives could affect the efficiency with which they learn and acquire knowledge. In this light, Stuart et al. (2013), in their work about how students' social and cultural life histories interact with the field of education, stated that "learners' biographies affect their engagement with knowledge and shape how their learning is understood" (p. 489). Several personal factors could affect learners, specifically English language students, in their learning development; however, this study focuses on the following personal factors: motivation, students' personality, identity, and family relationships.

Sun (2019) suggested that it is necessary to identify the factors that affect the second language learning process. He also explained many factors that can influence language learning, including internal and external factors. Internal factors, also known as individual difference factors, consist of learners' personality and motivation. External factors, referred to as social factors, typically include generational (family relationships) and cultural (identity) factors. These four factors (identity, motivation, personality, and family relationships) are crucial since they affect interaction and skill development (Valenzuela & Portillo, 2018).

Motivation is one of the main factors that could affect foreign language learners. Halimi et al. (2020) mentioned that language learning motivation plays an important role since individual differences influence language acquisition success. The authors also mentioned that language classroom motivation is very important, and knowledge of factors that influence it is very valuable for educators and curriculum designers. Furthermore, Seven (2020) emphasized that English has become a global language; that's why globalization can be categorized as a motivation for learners to learn this second language, since they see English as a crucial instrument.

Students' personality is another important variable that affects learning. Sun (2019) explained that personality factors like extraversion and introversion significantly impact language learning (LL). Extroverted individuals tend to excel in LL due to their optimism, strong social skills, and

desire to communicate, which provides them with more practice opportunities. In contrast, introverts may miss out on these chances due to their less active social engagement, hindering their language learning progress. Likewise, as Halimi et al. (2020) explained, personality can be influenced by the student's cultural identity, which also affects their academic performance.

Identity should not be overlooked since it strongly impacts students' performance. According to Tamimi (2017), identity is how people match up with what they feel similar to. Concerning foreign language learning, Bailey and Fahad (2021) determined that social identity holds a pivotal position in the acquisition of a second language since motivation is intricately linked to identity and the numerous socio-cultural elements that encompass identity. In addition, the study developed by Tamimi (2017) about foreign language learning and identity involving Iranian language learners showed that students acknowledged the impact of English learning on their perception of identity. There were a considerable number of students (almost 60%) who recognized the effect of learning English on their identity as beneficial for acquiring a foreign language, and those learners showed interest in identifying with the linguistic and cultural norms of the target language. Notwithstanding, other students resisted the restoration of their identity through language learning, claiming that they learned English for instrumental (academic) rather than integrative (personal) purposes.

Family relationships are one of the most critical factors that could affect learners' academic performance. Al Saud (2021) commented that a family provides a child with standards, behaviors, and language that help to facilitate communication. It can therefore be said that the family contributes to developing the mental, social, and linguistic proficiency of children, especially at an early age. A good intra-family relationship can positively impact learners' academic performance, just as a bad relationship between family members can have a negative impact. Hann (2017) described those individuals within one's social circle, including family, friends, and peers, can significantly affect learners' motivation by offering encouragement and praise.

Statement of the problem

Khonbi and Sadeghi (2017) explained that despite the importance of the learner's personal factors, this variable has not been taken into account in EFL studies in general. In consequence,

educators have not realized the importance of understanding EFL students' learning challenges. In addition, Shih and Chang (2018) determined that personal complications and attitudes affect the learners' self-efficacy and increase anxiety when learning a second language.

However, most of the studies focus on classroom variables (classwork, homework, participation, among others) and their influence on the student learning process, neglecting personal factors (motivation, student personality, identity, and family relationships), which also exert influence on the learner's academic performance. For example, Shih and Chang (2018) stated that personal factors have a powerful impact on students' performance. The implementation of English in the different courses may be hindered if teachers are not aware of the effects that students' personal variables may have on the learning process of the target language. Abdul-Rahaman et al. (2022) argued that both personal and institutional factors are equally responsible for academic failure among students.

Therefore, this research synthesis intends to analyze the effects of motivation, students' personality, identity, and family relationships on EFL students' academic performance to find out the impact these factors may have on learning a foreign language.

Rationale

Students' personal factors such as motivation, students' personality, identity, and family relationships can be strongly related to language learning and school performance; therefore, researching this area seems to be necessary in the realm of language teaching. According to Valenzuela and Portillo (2018), identity, motivation, and family relationships are features that play an important role in terms of interaction and the development of learners' skills, so promoting them is essential. Halimi et al. (2020) proposed that being aware of learners' backgrounds will help teachers understand the effects of learning a second language on students' motivation and how to plan their teaching according to the information obtained. Furthermore, Rhodes (2017) emphasized that teachers must consider students' identities to design an appropriate second-language classroom environment.

