

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO LEARN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY USING INTERACTIVE PLATFORMS AND AUTHENTIC VIDEOS IN ALBANIAN LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

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Abstract

The integration of digital technology in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has become increasingly central to modern pedagogical practices. This study examines the impact of interactive learning platforms and authentic video materials on student motivation to learn English language and culture in Albanian lower secondary schools. A quasi-experimental design was employed with 60 students across two schools, comparing an experimental group that used Quizizz, Kahoot, and authentic cultural videos with a control group following traditional textbook-based instruction. Data was collected through pre- and post-intervention motivation questionnaires, classroom observations, and teacher reflections. In addition, a google forms questionnaire collected responses from 98 English Language Teachers across Albania to measure the impact that ICT Integration has on enhancing students' motivation on English language, communication and cultural competencies. Findings indicate that technology-enhanced instruction significantly increased students' intrinsic motivation, cultural curiosity, and classroom engagement. Authentic videos improved learners' cultural awareness, while interactive platforms strengthened enjoyment, confidence, and willingness to participate. The study confirms the potential of technology as a catalyst for motivational and cultural development and offers pedagogical implications for EFL teachers and curriculum designers in Albania and similar contexts.

Keywords: Technology integration; student motivation; English language learning; cultural competence; authentic materials; interactive platforms; quasi-experiment.

1. Introduction

Motivation is widely recognized as a core predictor of success in second language acquisition (SLA), influencing students' engagement, persistence, and long-term achievement (Gardner, 2010; Dörnyei, 2005). As global educational systems shift toward technology-enhanced learning environments, digital tools have gained increasing attention for their potential to stimulate motivation and support cultural learning in language classrooms. In English Language Teaching (ELT), technology provides authentic exposure, multimodal interaction, and learner-centered opportunities that traditional methods often lack.

In Albania, English is a compulsory subject from the first grade, yet many classrooms still rely heavily on teacher-led instruction and textbook-driven tasks. Limited access to authentic materials and minimal real-life exposure to English-speaking cultures may reduce students' intrinsic interest in the language. Recent educational reforms encourage the integration of ICT into teaching practices, but empirical evidence on the motivational effects of technology, especially in the context of cultural learning, remains scarce.

This study addresses this gap by exploring how interactive learning platforms and authentic cultural videos influence motivation among lower secondary school learners. The research builds on theories of L2 motivation, multimedia learning, and technology-enhanced language learning to examine the extent to which digital tools enhance learners' desire to engage with both the linguistic and cultural dimensions of English.

Research Question

RQ: How do interactive platforms and authentic videos influence student motivation to learn English language and culture in Albanian lower secondary schools?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Motivation in Second Language Learning

Motivation in second language learning has long been recognized as a decisive factor influencing learners' engagement, persistence, and overall achievement. Within the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), motivation is considered one of the most powerful predictors of successful language learning, shaping not only the amount of effort learners invest but also the quality of their interaction with the language. Over the past decades, several influential theories and models have sought to explain how and why learners become motivated to study a foreign language, revealing its complex psychological, social, and emotional nature.

Early work by Gardner placed motivation within a socio-educational framework, emphasizing the importance of learners' attitudes and their desire to integrate into the target-language community. He argued that two major orientations—integrative and instrumental—shape learners' intentions to study a foreign language. **Integrative motivation** is linked to admiration or curiosity for the target community and culture, while **instrumental motivation** refers to practical benefits such as academic success or employment. Gardner also highlighted the importance of motivational intensity, persistence, and learners' attitudes toward the learning environment. These ideas remain central today, especially when considering technological tools that expose learners to authentic cultural content, which can naturally stimulate integrative motivation.

As the field evolved, researchers sought to understand motivation in more dynamic terms. One of the most influential models is Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System, which connects motivation to learners' future self-concept. According to this model, students are motivated when they can envision themselves as successful speakers of the target language. The ideal L2 self—the image of oneself as a competent, fluent English user—plays a key role in encouraging effort and persistence. Technology-enhanced learning environments are particularly effective in activating this future self-image because interactive platforms and authentic video materials allow students to see real-life language use and imagine themselves participating in similar communicative situations.

Other psychological theories, such as Attribution Theory, add further nuance by emphasizing how learners explain their successes and failures. Students who attribute their progress to effort and strategy use are more likely to remain motivated than those who attribute performance to uncontrollable factors. Technology plays an important role here, as interactive platforms provide immediate feedback that helps learners recognize their

own effort and improvement, strengthening their sense of control and competence.

The **affective dimension** of language learning has also attracted significant attention. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis suggests that emotions such as anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation influence learners' ability to process language input. When the affective filter is high—due to stress or lack of confidence, language acquisition is hindered. When it is low, learners become more receptive. Digital tools, especially gamified platforms and enjoyable multimedia resources, help reduce anxiety because they transform learning into a playful and less threatening experience.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), widely applied across educational contexts, deepens the understanding of motivation by distinguishing between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. According to SDT, motivation flourishes when three fundamental needs are met: **autonomy, competence, and relatedness**. Technology is well positioned to support these needs. Interactive platforms offer autonomy through individual pacing and choice; they enhance competence through instant feedback, scores, and visible progress; and they encourage relatedness through collaborative or competitive activities. Research consistently shows that when learners feel more autonomous and competent, they develop more sustained and internalized motivation toward the foreign language.

