

**JELENA V. GRUBOR<sup>1</sup>**

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NOVI PAZAR  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOLOGICAL SCIENCES  
STUDY PROGRAM – ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

## WHAT MAKES UP THE ATTITUDE TO LEARNING ENGLISH: EFLS-ALE SCALE

Attitudes have long been measured due to their predictive values; consequently, the paper deals with EFL students' attitudes to learning English (ALE). Since it is vital that the attitude construct be distinguished from other individual variables (e.g. affective variables such as motivation), the investigation into attitudes and their structure must be explored more thoroughly prior to taking the next step of establishing the link between attitudes and behaviour—herein achievement in English. Consequently, the main aims of the study were: (1) to test the validity of the employed scale (EFLS-ALE), (2) to examine the attitude structure, (3) to determine the participants' general attitude to behaviour (GA). The sample included 223 participants, the statistical analyses were performed via *IBM SPSS 21*. The scale reliability analysis showed good internal consistency of the EFLS-ALE; GA was reported predominantly positive in both age groups (secondary and tertiary students) and educational profiles (philological and non-philological subgroups); the confirmatory factor analysis showed that the attitude construct includes the following complex dimensions: Factor 1 – behavioural & emotional (BEF); Factor 2 – cognitive & instrumental (CIF); Factor 3 – language purism (LPF). Factor 1 has brought novelty to attitude research since behavioural and emotional dimensions are theoretically distinguished as two separate components, whereas in this study they merged into one. Accordingly, since the behavioural dimension can be viewed as the best predictor of behaviour itself, we believe that teachers may make an impact on their students' results by working towards intensifying their behavioural intentions.

**Keywords:** attitude structure; attitudes to learning English; behavioural intentions; EFL; individual differences.

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1 bram.english@yahoo.co.uk

## INTRODUCTION

The process of learning a foreign language (L2), broadly speaking, entails the psychological and social dimension. Foreign language learners are individuals who acquire an L2 at their own pace, in accordance with their own abilities and affinity to languages. However, they are also part of a community, which posits certain social/group norms and conventions on them. Other members' beliefs and attitudes, be that their peers or their immediate/wider social surroundings, may also have an impact on learners, as well as the social context in which L2 learning takes place.

Psychological variables connected with second language acquisition (SLA), which represent language learner characteristics, have been known as individual differences (IDs) in the SLA literature since the publication of Peter Skehan's monograph *Individual Differences in Second Language Learning* (1989). Those are "differences in how learners learn an L2, in how fast they learn, and in how successful they are" (Ellis, 2015, p. 343). Simply put, IDs can be regarded as individual-specific characteristics that facilitate or hinder language learning, thereby making learners more or less successful in mastering an L2. They are broadly categorised into sociocultural (e.g. beliefs, attitudes), cognitive (e.g. cognitive styles, working memory) and affective (e.g. anxiety, willingness to communicate) (Pawlak, 2017). Early research suggests that ID variables such as language aptitude, motivation, learning strategies etc are important contributors to success in mastering a foreign language (Dörnyei, 2005), which is the reason why a large body of research has been conducted in this area. The list of IDs is not very stable, but rather includes a host of variables concerning "anything that marks a person as a distinct and unique human being" (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p. 2)<sup>2</sup>. The focus of our analysis, however, is *L2 attitudes*.

Research on language attitudes is extensive. Nevertheless, most commonly these studies fall into the field of sociolinguistics because language attitudes normally refer to "attitudes which speakers of different languages or language varieties have towards each other's languages or to their own language" (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 314). Although many of these studies may be relevant for SLA in a broad sense (e.g. Grubor, Hinić & Petrović-Desnica, 2011; McKenzie, 2008; Zang & Hu, 2008), they are not directly applicable in terms of *successful mastery* of L2.