Consequently, this research synthesis aims to determine how learners' personal factors (motivation, identity, family relationships, and students' personalities) can impact the acquisition

of a second language.

Research Questions:

Q1. What are the effects of motivation and students' personalities on English language learners' academic performance?

Q2. What are the effects of learners' identity and family relationships on English language learners' academic performance?

• General Objective:

To determine the effect of motivation, identity, family relationships, and students' personality on English language learners' academic performance.

Specific Objectives:

- To analyze the impact of students' motivation and personality on English language learners' academic performance.
- To examine the impact of students' identity and family relationships on English language learners' academic performance.

Chapter II: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

Personal factors, including motivation, identity, family relationships, and personality, play crucial roles in shaping English Language Learners' (ELLs) academic performance. Likewise, when students come from diverse backgrounds, they can encounter varying challenges in achieving academic excellence, which influences the learning process (Banjong, 2015). To grasp the focus of this research, it is essential to conceptualize and delve into the various terms that shape the study; therefore, this chapter explores information on motivation, students' personality

traits, identity, and family relationships as potential personal factors influencing the academic performance of English learners.

Motivation

Motivation is a term that many experts in the education field have defined. For instance, Azar and Tanggaraju (2020) pointed out that “motivation refers to the combination of the effort plus the hunger to achieve the goal of language learning with good attitudes towards language learning” (p. 324). Dörnyei and Muir (2019), likewise, have defined motivation as a teaching practice that has a powerful impact on promoting learners' involvement with the acquisition of a second language.

Four main types of motivation have been identified: instrumental, integrative, intrinsic, and extrinsic. Cook (2008) defined instrumental motivation as learning a language for practical reasons, such as academic or labor. In addition, the author conceptualized integrative motivation as the desire to learn a second language to integrate into the culture associated with that language; this blend among the L1 and L2 cultures is interconnected with academic success in a foreign language classroom (Cook, 2008). Likewise, Ryan and Deci (2000) explained the other two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is an individual's interest in particular activities that they feel are attractive and pleasant. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is the tendency to participate in any activity with purposes that are not necessarily linked to the activity. For example, an L2 learner can be motivated by certification, career advancement, or financial incentives that are not closely related to learning a language or its culture.

Motivation serves as a driving force behind students' engagement and perseverance in learning English. Self-determination theory posits that intrinsic motivation, characterized by a genuine interest in mastering the language, fosters higher levels of academic achievement among ELLs (Stover et al., 2017). Finally, Lightbown and Spada (2013) linked second language learning and motivation defining the last one as communicative necessities and outlooks within the community and towards the second tongue.

Students' Personality

Personality is another factor that can influence students' development. Al Noor and Khan (2019) conceptualized personality as “those characteristics of a person which are the determiner for a consistent pattern of feeling, thinking and behaving” (p. 54). Furthermore, Azar and Tanggaraju (2020) conceptualized the student's character as the influence on acquiring a second language, which makes learners feel motivated and engaged with their learning. Since motivation and personality are intertwined regarding academic achievement, Al Noor and Khan (2019) stated that personality and motivation are two major factors that influence foreign language learning, since they are interrelated with students' performance in English.

Students' personalities go hand in hand with learners' learning proficiency; therefore, understanding the Big Five personality theory developed by Goldberg (1990) is imperative. According to this theory, there are five main dimensions to describe personality traits: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. Extraversion, also called surgency, includes traits like talkativeness, assertiveness, sociability, excitability, and the choice of words with emotional expression. Agreeableness is a component that involves people's perceptions of certain attitudes, like kindness, affection, generosity, and other prosocial behaviors. The third dimension is conscientiousness, a cognitive process involving thinking and good management of impulses and social behaviors. Neuroticism is defined as an incorrect emotional balance among feelings like anxiousness, irritability, and sadness. Finally, openness to experience proposes an open-minded conduct that allows people to try and experiment with new situations. However, these personalities may not be present in all people at once since a person's temperament is complex and variable (Goldberg, 1990).

Identity

Norton (1997) described identity as constructing and expressing the learners' sense of self through the languages they learn and use. It includes how individuals perceive themselves and others based on the language and culture they are engaged with. The perception of the learners' identity and the target language culture shapes the students' attitudes, behaviors, and interactions within multilingual contexts. Cahyono et al. (2021) defined language Identity as the

unique expression or *private* language used by individuals or groups within a community, which may include specific words or phrases only understood by those within the community, even if they communicate in the national language.

Virkkula and Nikula (2010) divided identity into essential and non-essential categories. Essential identity is defined as how a person perceives herself or himself, and this type of view tends to be singular and stable. On the other hand, non-essential identity is conceptualized as a changing perspective, meaning that identity can be fluid and constantly transformed across different external variations.