More recent perspectives emphasize the role of **identity and sociocultural context**. Norton's perspective on identity views motivation as tied to learners' imagined communities and their desire to participate in meaningful social worlds. Authentic videos portraying real cultural practices, communication styles, and everyday situations allow students to connect more deeply with English-speaking communities and imagine themselves as legitimate users of English. From a sociocultural viewpoint inspired by Vygotsky, learning occurs through socially mediated activities, and tools—including digital ones—mediate learners' participation and engagement. In this sense, videos and interactive platforms function as **cultural artifacts** that scaffold learners' understanding and involvement in the learning process.

Contemporary research also recognizes that motivation is highly dynamic and fluctuates during the learning process. Complex Dynamic Systems Theory suggests that motivation changes moment by moment, influenced by classroom climate, task type, emotions, and external stimuli. Technology, particularly gamified tasks, creates short “motivational peaks” that capture attention and sustain engagement. Similarly, the field of Positive Psychology highlights the role of emotions such as enjoyment, curiosity, and interest in shaping language learning. Studies show that enjoyable tasks—like interactive quizzes or culturally rich videos—boost positive emotions, which directly enhance motivation and willingness to participate.

Empirical studies across different contexts consistently demonstrate the motivational benefits of technology. Research shows that tools like Kahoot and Quizizz increase enjoyment, participation, and competitiveness; mobile learning applications promote autonomy and self-directed learning; and authentic video materials significantly enhance cultural awareness and integrative motivation. In contexts like Albania, studies have reported that students show higher engagement and improved attitudes toward English when exposed to multimedia resources. Authentic videos have been found to make cultural concepts more accessible and stimulate curiosity about the target language community.

Despite these advances, scholars acknowledge that motivation remains a complex construction influenced by cultural, contextual, and individual factors. Some critiques note that technology may produce only short-term engagement if not integrated meaningfully into pedagogy. Others highlight the importance of teachers' digital

competence in determining the success of technology-enhanced interventions. Nonetheless, the overall body of research supports the idea that thoughtfully implemented technology can significantly enhance learners' motivation toward language and cultural learning.

Taken together, the literature strongly suggests that technology—especially interactive platforms and authentic videos—holds great potential to increase students' motivation by supporting autonomy, boosting confidence, creating enjoyable learning experiences, and strengthening learners' connections with the cultural aspects of the English language. This forms a solid theoretical foundation for investigating how such tools influence the motivation of Albanian lower secondary students to learn both the English language and its culture.

2.2 Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL)

Technology-Enhanced Language Learning has transformed the landscape of second language education by reshaping how learners engage with linguistic input, interact with authentic resources, and construct meaningful learning experiences. As digital platforms have become more accessible and pedagogically sophisticated, technology is increasingly viewed not simply as a supplemental tool, but as an integral component of language learning environments that can enhance motivation, autonomy, and cultural awareness. The integration of technology into English language education has been supported by diverse theoretical foundations, including sociocultural perspectives, constructivist learning theories, multimedia learning principles, and motivational frameworks such as Self-Determination Theory. Taken together, these perspectives suggest that technology has the potential to create conditions that promote deeper engagement, authentic communication, and sustain interest in language learning.

A core contribution of technology to language learning lies in its capacity to provide rich, multimodal input that aligns with both cognitive and affective needs of learners. Through audio-visual materials, interactive simulations, and real-time communication tools, students encounter language in dynamic and contextually embedded forms that mirror real-world communication. Authentic digital videos, for instance, expose learners to diverse accents, gestures, cultural practices, and communicative styles that textbooks alone cannot capture. This immersive exposure contributes not only to linguistic development but also to intercultural competence, expanding students' understanding of how English operates across different sociocultural settings. Research has consistently shown that such authentic, meaningful input increases learners' intrinsic motivation because it reduces the abstraction of language learning and fosters a sense of relevance and immediacy.

Equally important is the role of interactivity and autonomy in technology-mediated environments. Digital platforms such as educational apps, learning management systems, gamified language tools, and collaborative online spaces allow students to take a more active role in their own learning. Technology supports learner autonomy by enabling choice—learners to select resources that match their interests, adjust the pace of learning, repeat materials as needed, and explore language topics beyond the classroom curriculum. This sense of control is strongly associated with intrinsic motivation, as learners feel more empowered and responsible for their progress. Gamified platforms build on reward systems, progress tracking, and challenge-based tasks to maintain engagement and stimulate persistent effort. When these tools are well-designed and pedagogically intentional, they can stimulate curiosity, reduce anxiety, and encourage students to invest more time in language activities outside formal instruction.

Technology also enhances interaction, which is central to communicative language learning. Synchronous tools such as video conferencing, chat rooms, and virtual classrooms provide opportunities for real-time

communication with peers, teachers, or speakers from other cultural backgrounds. Asynchronous tools such as discussion forums, digital storytelling platforms, and student-generated multimedia projects allow learners to reflect, revise, and collaborate in ways that deepen their linguistic and cultural understanding. These interactions can lead to increased confidence, willingness to communicate, and a stronger sense of community—factors that are crucial for motivation. Importantly, technology can reduce the affective barriers traditionally associated with language learning; shy or anxious learners often feel more comfortable expressing themselves in digital spaces where they have more time to prepare responses and can rely on supportive tools such as dictionaries, translation features, or grammar hints.