The number of scales measuring L2 attitudes *solely* is quite scarce (e.g. Grubor, 2018b; Hornjak, 2017)<sup>3</sup>. There are scales measuring attitude and motivation concurrently (e.g. AMTB), as well as scales which include only one attitude dimension, such as affective (e.g. Thadphooton, 2001). Although the attitude construct

2 Some categories are commonly not clear-cut but rather mutually interrelated or affected by other variables (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014), which is why attitudes for instance are very frequently categorised as affective (cf. Henter, 2014).

does include the motivational component, it is yet so complex a construct that it should (and must) not be reduced to any one of its individual components (Grubor, 2015, 2018a). Accordingly, we set up the task to explore the attitude construct in an EFL context, and test the scale which was designed for the purposes of measuring attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language. This is important because attitudes are regarded as predictors of behaviour (Bohner & Wänke, 2014; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011), achievement in this context. Predictable value is typically associated with *specific attitudes* (attitudes towards behaviour), in contrast to general attitudes that should not be expected to exert such effect according to the principle of compatibility (cf. Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011). Thus, learners' *attitudes towards learning an L2* become especially important since they are most closely related to the behaviour at issue, rather than broad (general) attitudes such as learners' attitudes to English language speakers, for instance, since they belong to different levels of specificity (cf. Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). In this paper, we will first define the attitude construct, outline different methods of measuring attitudes, as well as components assumed to make up an attitude. Subsequently, we will present the most important results of our research, and underline the main findings, along with their implications for future investigations into attitudes.

## THE ATTITUDE CONSTRUCT, ITS MEASUREMENT AND STRUCTURE

Investigating attitudes has always had an aim to explain different forms of social phenomena (Rot, 2014), as well as to predict behaviour in an individual and/or groups (cf. Ajzen, 2012; Bohner & Wänke, 2014; Pennington, Gillen & Hill, 2016). As early as in 1935, Allport provided a comprehensive definition of attitude, defining it as a “mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related” (as cited in Bordens & Horowitz, 2017). In a nutshell, attitudes encompass systems of various beliefs of an individual, their affective responses and behavioural intentions to perform certain behaviour.

Prior to focusing our attention on methods of measuring attitudes, we need to distinguish between two broad types of attitudes: *explicit* (communicative) and *implicit* (non-communicative) (Carruthers, 2018). The former operate at the con-

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3 In the former study parents' attitudes to their children's EFL learning, and the attitude structure were explored; in the latter, different dimensions/manifestations of primary students' attitudes to learning Spanish.

scious level, people are aware of them and openly express in self-report or by behaviour (Smith, Mackie & Claypool, 2015); hence, they normally have a direct influence on behaviour. The latter are typically associated with laboratory conditions and operate at the unconscious level (Bordens & Horowitz, 2017). We will concentrate on explicit attitudes since they may better predict voluntary behaviours (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2011), which is closely connected to the subject matter of our study.

Generally speaking, two methods of attitude measurement are tightly linked with the two said types of attitudes: *indirect* and *direct* (Pennington et al, 2016). The former are considered as the most objective from the scientific perspective because people are unaware of them and thus may not be consciously influenced. The latter (rating scales) present valid and reliable measures, and they are at the same time methodologically speaking most convenient, being “the most straightforward way to measure attitudes” (Smith et al, 2015, p. 231). This is the reason why many authors and researchers use simple self-report measures, most commonly a Likert-type scale (Gilovich, Chen & Nisbett, 2016). In this study, we used the “semi-direct” method of determining the participants’ attitude (Havelka, Kuzmanović & Popadić, 2008), whereby “the attitude is broken down into smaller or more specific manifestations treated as its indicators” (p. 187).

Finally, regarding the attitude structure, there is unanimous agreement in psychological literature that the following basic components constitute an attitude: *cognitions*, i.e. beliefs, thoughts and attributes we associate with particular objects, *affective responses or states*, i.e. feelings or emotions we associate with an attitude object, and *behavioural intentions* and *behaviours*, i.e. past, present and future anticipated behaviours associated with an attitude object (Bordens & Horowitz, 2017; Haddock & Maio, 2012). In the context of our research, we may talk about L2 students’ attitudes in terms of the stated components. For example, regarding students’ attitudes towards learning an L2, evaluative judgements such as whether it is important to speak the L2 belong to the cognitive, how students feel when they learn/speak the L2 to the affective, and what courses of actions they have taken (or might take) in order to master a specific linguistic unit or the L2 better to the behavioural component. These components, nevertheless, do not exist independently but are rather inextricably intertwined, since the attitude represents a general evaluative summary of the information derived from the mentioned components (cf. Crites, Fabrigar & Petty, 1994).