Family Relationships

Family relationships are one of the components that impact students' language and academic performance. Rostami et al. (2015) defined family as the base of each person's personality, in the same sense that roots are for trees. In addition, Otero et al. (2021) explained that the learners' cultural background and familiar interrelations can influence how students perform at school. Little (2020) expounded on family language as the language spoken within a family setting. For instance, it is imperative to establish a good familiar environment that positively impacts the learner's proficiency. In this regard, Freire Gómez et al. (2018) described dysfunctional families as an agent that boosts negative attitudes in children, whether academically or socially.

Furthermore, Ródenas Ríos (2018) established a strong correlation between family status and students' academic development when they develop their bilingual skills. Family involvement and communication are fundamental to encouraging students to achieve their personal goals and educational outcomes (Otero et al., 2021). According to Ebuta and Ekpo-Eloma (2014), when children are learning a foreign language such as English, parents must be involved with their kids' education because this parental commitment influences students' academic achievement.

Literature Review

This section examines research studies that report on how motivation, students' personality,

identity, and family relationships affect English language learners' academic performance. The analysis of these factors illustrates the students' learning challenges and difficulties linked with the second language acquisition process.

The Impact of Motivation on English Language Learners' Academic Performance

Motivation plays a significant role in acquiring a second language and developing learning skills. Yu and Shen (2022) argued that learners with mature thinking and behavior can develop motivation during the learning process and achieve a higher English proficiency level. Azar and Tanggaraju (2020) have stated that motivation is related to good attitudes toward language learning and the desire to achieve good language proficiency. This study analyzed the impact of a lack of motivation in the learning process and the findings showed that the teachers' techniques and materials must be creative to keep students engaged with the class since motivation is a very complex factor that influences language proficiency and encourages students to achieve their linguistic goals.

Motivation is important in developing learners' proficiency when learning a second language. Furthermore, motivation and other factors such as personality and cultural background can predict success in learning a language (Rose et al., 2020). Halimi et al. (2020) have defined motivation as a factor that goes hand in hand with the student's attitudes toward learning a language since every attitude the students develop in their academic achievement impacts how fruitful this process is. However, Nevisi and Farhani (2022) argued that motivation when learning English is not only useful for academic purposes but also for social and work motives since learners consider English a tool to have broader possibilities in society.

The aforementioned studies emphasize the influence of motivation on academic performance and second language acquisition. Consequently, instructors, administrators, and representatives should be aware of how these personal variables affect the learners' learning process since the pupils' attitudes are connected to the motivation they feel.

The Impact of Students' Personality on English Language Learners' Academic Performance

Al Noor and Khan (2019) indicated that personality is a variable that determines success in second language acquisition and learners' language proficiency. Zhang and Wang (2023) have analyzed the impact of personality dimensions on language acquisition, concluding that students who show the dimension of openness can receive and solve problems easier when they acquire a new language. In addition, Al Noor and Khan (2019), Rakhimova and Kalygulova (2024), and Cao and Meng (2020) reported that learners with extroverted personalities tend to perform better in their second language skills, especially in speaking. However, Rakhimova and Kalygulova (2024) also argued that introverted students may demonstrate strengths in independent learning tasks, such as writing and comprehension, but may struggle with social engagement.

Personality has been linked to other variables regarding language learning. In this regard, Al Noor and Khan (2019) stated that motivation and personality are the most influential factors in second language acquisition and proficiency. Moreover, Cao and Meng (2020) have pointed out that personality traits are correlated with motivation in the language classroom, promoting higher target language proficiency. However, Zhang and Wang (2023) have stated that it is not certainly known if there is a connection between motivation and personality traits with language performance.

The study conducted by Foroozandehfar et al. (2019) found a significant relationship between personality traits and academic performance since the former can strongly influence English proficiency. In addition, Rakhimova and Kalygulova (2024) stated that personality traits can foster curiosity and willingness to embrace diverse cultural perspectives, which are crucial for mastering a language.

The Impact of Identity on English Language Learners' Academic Performance

Identity is a multifaceted construct that intersects with language learning and academic performance. In recent studies, identity has been increasingly recognized as a dynamic construct shaped by sociocultural and linguistic influences. For instance, Hio Mei (2021) studied

the evolution of Hong Kong English (HKE); he mentioned that HKE serves as a significant marker in the identity of Hongkongers, especially in social movements. Younger generations embrace HKE since they view it as a legitimate expression, underscoring the interplay between language and identity.

Chan (2018) studied how students perceive the importance of learning Putonghua (their second language) in comparison to English (their third language). The study indicated that learners preferred to sound native-like in English to show a high status, while when learning the second tongue, the students only aimed for intelligibility. In addition, Peng and Patterson (2021) stated that cultural identity can influence motivation and language proficiency, critical factors for English academic achievement. Identification with the target language culture can enhance motivation and improve language skills. ELLs who navigate their cultural identities may experience better academic outcomes, as their motivation to engage with the language is bolstered by a sense of belonging to their ethnic group and the educational environment.