From a cultural learning perspective, technology opens pathways for students to experience the English-speaking world beyond the constraints of the classroom. Social media, virtual museum tours, online cultural events, and video blogs produced by native speakers allow learners to observe cultural norms, values, humor, traditions, and everyday life. These experiences make cultural learning more vivid and personal, helping students build connections between the target language and real human experiences. When learners develop cultural curiosity, they often become more motivated to master the language to understand and engage with global communities. This aligns with the concept of integrative motivation, which reflects the learner's desire to connect with the culture and people of the target language. Technology thus becomes a catalyst not only for linguistic development but also for nurturing intercultural openness and global citizenship.

At the same time, technology's motivational impact is strongly influenced by how teachers design learning tasks. Research shows that simply adding digital tools does not guarantee engagement; what matters is pedagogical integration. Effective technology-enhanced learning requires purposeful task design, alignment with curricular goals, and scaffolded support that guides learners toward meaningful linguistic and cultural outcomes. Teachers play a crucial role in curating materials, structuring interactive activities, and ensuring that technology use supports—not replace communicative and cognitive processes. When technology is embedded within principled, learner-centered pedagogies, its impact on motivation becomes stronger and longer-lasting. Finally, empirical studies consistently demonstrate that technology-enhanced English language learning can significantly improve learners' motivation by making the environment more interactive, relevant, and learner-driven. Students frequently report increased enjoyment, greater willingness to participate, more consistent study habits, and heightened interest in cultural content when digital tools are part of instruction. However, the motivational effects vary depending on learners' previous experiences with technology, accessibility, the quality of digital resources, and the authenticity of communicative tasks. These nuances highlight the need for continued research and classroom experimentation to understand how specific technologies influence motivation and cultural learning within educational contexts, such as Albanian basic education schools.

2.3 Authentic Videos in Language and Cultural Learning

Authentic videos—such as interviews, vlogs, documentaries, and cultural clips—offer real linguistic input, natural speech patterns, and cultural practices that textbooks cannot replicate. Gilmore (2010) argues that authentic materials heighten learners' interest because they present language in context. Exposure to cultural norms, values, humor, and daily interactions enhances cultural competence and fosters integrative motivation. Authentic videos—whether interviews, vlogs, short documentaries, news segments, or everyday cultural clips—have become one of the most dynamic tools for bridging classroom learning with the realities of language use. Unlike scripted textbook dialogues, these materials expose learners to spontaneous speech,

varied accents, natural pausing, and real communicative intentions. As Gilmore (2010) emphasizes, authentic materials increase engagement precisely because they embed language within meaningful social contexts rather than presenting it as isolated structures.

Beyond linguistic gains, authentic videos carry a strong cultural dimension. They visually and narratively immerse learners in the norms, values, humor, customs, and routines that shape communication in the target language community. Watching how people greet each other, negotiate meaning, express politeness, or participate in cultural rituals enables learners to internalize pragmatic competence—skills often overlooked in traditional materials. Such exposure supports the development of intercultural sensitivity and fosters a sense of connection with the target culture, strengthening integrative motivation. For many students, seeing “real life” unfold on screen transforms abstract cultural concepts into lived experiences, making the language not just something to learn, but something to participate in.

2.4 Interactive Platforms

Interactive platforms such as Quizizz, Kahoot, and Wordwall have transformed traditional exercises into engaging, game-based learning experiences. Their use of points, timers, badges, music, and friendly competition creates an energising classroom atmosphere where students are eager to participate. As Wang and Tahir (2020) highlight, the gamification embedded in these tools does more than entertain—it boosts motivation, lowers performance anxiety, and encourages participation from even the more hesitant learners. The instant feedback provided after each question helps students quickly identify gaps in understanding while reinforcing correct responses in real time.

These platforms also offer valuable pedagogical flexibility. Teachers can tailor activities to different proficiency levels, making them ideal for differentiated instruction. Customized quizzes, interactive puzzles, and adaptive question types support varied learning preferences, enabling both practice and consolidation of skills. Additionally, the data analytics built into these platforms give teachers immediate insight into student performance, helping them conduct formative assessments efficiently. In this way, interactive platforms function not only as engaging learning tools but also as strategic instruments for monitoring progress and personalising support.

2.5 Research Gaps

Despite global research, gaps remain in the Albanian context:

- Limited empirical studies using controlled experiments in compulsory education.
- Minimal focus on technology’s impact on cultural learning, not only linguistic skills.
- Lack of research combining interactive platforms with authentic video materials.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design with pre-test and post-test measures to investigate the effects of ICT-enhanced instruction on student motivation in English language learning. Quasi-experimental designs are particularly suitable in educational research when random assignment to groups is impractical or impossible, allowing for meaningful comparisons between naturally existing classes while maintaining a structured methodological approach.