## METHODOLOGY

In view of everything stated in the introductory section, the main aims of the present study are: (1) to determine the structure of attitude towards behaviour,

i.e. learning English (LE) and test the validity of the given scale on the sample of Serbian school and university students; (2) to explore general attitude of the participants as well as the presence of the extracted components in the subgroups of the sample. Regarding the stated aims, we hypothesise that: (1) the attitude construct constitutes the affective (emotional), cognitive, and behavioural (volitional/intentional) components, which is in line with the attitudinal theory; (2) general attitude of the participants' is moderate, but considerably more positive in philologically-oriented participants because they have voluntarily chosen to learn English. Although the current study is part of broader research which had the ultimate main aim to determine the influence of L2 attitudes upon achievement (Grubor, 2012a), we will only present the results closely connected to attitudes towards learning English due to the importance of the investigated construct itself within the SLA field.

## THE SAMPLE

Owing to the fact that Serbian versions of similar scales have not been validated/standardised up to date (e.g. the subscale of Gardner's AMTB test battery, 2004, dealing with attitudes to learning English in a ESL context)<sup>4</sup>, the external validation of the scale has not been performed. For this reason, the sampling procedure employed in this study was *stratified random sampling*. The strata we included in the sample involved two categories: on the one hand, those were participants whose major was the English language (termed as "philologically-oriented"), and on the other those whose major was outside language learning (herein "non-philologically-oriented"), but within social sciences and humanities field so that the differences between the two strata would not be so great. Once we formed the two mentioned strata, we further divided them according to age. The first stratum therefore naturally included secondary school students attending a philological course in grammar schools and tertiary students attending the Faculty of Philology (hereinafter referred to as *Phil*). The second stratum included secondary school students attending a general course in grammar schools as antipode to a philological course. As for university students, the representatives of non-philologically-oriented students (*NonPhil*), the Faculty of Economics was chosen randomly out of the faculties belonging to social sciences and humanities.

The sample thus obtained involved 223 participants, aged 16 to 24 ( $M=18.69$ ,  $STD=2.00$ ), of both sexes ( $m=67$ ,  $f=156$ ). As stated, the participants belonged to two age groups: (1) secondary school students ( $N=113$ ), aged 16 to 18, and (2) uni-

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4 The AMTB battery was used in Serbia with the author's consent, but not standardised nor validated (e.g. Grubor, 2012b).

versity students (N=110), aged 20 to 24. Both groups included respective sub-groups, more precisely (1) secondary school students, at intermediate and pre-intermediate level, attending (1a) philological (N=56; m=8, f=48), and (1b) general course (N=57; m=30, f=27), and (2) university students, at proficiency and upper-intermediate level, attending (2a) English language studies (N=50; m=13, f=37) and (2b) Economics (N=60; m=16; f=44).

All participants were on their second or third year of study because students attending first and fourth year may well be at an in-between age, thus not fully representing their age groups. The reason for having the category of *Phil* and *NonPhil* participants lies in the fact that these two categories most likely have different levels of ambition to learn English, since *Phil* are expected to have voluntarily decided to learn the language (there is the element of *intention* to perform certain behaviour).

To sum up, the purpose of the study was to include two different age groups, but also students with different orientations towards language learning so that their scores on general attitude as well as on its separate components could be compared. Finally, all the participants took part in the research voluntarily and the informed consent was obtained.

## INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

With the aim of determining general attitude to LE, we constructed the Attitudes to Learning English Scale (EFLS-ALE)<sup>5</sup>, a seven-point Likert scale from 1 – *completely disagree* to 7 – *completely agree*<sup>6</sup>. The scale included 18 items reflecting different attitude components, for instance instrumental value of knowing English (IT9 *I think the knowledge of English can help me in life*), affective dimension (IT10 *I enjoy learning English*), intention to master English (IT5 *I'm willing to sacrifice learning some other subject to learn English*). Upon entering the data, negatively-keyed items (e.g. IT17 *I find learning English boring*) were reverse coded.