Nevertheless, EFL learners can view their identity as a disadvantage to their language learning. In a study about foreign language learning and identity reconstruction, Tamimi (2017) discovered that some Iranian EFL students feel that their lack of familiarity with the English culture hinders their language learning progress. According to the author, this problem with students can be addressed through teaching methods that promote the development of students' various identities and independence. Likewise, the study of Cubero-Pérez et al. (2023) found that participants tended to focus on their shortcomings, resulting in a negative sense of identity as learners. However, their experiences during their time abroad quickly led to more positive views of themselves as foreign language users despite their proficiency limitations.

The Impact of Family Relationships on English Language Learners' Academic Performance

Family is the foundation of the development of human identity that has profound implications for academic performance. Robles-Goodwin et al. (2020) reported that active parenting involvement promotes high academic performance in learning English and also reinforces family relationships. In addition, Al Murshidi et al. (2023) explained that English learners consider that

having parental encouragement is imperative for reaching their learning outcomes. In this study, the parents who participated reported that their involvement in the children's education had increased their academic achievement in learning English. Daniel et al. (2018) demonstrated that familiar involvement is strongly related to the student's motivation to learn English. Also, Chen et al. (2020) concluded that parental influence encourages English learners to have positive attitudes and motivation toward acquiring a foreign language.

On the other hand, Al Saud (2021) studied the family's role in achieving language affiliation inferring that family relationships are a form of connection between children and their native language that maintains the individual's language identity. Likewise, the family is the primary factor in helping the child interact with others and preserve his mother tongue simultaneously. Families strive to deepen the language affiliation of their children from an early age by focusing their attention on the essential identity of the child and teaching them all issues related to this identity feature. According to Robles-Goodwin et al. (2020), bilingual children tend to develop their identity based on their families' culture and the second language culture. The learners' family influences the development of a bilingual identity and their feelings and emotions.

Chapter III: Methodology

This study falls into the category of research synthesis, which focuses on collecting and analyzing empirical research to generalize information (Cooper & Hedges, 2009). A research synthesis may help to classify and analyze findings presented in different studies, allowing a further understanding of the data (Steingut, et al.2022).

Twenty empirical articles were analyzed in this research synthesis. Databases such as Google Scholar, Redalyc, and Taylor & Francis were used to look for the articles. Besides, the following journals were used to find the empirical articles since most of them are peer-reviewed and thus guarantee the reliability of the findings: The International Journal of Educational Research Open, EPRA International Journal of Research and Development, Arab World English Journal, Studies in English Language and Education, Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, The 1st International Conference on Research in Social Sciences and Humanities, Learning and Individual Differences, The Reading Matrix: An International Online

Journal, Cogent Arts & Humanities, European Journal of Psychology of Education, Global Journal of Educational Research, Language Learning Journal, Opuntia Brava, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, English Language Teaching, English Scholarship Beyond Borders, Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research, Revista Colombiana de Psicología, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Psicología Educativa, Contemporary Educational Psychology, Universal Journal of Educational Research, Revista de la Facultad de Educación de Albacete, ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities, Studies in Higher Education, Cambridge Journal of Education, Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics, Asian Englishes, Frontiers in Psychology, Revista de Psicología y Ciencias Afines, Ethnic and Racial Studies, International Journal of Lifelong Education, Journal of Language Teaching and Research; Language, Culture, and Curriculum, Bulletin of Osh State University, CEPS Journal, Revista Electrónica Educare, International Journal of Applied Linguistics, Journal of Latinos and Education; and Psychology Research and Behavior Management.

Furthermore, the following keywords were used for searching the articles: 1) motivation, 2) students' personality, 3) identity, 4) family relationships, 5) academic performance, 6) English language learners, 7) English as a Foreign Language, 8) English learning, 9) enseñanza del Inglés, 10) aprendizaje de un segundo idioma, 11) English as a second language.

The following inclusion criteria were used to select the articles. First, the studies had to be written in English or Spanish since the authors understand and speak both languages. Second, these works could follow qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method approaches. Third, all the articles were obtained from digital platforms according to their availability. Fourth, the articles had to be related to the four main topics covered in this study: motivation, students' personality, identity, and family relationships affecting learners' academic performance. Finally, all the studies had to be carried out in the last seven years to have updated information. Once the data was collected, it was analyzed and categorized according to themes or categories that emerged during the analysis itself.

Chapter IV: Data Analysis and Results

This section analyzes the findings from twenty different empirical articles. The studies were classified based on the specific personal factors addressed in this work: motivation, personality, identity, and family relationships. Five articles were analyzed for each factor.