Two groups of participants were involved: an experimental group, which received technology-integrated lessons using authentic videos, gamified platforms, and collaborative tasks, and a control group, which followed conventional textbook-based instruction with teacher-led explanations. The pre-test/post-test structure enabled the measurement of motivational changes over time, providing both within-group comparisons (pre-test vs. post-test) and between-group comparisons (experimental vs. control group).

The design was chosen to capture the causal influence of ICT-mediated activities on motivation, while also accounting for baseline differences in learner characteristics. By incorporating multiple data sources—including questionnaires, classroom observations, and teacher reflective notes, the study employed triangulation to strengthen the validity and reliability of the findings. This approach allowed the research to examine not only whether ICT integration influenced motivation but also how it manifested in classroom behaviours, affective engagement, and cultural awareness.

The quasi-experimental framework also accommodated the practical constraints of school scheduling and classroom logistics, ensuring that instructional interventions could be delivered consistently while maintaining the integrity of the research design. In this way, the study balanced methodological rigor with ecological validity, providing a realistic and robust evaluation of technology-enhanced pedagogical approaches in Albanian English language classrooms.

In addition, a google forms questionnaire was disseminated to English Language Teachers across Albania and it collected 98 responses from English teachers mainly measuring the impact of ICT integration on **Student's Motivation, Linguistic, Cultural Competencies**.

3.2 Participants

The study involved **60 students** from two 9 grades in two different nine-year schools in Tirana. Participants were 14 years old. Both, the experiment and control group were using **Spark 4**, by Express Publishing and the module observed/experimented during the study period was “**Strange but true**”.

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Motivation Questionnaire

The motivation questionnaire used in this study is based on the well-established framework developed by Dörnyei & Taguchi (2010), which draws on the **L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS)**. This framework views motivation not simply as a single internal drive, but as a combination of future-oriented self-belief, personal goals, and learners' immediate learning experiences. The questionnaire remains one of the most widely used and validated instruments in second language acquisition research, making it a solid foundation for exploring motivational factors among English language learners in the Albanian context.

The questionnaire included items on:

- enjoyment
- effort and persistence
- cultural curiosity
- confidence
- relevance and value

3.3.2 Classroom Observation

Classroom observations were conducted to complement the questionnaire data and provide a richer understanding of how motivation manifested in real instructional settings. Observations focused on al,

emotional, and interactional indicators that are widely associated with learner engagement and motivational states in language learning environments. These indicators allowed for a systematic and consistent assessment of student across different lessons and contexts.

On-task was used to evaluate the extent to which students remained focused on the assigned learning activities, such as completing digital tasks, interacting with ICT tools, or participating in teacher-led exercises. High levels of on-task behavior typically reflect sustained attention and intrinsic engagement, while frequent off-task actions may signal frustration, boredom, or low motivation.

Participation frequency captured how often students contributed during classroom discussions, responded to teacher questions, or interacted with digital platforms. Frequent participation suggests confidence, interest, and a willingness to engage with the material, whereas limited participation may indicate anxiety, low proficiency, or reduced motivation.

Voluntary responses were observed to assess spontaneous learner involvement beyond what was teacher-directed. This included students raising their hands without being prompted, offering comments or examples during discussions, or initiating interaction with ICT tools. Voluntary contributions are considered strong indicators of intrinsic motivation and learner autonomy.

Enthusiasm and affect were also evaluated through observable cues such as smiles, positive tone of voice, body language, and excitement when using technology or engaging in communicative tasks. These emotional indicators provide valuable insight into learners' attitudes toward the learning process and help reveal whether ICT-enhanced activities support a more enjoyable and motivating classroom environment.

Finally, peer collaboration was monitored to understand how learners interacted with one another during pair work, group projects, or digital collaborative tasks. Effective collaboration—characterized by mutual support, shared problem-solving, and active communication—often correlates with higher motivation and a positive classroom climate.

By examining these indicators collectively, the classroom observations offered a nuanced picture of how motivation functioned within ICT-integrated English lessons and how technology influenced engagement, behavior, and interpersonal dynamics.

3.3.3 Teacher Reflective Notes

Teacher reflective notes were incorporated as an additional qualitative data source to capture insights that may not be immediately visible through structured observation or questionnaire responses. These notes provided a professional, insider perspective on the daily dynamics of the classroom, offering valuable contextual understanding of students' motivational patterns and interactions with ICT-enhanced language learning activities.

The reflective entries documented overall **classroom climate**, including the emotional tone, group cohesion, and the general atmosphere during lessons. Teachers commented on whether the environment felt supportive, relaxed, and conducive to participation, or whether tensions, distractions, or disengagement were present. Such reflections help situate learner behaviors within the broader social-emotional context of the classroom rather than interpreting motivation solely through isolated behaviors.

Teachers also recorded **engagement levels**, noting how diverse types of tasks—particularly those involving digital tools, multimedia resources, or interactive platforms—affected students' attention and involvement. These reflections included observations on which activities generated high enthusiasm, which led to passive

engagement, and how individual students responded differently to ICT-mediated learning. This qualitative dimension enriches the understanding of how technology influenced motivation beyond what quantitative indicators alone could capture.