Prior to the main research, we had conducted a pilot study with 60 participants belonging to the general population of the target sample in order to test the validity and reliability of the scale<sup>7</sup>. Another goal was to test the wording of the items, in terms of ambiguity and/or vagueness<sup>8</sup>. Since the internal consistency

5 EFL Students' Attitudes to Learning English (EFLS-ALE).

6 The English equivalent of the original (Serbian) scale is provided in the section dealing with factor analysis results (cf. Results).

7 In this preparatory phase, the scale was administered to 60 participants so that the number of participants would approximately be three times as big as the number of items making up the scale (i.e. 18).

cy of the scale was good, the scale only underwent some minor changes (as mentioned in footnote 8).

In order to determine the distribution of the data, we employed the normality test Shapiro-Wilk and not Kolmogorov-Smirnov because the sample subgroups were relatively small (Table 1). The responses of *NonPhil* subgroups on the attitude scale follow a normal distribution pattern. As far as *Phil* subgroups are concerned, it is expected that their scores are skewed towards higher values because they are likely to be more motivated to learn English. To conclude, all the scores are within the set limits, except for the Faculty of Philology. Based on the stated and the fact that some authors maintain that “most procedures work well with the data that is only approximately normally distributed” (Dörnyei 2011, p. 208), we will use *parametric tests* henceforth.

TABLE 1: NORMALITY TEST RESULTS (SHAPIRO-WILK)

GENERAL ATTITUDE (GA) ACCORDING TO PROFILES	SHAPIRO-WILK			MEASURES OF SHAPE	
	STATISTICS	DF	SIG.	SKEWNESS	KURTOSIS
Philological course	.944	56	.011	-.806	.189
General course	.960	57	.057	-.567	-.327
Faculty of Philology	.950	50	.033	-.928	2.127
Faculty of Economics	.963	60	.067	-.398	-.392

Accordingly, we employed different statistical procedures within the statistical program IBM SPSS 21: descriptive statistics, scale reliability tests, *t*-test, ANOVA, Tukey’s test, correlation analysis, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses.

## RESULTS

In this section, we will present the most significant results in line with the set aims, and in the subsequent, we will discuss their implications. The first aim was to determine the structure of the attitude construct, i.e. components constitut-

8 Items with negative statements such as IT3 *I don’t believe learning English is easy* were confusing to the pilot participants, therefore the initial negation was changed as in *I believe learning English isn’t easy*.

ing the attitude to learning English. KMO and Bartlett’s tests were performed, both of which confirmed that the items on the scale can be factorised.

TABLE 2: KAISER-MEYER-OLKIN TEST FOR SAMPLING ADEQUACY AND BARTLETT’S TEST OF SPHERICITY

KMO AND BARTLETT’S TEST		
KMO		.860
Bartlett's test	Approx. Chi-Square	1435.210
	df	153
	Sig.	.000

Consequently, we performed an exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The inter-correlation matrix was computed from the evaluated attitudes, and afterwards factor analysed through the principal component method (varimax rotation with Kaiser normalisation), as well as maximum likelihood method (oblique rotation). Both methods were employed so as to check the consistency of the results, as some authors recommend (cf. Dörnyei, 2011). Since both analyses showed very similar results, we will only present the former (the first method).

Initially, five factors were extracted explaining 64.66% of the total variance observed, with the reliability coefficient  $\alpha=0.806$ . However, Item 16 showed a low value in initial extraction, thus it was excluded from further analysis<sup>9</sup>. Moreover, factor 4 and 5 were also excluded because they consisted of one item only, whereas a factor must be comprised of at least two (cf. Dörnyei, 2011)<sup>10</sup>. Upon excluding the said three items, the Cronbach Alpha of the scale was  $\alpha=0.815$ .

Finally, three factors were extracted, all of which accounted for 58.29% of the total variance (Table 3):

I: *Factor 1* accounted for 34.43% of variance and comprised IT2, IT5, IT7, IT8, IT10, IT11, IT12, IT17. This factor clearly represents *behavioural intentions*, but in combination with *emotions*, so we will name it *behavioural & emotional factor* (BEF):

IT2 *I’m determined to master English as well as I can.*

IT5 *I’m willing to sacrifice learning some other subject to learn English.*

IT7 *Learning English is interesting.*

IT8 *I’m prepared to devote my time to studying English.*

IT10 *I enjoy learning English.*

<sup>9</sup> IT16: *I think English isn’t necessary for me.*

<sup>10</sup> IT3: *I believe learning English isn’t easy* and IT6: *It is unnecessary to know English.*