Table 1

Studies on the Impact of Motivation on English Language Learners' Academic Performance

Author and date	Focus	Context	Research methodology	Main findings
Azar and Tanggaraju (2020)	To investigate students' motivation for learning English as a second language	150 second-year BTESL students from a private university in Selangor, Malaysia	Quantitative method Questionnaire and reliability test	Motivation strongly influences English learning. Proficiency and good academic performance are linked to motivation.
Halimi, Cathy, and AlShammari (2020)	To investigate social, psychological, and cultural dimensions of motivation in English as a second language learning	233 undergraduate students from a private university, Kuwait	Quantitative methods using questionnaires	Motivation has a strong influence on learning English. Extrinsic motivation is common in beginners.

Nevisi and Farhani (2022)	To investigate motivational factors that affect EFL learning among Iranian students from different levels	180 Iranian EFL learners in Gooyesh, Rohroshd, and Safir Language Institutes in Qom, Iran	Mixed-method approach, using instruments such as the Oxford Placement Test, semi-structured interview, and questionnaire of EFL learners' motivational factors	Motivation and personality correlate with academic performance. A positive attitude enhances motivation.
Rose, Curle, Aizawa, and Thompson (2020)	To investigate the relationship between course performance, English language proficiency, motivation, and academic language skills in an English medium instruction (EMI) university context	146 students from an English medium instruction business program at a Japanese university, Japan	Qualitative and quantitative single case study Interviews and questionnaires	Motivation does not always correlate with proficiency. Learners prioritize grades over motivation in some cases.
Yu and Shen (2022)	To explore the relationship between learning motivation in	62 undergraduate students from a university in Jinan City,	Quantitative and qualitative methods. Corpus-data-driven teaching approach	Motivation and personality have a positive direct effect on academic performance and

English and academic performance	Shandong Province, eastern China	using tests and questionnaires.	English proficiency levels.
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Table 1 illustrates that all the studies were conducted with adults from Asian countries. Furthermore, three studies followed a mixed-method approach (i.e. qualitative and quantitative) while two employed a quantitative approach. Regarding the relationship between motivation and academic performance, Azar and Tanggaraju (2020), Halimi et al. (2020), Nevisi and Farhani (2022), and Yu and Shen (2022) agreed that motivation has a strong influence on learning English. Nevertheless, Rose et al. (2020) revealed that English language proficiency is not related to motivation since learners prefer to have language success and good grades rather than being motivated in the language classroom. Azar and Tanggaraju (2020) emphasized that language proficiency and good academic performance are related to motivation in the English class because motivation influences learners' commitment, persistence, and effort throughout the learning process.

Nevisi and Farhani (2022) and Yu and Shen (2022) found that there is a strong correlation between motivation and personality with academic performance in learning English since the results highlighted that students tend to relate their emotions and behaviors with the engagement they feel in the learning process. According to Yu and Shen (2022), students who manage their thinking and attitudes increase their motivation for English learning. In this regard, Nevisi and Farhani (2022) reported that motivation is deeply related to personality since EFL learners acquire the English language efficiently when they have a positive character or attitude in the learning process, which increases the students' motivational levels.

Furthermore, the studies revealed that motivation can change from extrinsic to intrinsic according to the level of learner engagement with the language. For instance, beginners have high extrinsic motivation since they focus on getting good grades or entering a good university or job (Halimi et al., 2020; Yu & Shen, 2022). On the other hand, advanced students felt motivated to learn English to improve themselves or to learn more about the culture than the

language structure or theory; in other words, they have a higher intrinsic motivation (Rose et al., 2020; Azar & Tanggaraju, 2020; Nevisi & Farhani, 2022).

Table 2

Studies on the Impact of Personality on English Language Learners' Academic Performance

Author and date	Focus	Context	Research methods	Main findings
Al Noor and Khan (2019)	To investigate the effects of personality and motivation on second language acquisition	3 participants with bachelor's degrees in Bangladesh	Qualitative method using an interview	Personality traits like introversion toward English learning result in a lack of motivation and low academic performance
Cao and Meng (2020)	To delve deeper into the relationship between personality traits and academic performance by focusing on two specific aspects: global competence and achievement in learning English as a second language	555 second-year students at a large comprehensive university, China	Quantitative method using a survey	Extroverted and open students use English constantly because they want to improve their language skills