In addition, the reflective notes monitored **cultural awareness indicators**, such as students' reactions to authentic videos, culturally rich content, or discussions involving intercultural perspectives. Teachers highlighted moments where students demonstrated curiosity, empathy, or increased understanding of cultural norms in English-speaking contexts. These insights were particularly important given the study's focus on motivation and the role of culturally embedded ICT resources in shaping learners' attitudes and identities.

Overall, the teacher reflective notes served as a vital triangulation tool, providing nuanced, narrative-rich accounts that complemented the more structured data sources. They offered a deeper understanding of how ICT integration influenced classroom interactions, learner motivation, and cultural learning processes across diverse instructional settings.

3.4 Procedure

The study followed a six-week experimental design aimed at examining the effects of ICT-integrated instruction on learner motivation in English language classrooms. The procedure involved both an experimental group, which received technology-enhanced instruction, and a control group, which followed traditional teaching approaches.

Week 1 involved administering the pre-test motivation questionnaire, adapted from Dörnyei & Taguchi (2010). This initial measure established a baseline for students' motivational profiles, allowing for comparisons before and after the intervention. Students completed the questionnaire during regular class time to ensure consistency and to minimize external influences.

Weeks 2–5 constituted the intervention phase, during which the two groups followed different instructional approaches.

Experimental Group:

Students in the experimental group participated in a structured series of ICT-mediated activities designed to boost engagement and motivation.

- *Quizizz and Kahoot* were used weekly to reinforce vocabulary (e.g. **bizarre coincidence, insurance company, spare parts, assassinate, brave act etc**) and grammar (**past simple, past continuous, present perfect used to; -ing-ed adjectives; phrasal verb turn etc**) through game-based learning, integrating elements of competition, immediate feedback, and visual stimuli.
- *EdPuzzle and YouTube authentic videos* such as a video from British Council "**Weird things we do in Britain**" introduced thematic content related to British cultural practices, accents, values, and social norms. Students engaged with these videos through embedded questions, comprehension prompts, and guided listening tasks (the teacher paused the videos at key points for learners to predict what happens next)
- *Group discussions and collaborative tasks* allowed learners to process cultural information, exchange ideas, and articulate personal reactions, thereby linking linguistic development with cultural awareness and communicative practice. Cultural reflection prompts, used by the teacher, such as "How does this tradition compare with life in Albania?"

Control Group:

To isolate the effect of ICT integration, the control group followed a traditional instruction model.

- Students were asked to read the texts and try to guess the meaning of the new words through the context and underline them. The teacher wrote some key new words in the blackboard with their pronunciation and translation. They completed *textbook-based exercises* for vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. Grammar concepts were also explained by the teacher by writing examples to the blackboard.
- Lessons relied on *teacher-led explanations*, focusing on explicit instruction, mechanical drills, and controlled practice. Few students were willing to answer the brainstorm questions.
- *No digital materials or multimedia content* were used. This ensured that any changes in motivation could be attributed to the presence or absence of technology-enhanced pedagogy.

Week 6 concluded the study with a post-test motivation questionnaire and classroom observations.

The post-test allowed for direct comparison with the pre-test results, enabling the measurement of motivational change over the intervention period. Classroom observations, conducted during this final week, provided qualitative insights into behavioral and affective indicators of motivation, complementing the quantitative data and offering a richer picture of how the intervention influenced learner engagement.

3.5 Data Analysis

A combination of quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques was used to examine the impact of the ICT-integrated intervention on student motivation.

- **Descriptive statistics** (means, standard deviations, frequencies) were first computed to summarize students' motivation scores before and after the intervention. These statistics provided an overview of general trends in each group.
- **Paired-sample tests** were used to assess *within-group changes* from pre-test to post-test. This analysis determined whether each group—experimental and control separately—experienced statistically significant shifts in motivation over time.
- **Independent sample tests** were conducted to compare *between-group differences*, particularly whether the experimental group demonstrated greater motivational gains than the control group. This analysis was crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of ICT-enhanced instruction relative to traditional methods.
- **Qualitative thematic analysis** was applied to classroom observation notes and teacher reflections. Codes were generated to identify recurring patterns related to engagement, participation, affect, cultural curiosity, and responses to ICT tools. Themes emerging from this process provided an interpretive layer explaining how and why motivational changes occurred.

Together, these analytical methods offered a comprehensive understanding of both the quantitative impact and the qualitative dynamics of ICT integration in English language teaching.

4. Results

The quantitative analysis revealed clear differences in motivational development between the experimental and control groups over the six-week intervention period. Results from the pre- and post-test questionnaires demonstrated that students exposed to ICT-integrated instruction experienced a substantially greater increase

in overall motivation compared to those taught through traditional methods.

Across the intervention, the experimental group showed an average motivation increase of 18%, indicating notable improvement in learners' attitudes, engagement, and future-oriented L2 self-concepts. This rise suggests that the combination of authentic videos, gamified platforms, and culturally enriched tasks had a meaningful positive impact on students' motivational trajectories. In contrast, the control group exhibited a modest increase of only 4%, implying that conventional textbook-based instruction produced limited motivational gains over the same period.