IT11 *English is important to me.*

IT12 *I don't find it difficult to make time to learn English.*

IT17 *I find learning English boring.*

II: *Factor 2* accounted for 15.13% of variance and comprised IT1, IT9, IT13, IT14, IT15. This factor relates to *cognitive* and *instrumental* aspects of LE; therefore, we will name it *cognitive & instrumental factor (CIF)*:

IT1 *I believe a person is more educated when they know English.*

IT9 *I think the knowledge of English can help me in life.*

IT13 *I believe learning English is important because English is an international language.*

IT14 *I believe knowing English is useful.*

IT15 *I believe people are more respected if they know English.*

III: *Factor 3* accounted for 8.73% of variance and comprised IT4 and IT18. This factor relates to *nationalism*, i.e. fear of losing national identity (namely language and cultural heritage) or else its antipode *liberalism*; thus, we will name it *language purism factor (LPF)*:

IT4 *I don't mind people using foreign words (eg English) in everyday language.*

IT18 *I think that using a foreign language (eg English) steadily and undoubtedly corrupts our language.*

TABLE 3: FACTOR LOADINGS >0.60

ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX			
ITEMS	COMPONENTS		
	1	2	3
IT1		.740	
IT2	.718		
IT4			.803
IT5	.648		

TABLE 3: FACTOR LOADINGS >0.60

IT7	.815		
IT8	.798		
IT9		.610	
IT10	.847		
IT11	.575		
IT12	.764		
IT13		.668	
IT14		.727	
IT15		.691	
IT17	.719		
IT18			.788

## PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS, VARIMAX ROTATION WITH KAISER NORMALISATION

With a view to checking the validity of the proposed structure and/or the results of the employed EFA, we checked the three-factor model in Amos, i.e. performed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

TABLE 4: MODEL FIT INDICES: MODEL 1, MODEL 2 & MODEL 3

Model 1	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMSEA	P close
	2.713	.874	.827	.878	.088	.000
Model 2	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMSEA	P close
	1.842	.917	.880	.943	.062	.106

TABLE 4: MODEL FIT INDICES: MODEL 1, MODEL 2 & MODEL 3

Model 3	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMSEA	P close
	1.1462	.944	.915	.973	.046	.619

In the initial model (Model 1), there were covariances between errors, so we connected them (er. 9 & 13, 4 & 6, 2 & 5, 1 & 3) in the next step (Model 2). With these changes, the model became satisfactory, with the indices being significantly improved (they were above 0.9, RMSEA was perfect, p-close insignificant, but AGFI was below 9). Although Model 2 can work the way it is, we decided to delete IT 15 from CIF due to their weak link (below 5) in the following step (Model 3). In addition, we removed IT 11 from BEF due to high standardised residual covariances. Although we reduced RMSEA value slightly below 0.5, all other fit indices were more than satisfactory. The construct of learners' attitudes to learning English hence is provided in Figure 1.

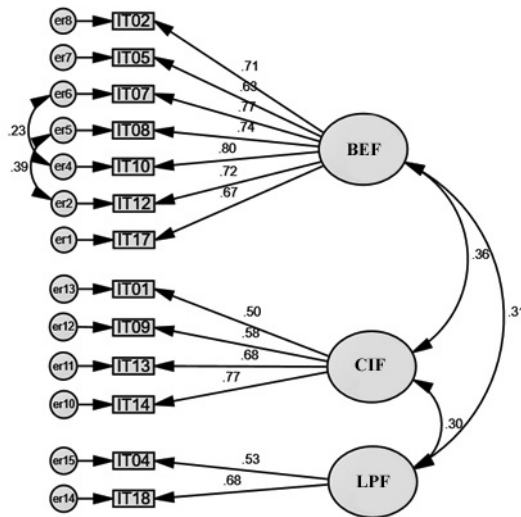


FIGURE 1. ATTITUDE TO LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: CFA – MODEL 3

The second aim of the research was to determine general attitude (GA) of the participants to learning English (its direction and intensity). With that aim in view, we performed descriptive statistics and the mean values of the participants' responses on the attitude scale indicated that GA was predominantly positive<sup>11</sup>. The distribution of the mean values within (age & educational field) groups has been shown below.