Foroozan dehfard, Khalili, and van de Weijer (2019)	To investigate the relationship between EFL personality types, their learning style, and their reading fluency	185 Iranian students at the intermediate level form an institute in Karaj, Iran	Mixed-method approach, two questionnaires including Holland's questionnaire of personality types and Reid's Perceptual Learning Style Preference (PLSP) Survey	Learning styles are determined by personality types, where extroversion affects positively the student's English performance
Rakhimov a and Kalygulova (2024)	To analyze the internal factors that influence students' success in learning English	47 first-year students enrolled in the College of International Educational Programs at Osh State University, Kirguistán	Qualitative and quantitative methods using a questionnaire	Personality traits have a strong impact on language learning. Extroversion improves language acquisition
Zhang and Wang (2023)	To investigate the relationship between English learning motivation and academic performance and to identify the moderating role of certain personality	273 English majors from Chinese universities	Qualitative method using a questionnaire survey	Implementing activities related to the students' personalities encourages learners to stay involved with the class and with the English language,

traits

resulting in higher
academic
development

Table 2 shows that most of the studies were conducted in Asian countries with adult participants. Also, four of the studies used questionnaires, while one article employed an interview as their primary data collection method. All the articles analyzed the influence of different personality traits on English learning since these traits can determine learning techniques and styles.

Most studies determined a relationship between personality and motivation for learning English and achieving high academic performance (e.g., Zhang & Wang, 2023; Cao & Meng, 2020; Al Noor & Khan, 2019). Furthermore, they indicate that personality highly impacts how students implement different learning strategies to learn English. Zhang and Wang (2023), Cao and Meng (2020), and Rakhimova and Kalygulova (2024) stated that learners with an open personality can perform better academically since this personality trait reinforces the curious and conscious part in the English learning process. On the other hand, extroversion is considered the strongest personality trait that influences learning styles and motivation for English academic achievement (Al Noor & Khan, 2019; Foroozandehfar et al., 2019).

The findings of some studies mentioned that it is important to understand personality traits to implement effective teaching strategies. Al Noor and Khan (2019) and Cao and Meng (2020) advised educators to consider introversion, extraversion, and openness to motivate students and promote a collaborative learning environment. Also, Zhang and Wang (2023) suggested that teachers should consider personality traits when designing their pedagogical strategies so learners feel more involved with the English class. Finally, Rakhimova and Kalygulova (2024) emphasized that personality traits like extraversion or openness encourage students to improve their English learning.

Table 3

Studies on the Impact of Identity on English Language Learners' Academic Performance

Author and date	Focus	Context	Research methods	Main findings
Chan (2018)	To compare bilingual learners' choice of English and Putonghua learning targets and examine their language attitudes and identities about these two languages	7 English language and 5 content-area teachers with students from 7-12 grade, Hong Kong	Qualitative in-depth semi-structured focus group interviews	Students do not consider it essential to have a native pronunciation. They prefer to maintain their identity using their mother's accent
Cubero-Pérez, Cubero, Matías-García, and Bascón (2023)	To analyze the effects of identity in the language learning process at the secondary level of education	82 students of secondary post-compulsory education in Seville, Spain	Qualitative content analysis of interviews	As students develop their identity it directly influences their motivation
Hio Mei (2021)	To explore how the different sociological factors have affected the evolution of Hong Kong English	18 participants, 60% of them are graduated students and 40% are still in University, Hong Kong	Qualitative questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews	Students see Hong Kong English as a way to maintain their identity and culture

Peng and Patterson (2021)	To understand the relationship of cultural identity and how it impacts the language learning process for international learners living in the United States	77 respondents, including university students from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and Europe in the United States	Quantitative pool/questionnaire	Identity perception negatively affects the students' motivation to be involved in the target language
Tamimi (2017)	To explore the relationship between English language learning and identity reconstruction from the viewpoints of Iranian language learners	45 intermediate-level learners from a language institute in Ahwaz, Iran	Qualitative. Focus-group interview	Motivation is strongly linked with students' cultural identity. Bilingual identity ensures English learning success

In Table 3 it is shown that most articles focused their research on EFL learners, except for Peng and Patterson (2021) who focused on ESL learners since this study was conducted in the United States of America with foreign participants. In addition, Peng and Patterson's (2021) study followed a quantitative research approach while the other authors used a qualitative design.

Furthermore, some studies found that there is a link between identity and language proficiency. Tamimi (2017) mentioned that developing a bilingual identity guarantees motivation for English learning success. In this regard, Chan (2018) explained that Hong Kong learners find it non-essential to have a native-like English pronunciation since students can achieve a higher level of English proficiency once their identity has been accepted. Finally, Peng and Patterson (2021) reported that cultural identities are related to students' level of motivation when developing English language proficiency.