Statistical tests confirmed that the differences between the two groups were significant across several motivational domains. Learners in the experimental group reported significantly higher levels of enjoyment ($p < .01$), demonstrating that technology-enhanced activities created a more stimulating and emotionally positive learning environment. Similarly, scores related to cultural curiosity also increased significantly ($p < .01$), highlighting the strong influence of authentic multimedia resources in sparking interest in English-speaking cultures and increasing integrative motivation.

Furthermore, learners in the experimental group showed a significant rise in willingness to participate ($p < .05$), reflecting increased confidence, reduced performance anxiety, and greater readiness to engage actively during lessons. This finding aligns with classroom observations of more frequent voluntary responses and collaborative interactions during ICT-based activities.

Overall, the quantitative findings suggest that integrating technology, authentic input, and interactive platforms can meaningfully enhance multiple dimensions of learner motivation, whereas traditional instruction alone may not provide sufficient stimuli to produce comparable motivational growth.

4.2 Observation Results

Classroom observations conducted throughout the intervention, particularly during Weeks 5 and 6, provided rich qualitative evidence supporting the quantitative findings. Observed behaviors in the experimental group indicated clear shifts in learner engagement, emotional involvement, and cultural responsiveness because of the ICT-enhanced instructional approach. These behavioral indicators complemented the motivational gains captured by the questionnaire data and offered a more nuanced understanding of how technology influenced classroom dynamics.

A notable change was **the increase in voluntary participation**, with students more frequently raising their hands to answer questions, initiating contributions during discussions, and demonstrating a willingness to share interpretations of digital tasks and video content. This shift suggested heightened intrinsic motivation and growing confidence, attributes that were less evident in the control group.

Students in the experimental group also showed **more enthusiastic responses during game-based activities**, especially when using platforms such as Kahoot and Quizizz. Their animated facial expressions, competitive excitement, and active involvement reflected high levels of enjoyment and engagement. These reactions aligned closely with the quantitative finding that enjoyment significantly increased for this group. Additionally, **higher levels of peer collaboration were observed during video-based tasks**, including pair and group work centered on EdPuzzle activities and cultural themes embedded in YouTube videos. Learners engaged in cooperative meaning-making, negotiated interpretations, and supported one another during comprehension tasks. This behavior indicated positive social dynamics and a strengthened classroom climate—an important marker of the “L2 Learning Experience” component of motivation.

Another significant observation was a **reduction in off-task behavior** among the experimental group compared to the control group. Students appeared more focused, attentive, and behaviorally regulated when engaged in ICT-mediated activities. This suggests that digital tools not only captured learners' interest but also helped sustain concentration over longer periods.

Finally, there was a marked **increase in student references to cultural elements featured in the videos**. Learners demonstrated curiosity about British and American customs, idiomatic expressions, and everyday life. They spontaneously discussed cultural comparisons, asked questions about lifestyle differences, and used culturally rich vocabulary encountered in the videos. This behavior aligned with the quantitative finding of increased cultural curiosity and provided clear evidence that authentic multimedia content helped cultivate cultural awareness and integrative orientation.

Taken together, the observational data revealed substantial enhancements in motivation-related behaviors, confirming that ICT integration promotes deeper engagement, emotional involvement, and cultural responsiveness in English language learning environments. These improvements were consistently more pronounced in the experimental group, underscoring the pedagogical value of technology-mediated approaches.

4.3 Teacher Reflections

Teacher reflective notes provided valuable qualitative insights into the classroom dynamics and the impact of ICT-enhanced instruction on student motivation and engagement. Across the six-week intervention, teachers consistently observed positive shifts in both affective and behavioral aspects of learning, complementing the findings from questionnaires and classroom observations.

One of the most prominent themes reported by teachers was **students' strong interest in cultural topics**. Lessons that incorporated authentic videos on festivals, daily habits, and school life in English-speaking countries elicited curiosity and active discussion. Teachers noted that learners frequently asked questions, shared personal comparisons with their own cultural experiences, and referenced cultural content spontaneously during group tasks. This heightened cultural awareness not only reinforced linguistic learning but also appeared to strengthen integrative motivation, encouraging students to envision themselves as competent users of English in authentic contexts.

Teachers also highlighted the **positive emotional climate generated by gamified tasks**. Activities using platforms such as Quizizz and Kahoot created excitement, enjoyment, and a sense of friendly competition. Learners were often observed smiling, laughing, and supporting one another during gameplay, which contributed to a classroom atmosphere conducive to participation and reduced anxiety. Teachers emphasized that this emotional engagement was particularly important for sustaining motivation throughout the lesson and for encouraging even reluctant or less confident students to contribute.

Another important observation concerned **the engagement of low-performing students**. Teachers reported that students who typically remained passive in traditional classrooms demonstrated increased initiative when participating in ICT-based activities. These learners contributed voluntarily, interacted with peers during collaborative tasks, and expressed satisfaction in completing game-based or video-related exercises. Teachers interpreted this as evidence that technology-mediated tasks can lower barriers to participation, providing scaffolding that motivates students across a range of proficiency levels.

Overall, teacher reflections reinforced the quantitative and observational findings by illustrating how ICT-

integrated instruction supports not only behavioral engagement but also affective and cultural dimensions of motivation. Teachers concluded that authentic content, interactive platforms, and gamified activities collectively foster a more inclusive, stimulating, and culturally enriching learning environment, where students are motivated to actively participate and engage with both language and culture.

4.4 What do English teachers say about ICT and Student motivation?

To measure teacher's perception on the impact of ICT integration in the motivation of students to learn English language, an google forms questionnaire was disseminated to many English teachers across Albania and 98 % of them responded. The results obtained are illustrated below:

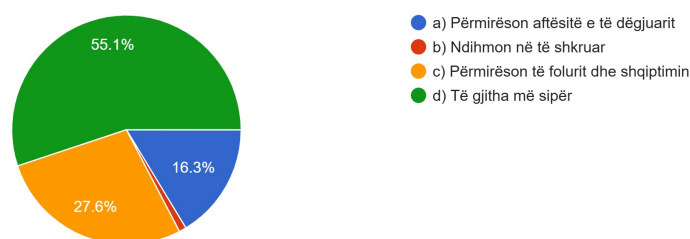
The Impact of Technology on Linguistic and Cultural Competencies

Regarding the impact of technology on students' linguistic and cultural competencies, most teachers (55%) reported that the use of technology has contributed to the improvement of students' language skills, including speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Meanwhile, 93% of respondents indicated that students have developed better knowledge of different cultures, which positively influences their overall personal and educational development. With respect to student motivation, an increasingly significant challenge for the education system, teachers observe that the use of technology provides substantial support in enhancing students' motivation. Specifically, 68% noted that lessons become more comprehensible and more engaging using technology, thereby motivating students to learn more effectively.

Figure 1 Impact of ICT on Linguistic Competencies

12.Si ndikon përdorimi i teknologjisë në zhvillimin e aftësive gjuhësore të nxënësve?

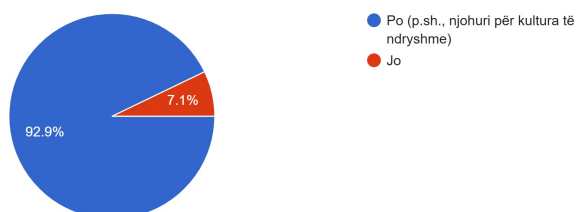
98 responses



The primary aim of using technology is to improve teaching and learning outcomes; therefore, teachers' perceptions of the impact of technology on students' language skills are of particular interest. According to the findings, 55% of teachers observe improvements in students' speaking, listening, and writing skills, followed by 28% who report improvement only in speaking skills, and 16% who note improvement in listening skills. These results indicate that students can enhance all four language skills using technology, depending on the level of their exposure to it and the way it is integrated into classroom practice.

Figure 2 The positive impact of technology on students' cultural competencies

13. A keni vënë re ndonjë ndikim pozitiv të teknologjisë në aftësitë kulturore të nxënësve?
98 responses



Regarding the impact of technology on the development of students' cultural competencies, an almost unanimous 93% of teachers believe that technology has had a positive effect on improving students' cultural skills. This is a significant finding, as it highlights the role of technology in preparing the younger generation for the global labor market, as well as in fostering positive changes in the country through the adoption and practice of best models in civic and professional life.

Figure 3 The impact of technology on increasing students' motivation during lessons

14. Sipas mendimit tuaj, si ndikon përdorimi i teknologjisë në motivimin e nxënësve për të mësuar gjuhën angleze?
98 responses



Motivation is the internal drive that enables each student to acquire new knowledge; however, it can also be enhanced through the methods that teachers employ in the classroom. Teachers were asked about the impact

of technology on increasing students' motivation during lessons. According to the findings, 68% of teachers believe that, due to the use of technology, lessons become more comprehensible and engaging for students, while 26% consider that technology contributes to the improvement of students' technological skills.

An increasing challenge for teachers is the reduction of students' attention span during class time; therefore, these results indicate that, regardless of students' intrinsic motivation, the use of technology in the classroom helps students understand lessons more effectively and feel more engaged. As a result, students are less likely to perceive school with fear related to task completion and are more likely to attend classes with a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction.

5. Discussion

5.1 Technology as a Motivational Driver

Technology functions as a powerful motivational driver in second language learning because it reshapes how learners experience the language, interact with content, and perceive their own progress. The integration of digital tools introduces elements of novelty, autonomy, relevance and personal agency—factors that are central to modern motivational theories such as Self-Determination Theory and Expectancy–Value Theory. When learners encounter language through interactive platforms, authentic videos, gamified tasks or collaborative digital projects, they often feel that the learning process becomes more meaningful and enjoyable. This emotional engagement is key: motivation increases when learners feel that the learning environment is dynamic, stimulating and aligned with their personal interests.

A major reason technology boosts motivation is that it creates immediate and tangible learning experiences. Unlike traditional materials, digital tools provide real-time feedback, visual progress indicators and interactive pathways that help students see the results of their effort. This supports learners' sense of competence, one of the core psychological needs that fuel intrinsic motivation. Progress bars, badges, challenge levels, or instant feedback on quizzes help students perceive improvement, which strengthens their belief that they can succeed. When learners feel competent, they are more willing to take risks, communicate in English and persist in challenging tasks.