The analysis of the articles showed that motivation and identity are strongly related in the context of English learning. Tamimi (2017) noted that Iranian students’ motivation is deeply connected to their identity. During the language learning process, the learners focused on integrating cultural elements of English into their identity. Likewise, Hio Mei (2021) explained that motivation to learn English is influenced by cultural resistance and identity expression. In contrast, Peng and Patterson (2021) reported that students' cultural backgrounds can negatively affect their motivation to engage with the target language culture since they tend to remain deeply rooted in their origins and resist exploring new cultures for fear of losing their sense of identity. Similarly, Cubero-Pérez et al. (2023) mentioned that students' motivation is influenced by how they develop their identity as they grow up and the context in which they have lived. In summary, all the authors explained that English learning motivation is affected by how students perceive their own identity.

Following the previous idea, an example of how identity influences English learning is the contrast in the results that Chan (2018) and Hio Mei (2021) found in their research regarding language identity. Hio Mei (2021) discovered that participants established that Hong Kong English is a marker of their identity, which is the reason why they leaned toward maintaining their accents to preserve their roots. On the other hand, Chan (2018) stated that some participants seemed not to be willing to link their identity to the way they speak English (i.e., participants do not want to speak with a Hong Kong English accent) since they felt “ashamed” of their culture and learners think that they speak English “incorrectly” (p. 10).

Table 4

Studies on the Impact of Family Relationships on English Language Learners' Academic Performance

Author and date	Focus	Context	Research methods	Main findings
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Al Murshidi, Daoud, Al Derei, Alhamidi, Jabir, and Sayed (2023)	To investigate the challenges, solutions, and recommendations as seen through the lens of parents of elementary school children in the UAE who reflected on their role in improving their children's performance in the English language subject during and after the pandemic	28 parents of elementary school children in the United Arab Emirates	Quantitative and qualitative 28 semi-structured interviews were carried out	Parents with a lack of English knowledge affect the students' learning since parental support impacts the students' motivation at home and school when acquiring a foreign language
Al Saud (2021)	To determine the role played by Arab families and their identity in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Austria, and Britain to attain language affiliation among their children	120 randomly selected parents from Saudi Arabia, Austria, and Britain	Quantitative and qualitative Descriptive-analytical approach Questionnaire	The learner's family and identity affect the way in which students acquire and develop a foreign language
Chen, Zhao, de Ruitter, and Zhou, and	To examine the effect of learning English as a foreign language in early childhood on children's later	892 participants; students from first and third grade along with their parents, China	Quantitative Questionnaire	Early second language exposure at home increases the levels of motivation in

Huang (2020)	English and Chinese achievement and attitude toward English learning			learning a language and enriches cultural identity in students
Daniel, Halimi, and AlShamma ri (2018)	To identify the learning challenges during the development of motivational intensity and parental encouragement	233 undergraduate students from five different majors, Kuwait	Quantitative Questionnaire	Parental involvement in the student's English learning process increases their levels of motivation and proficiency
Robles-Goodwin, Salazar, Garza, Torres, and Martinez (2020)	To assess the increase in Latino parents' confidence in advocating and supporting their child's English schooling	45 parents from 6 independent public schools in Southwest United States	Quantitative pre- and post-surveys	Lack of English knowledge among Latin immigrant parents can make it difficult for them to participate actively in students' education. Consequently, it affects learners' confidence and motivation

Table 4 shows that most of the studies followed a quantitative approach and only two articles implemented a mixed-method approach. In addition, most of the studies were applied to parents because they are usually in charge of supporting and encouraging their children in their learning

(Daniel et al., 2018). Furthermore, most studies were conducted in Asian countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, China, and Kuwait.

A connection between family relationships and motivation was found since these two factors affect language learning. In this regard, Al Murshidi et al. (2023) explained that learners' motivation levels increase when parents show interest in subjects that are important to their children. It was demonstrated that parents tend to believe that when learning a second language the school must support their children, producing a lack of interest from representatives and a lower level of motivation and academic achievement. To support the previous idea, Chen et al. (2020) stated that parents who motivate their children to learn English from early childhood help them to develop confidence, enthusiasm, and proficiency for their future learning. Similarly, according to Daniel et al. (2018), relatives with a positive active involvement in their children's language learning process increase the levels of motivation to achieve English proficiency.

Three authors linked family relationships and identity and explained how these factors affect English language learning. The findings of Al Saud (2021) and Al Murshidi et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of the family in the children's cultural and linguistic identity development. Al Saud (2021) mentioned that parental influence maintains the mother tongue and cultural identity in a multicultural background. In this way, children can create a stronger base for their identity. Furthermore, Al Murshidi et al. (2023) emphasized that parents' active participation directly influences linguistic identity formation. Based on the previous authors, Chen et al. (2020) mentioned that early exposure to different languages at home grows the children's cultural identity. They found that children who learn different languages tend to develop a richer and more diverse identity. On the whole, the findings of these studies showed the connection between family, language learning, and cultural identity.