Another motivational force comes from the autonomy that technology enables. Learners can choose what to watch, which activities to complete, how fast to work and how often to repeat content. This sense of control transforms the learning experience from teacher-led to learner-driven, making learners active agents in their own progress. Autonomy is strongly linked with higher motivation, especially among young learners, who prefer environments that allow exploration and personal choice. Digital platforms also allow learners to individualize their learning paths by selecting topics that interest music, sports, travel, science, thus connecting language learning to their personal worlds.

Technology also enhances relatedness, another central component of motivation, by facilitating communication and social engagement. Virtual discussions, collaborative tasks, video exchanges with peers or online communities allow learners to interact meaningfully in English. When students feel part of a learning community—whether in class or online—they are more likely to participate, help others, share ideas and express themselves. This sense of belonging reinforces motivation and reduces anxiety, especially for shy learners who may feel more comfortable expressing themselves through digital communication tools.

Furthermore, technology introduces real-life relevance into the learning process. Authentic videos, cultural documentaries, podcasts, social media posts and digital storytelling expose learners to real English as it is used

in global contexts. This relevance increases integrative motivation: students become more curious about English-speaking cultures and more interested in learning the language as a tool for communication, connection and understanding. When learners see English as meaningful beyond the classroom, their motivation becomes deeper and more sustainable.

Finally, technology supports a learning climate that feels modern and connected to students' everyday lives. Young learners already interact with technology in entertainment, communication and social networking; bringing similar tools into the classroom reduces the psychological distance between "school tasks" and "real life." This alignment increases the perceived value of learning English and helps learners view language learning not as an academic requirement, but as an engaging activity that fits naturally into their daily experiences.

5.2 Impact on Cultural Learning

Authentic videos had a noticeable impact on students' cultural learning by exposing them to real-life situations, social s and everyday communication practices from English-speaking contexts. Through visual and auditory cues—accents, gestures, humor, routines, celebrations and social norms—students developed a clearer sense of how language and culture intersect in actual use. This exposure stimulated curiosity and prompted learners to compare cultural elements with their own experiences, leading to meaningful classroom discussions where they referenced cultural similarities and differences with increasing confidence. The authenticity of the materials made cultural content more accessible and emotionally engaging, helping students understand that learning a language extends beyond grammar and vocabulary to include understanding people, perspectives and ways of life. As students identified cultural references and incorporated them into their conversations, it became evident that the videos encouraged deeper intercultural awareness and fostered a more integrative orientation toward learning English, strengthening both their cultural competence and their motivation to use the language meaningfully.

5.3 Alignment with prior research

The findings of this study align closely with previous research demonstrating the motivational and pedagogical benefits of authentic materials and technology-enhanced instruction. Consistent with Gilmore (2010), authentic videos provide learners with realistic linguistic input and cultural context, which heightens engagement and encourages active participation. Similarly, Chapelle (2017) emphasizes that digital tools not only facilitate interaction and autonomous learning but also support meaningful connections between language and culture, fostering both linguistic and intercultural competence. By showing that interactive platforms and authentic video materials significantly enhance motivation and cultural curiosity, the present study reinforces these established findings while extending them to the Albanian educational context, where the integration of technology into language classrooms is still emerging. These results suggest that even in settings with limited prior experience in digital pedagogy, thoughtfully designed technology-enhanced activities can produce measurable improvements in learner engagement, motivation, and cultural awareness, confirming the relevance of international research while addressing local educational needs.

6. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the integration of interactive platforms and authentic cultural videos can substantially enhance students' motivation to learn both the English language and its associated culture. By providing rich, multimodal input and opportunities for interaction, technology transforms the learning

experience into one that is engaging, relevant, and learner-centered, supporting autonomy, competence, and relatedness—key drivers of intrinsic motivation. Authentic videos expose students to real-life language use, cultural norms, and communicative practices, fostering curiosity, intercultural awareness, and meaningful engagement with content that goes beyond traditional textbook instruction. Interactive platforms and gamified tools further sustain motivation by providing immediate feedback, visible progress, and opportunities for autonomous and collaborative learning, creating a learning environment that mirrors the dynamic, participatory nature of real-world communication. The study’s findings align with prior research, confirming that technology-enhanced materials increase both motivation and cultural learning while also extending these insights to the Albanian educational context, where systematic technology integration remains in its early stages. Overall, the results suggest that incorporating digital tools and authentic multimedia into English language teaching can not only enhance student engagement and enjoyment but also cultivate deeper linguistic, cultural, and cognitive skills. These outcomes highlight the potential for teachers to adopt multimedia and gamified strategies more consistently and underscore the need for broader investment in technology-enhanced pedagogy within Albanian schools to support sustained motivation and effective language learning.

7. Limitations and Future Research

- Short intervention period
- Limited sample size

8. Implications for Practice

- Teachers should integrate short authentic videos weekly to support cultural understanding.
- Gamified learning platforms should be used regularly to build vocabulary and sustain motivation.
- Curriculum designers should incorporate ICT-based cultural components across grades.
- Schools should support ICT training for teachers to enhance pedagogical use of technology.

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Google Forms Questionnaire with 98 English Language Teacher respondent in Albania