The findings of Robles-Goodwin et al. (2020) and Al Murshidi et al. (2023) complemented each other to support the idea that parent's lack of English knowledge and confidence influence children's language learning. Robles-Goodwin et al. (2020) demonstrated that Latin parents who did not speak English could not have an active participation in empowering their kids' education to grow their levels of confidence in their academic development. Likewise, Al Murshidi et al. (2023) pointed out that parents with a lack of English language knowledge face challenges that

can limit their capacity to be involved in their children's education. The lack of familiarity with the language can create insecurity that affects students' active participation in the English learning process.

Chapter V: Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The present study set out to determine the effect of students' personal factors (motivation, personality, identity, and family relationships) on English language learners' academic performance. The analysis revealed that these factors play a crucial role in English learning academic performance; therefore, these factors should be considered when planning lessons since they can help teachers improve and adapt their teaching methods and strategies according to different students' needs and learning styles.

Although some studies found that motivation is not linked with personality (Foroozandehfar et al., 2019; Cao & Meng, 2020; Rakhimova & Kalygulova, 2024), other experts concluded that motivation and personality go hand in hand with the English language learning process (Al Noor & Khan, 2019; Zhang & Wang, 2023). Similarly, one author indicated that learners' family relationships do not affect their motivation levels in the academic field and that motivation is not connected with family relationships (Al Saud, 2021), while other scholars agreed that family relationships are directly linked to motivation (Daniel et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2020; Robles-Goodwin et al., 2020; Al Murshidi et al., 2023). Lastly, some studies did not mention any relationship between motivation and identity (Chan, 2018; Hio Mei, 2021), while others did find such correlation (Cubero-Pérez et al., 2023; Peng & Patterson, 2021; Tamimi, 2017).

As stated above, the majority of findings agree that motivation is linked with all the other factors. In fact, motivation is fundamental for academic success because it influences the students' compromise and persistence along the learning process and goes hand in hand with the students' attitudes toward learning a language, since every attitude the students develop in their academic achievement impacts how fructiferous this process is (Halimi et al., 2020).

An important finding regarding personality is how it affects students' interaction with the language. Openness and extroversion generate a collaborative learning environment and help students develop English skills such as speaking (Cao & Meng, 2020). Extroversion was determined to be the strongest personality trait influencing learning styles and motivation for English academic achievement, since extroverted students are generally more successful in English language acquisition (Al Noor & Khan, 2019; Foroozandehfar et al., 2019). In addition,

learner identity plays a significant role in the English language learning process. Some authors indicate that foreign language affiliation can lead to a loss of the student's native culture (Al Saud, 2021) while others pointed out that the culture of the foreign language and the learner's native culture can blend, forming a new bilingual identity. This blending of cultures not only fosters a unique identity but also creates a positive perspective on the value of being bilingual, as it highlights the practical and cultural benefits of navigating between two languages (Chan, 2018; Hio Mei, 2021; Peng & Patterson 2021).

Finally, family relationships are determinant in motivation levels and linguistic identity. This highlights the necessity of educators identifying these factors to improve academic performance in English learning. Parents must be involved in their children's educational environment, as their interest reinforces motivation levels and encourages learners to stay engaged with the language. This active involvement plays a crucial role in academic success, as it stems from the parents' genuine interest in contributing to their children's language learning process (Daniel et al., 2018; Al Murshidi et al., 2023).

The studies analyzed in this work underscore the interconnected nature of motivation, personality, identity, and family relationships in shaping English language learners' academic performance. These personal factors not only influence students' attitudes and persistence in language acquisition but also highlight the importance of a holistic approach to teaching. Educators should consider these elements when designing and implementing teaching strategies to foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

The findings of this study should not be generalized since the majority of the studies were conducted in Asian countries and the number of studies analyzed for each personal factor is small.

Recommendations

It is recommended that educators implement strategies to foster intrinsic motivation in English learning, tailoring activities to the characteristics and personalities of the students. Likewise, it is essential to promote an inclusive environment that values and respects students' cultural identities, thereby facilitating their connection to the language. Additionally, involving families in the educational process is crucial to provide learners with support and resources to help them boost confidence and motivation. Many articles about the impact of family relationships on students' language learning are not updated; therefore, it is recommended to do further research on how families influence the learners' academic environment since current data is needed.

Finally, taking these personal factors into account can contribute to design more effective and personalized educational programs for teaching English. Educators should adopt a broader perspective on the teaching process, recognizing that education extends beyond tasks and class participation. It is equally shaped by the learners' attitudes, behaviors, and backgrounds, which play a crucial role in their engagement and success. Teachers should remember that they are constantly surrounded by human beings who need extra support and assistance to improve their English language skills. Furthermore, as Halimi et al. (2020) emphasized, students' cultural backgrounds should be understood by English teachers to create tools to learn and assess their motivation.

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