TABLE 5: DESCRIPTIVE VALUES ON THE ATTITUDE SCALE

GENERAL ATTITUDE	N	M	SD	SE	MIN	MAX
Philological course	56	75.27	10.32	1.38	48	91
General course	57	66.33	11.12	1.47	40	85
Faculty of Philology	50	75.88	7.48	1.06	49	91
Faculty of Economics	60	71.70	7.26	0.94	56	85
<b>Total (max.91)</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>72.16</b>	<b>9.91</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>91</b>

In order to check whether groups differ in GA, we performed ANOVA test, which detected certain differences between groups ( $F(3, 219)=12.462$ ;  $p=0.000$ ;  $\eta^2=0.15$ ). Tukey's *post hoc* test showed a very significant difference between secondary school groups with respect to *Phil* and *non-Phil* ( $MD=8.9345$ ;  $SE=1.73$ ;  $p=0.000$ ), but not between university students' groups.

When we compared the participants' responses by the sex criterion, independent *t*-test suggested that there was a statistically significant difference in scores in favour of female participants ( $t(221)=-4.751$ ;  $p=0.000$ ), with moderate-to-large effect size ( $\eta^2=0.11$ ).

We also wanted to check the presence of each attitude component in the subgroups of our sample. Total score of Factor 1 on the attitude scale was moderate. *Phil* showed higher mean values than *non-Phil* (Table 6).

TABLE 6: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: BEF ON THE ATTITUDE SCALE

BEHAVIOURAL & EMOTIONAL FACTOR	N	M	SD	SE	MIN	MAX
Philological course	56	39.16	8.04	1.07	18	49
General course	57	32.72	8.14	1.08	10	48
Faculty of Philology	50	41.92	4.87	0.69	25	49
Faculty of Economics	60	36.18	5.92	0.76	22	49

11 The presented values represent the results obtained after Items 3, 6 and 16 were deleted in the factorial analysis (cf. above).

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TABLE 6: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: BEF ON THE ATTITUDE SCALE

Total (max.49)	223	37.33	7.66	0.51	10	49
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By the sex criterion, *t*-test showed a statistically significant difference in favour of female participants, but with a moderate effect size ( $t(221)=-4.195$ ;  $p=0.000$ ;  $\eta^2=0.07$ ). By the education profile criterion, ANOVA test detected a statistically significant difference ( $F(3, 219)=17.605$ ;  $p=0.000$ ;  $\eta^2=0.19$ ). Analogous with the GA analysis, we employed Tukey's *post hoc* test on Phil and non-Phil, which showed a difference in both age groups (secondary school group:  $MD=6.4414$ ;  $SE=1.73$ ;  $p=0.000$ ; university group:  $MD=5.7367$ ;  $SE=1.33$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). The mean values of Factor 2 are presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: CIF ON THE ATTITUDE SCALE

COGNITIVE & INSTRUMENTAL FACTOR	N	M	SD	SE	MIN	MAX
Philological course	56	26.62	1.94	0.26	20	28
General course	57	25.05	2.84	0.40	14	28
Faculty of Philology	50	25.54	2.84	0.40	17	28
Faculty of Economics	60	26.40	1.49	0.19	23	28
Total (max.28)	223	25.92	2.48	0.17	14	28

According to the sex criterion, *t*-test indicated a statistically significant difference in favour of female participants, with a weak effect size ( $t(221)=-2.722$ ;  $p=0.008$ ;  $\eta^2=0.03$ ). In terms of educational profile, ANOVA showed a statistically significant difference of lower intensity ( $F(3, 219)=5.263$ ;  $p=0.002$ ;  $\eta^2=0.07$ ). By means of Tukey's test application, it was determined that the statistically significant difference was found between Phil and non-Phil groups in secondary school students ( $MD=1.5724$ ;  $SE=0.45$ ;  $p=0.004$ ). The difference was also detected between General Course and Faculty of Economics ( $MD=-1.3474$ ;  $SE=0.45$ ;  $p=0.015$ ).

Finally, the mean values of Factor 3 were moderate<sup>12</sup>. Distribution of mean values is presented in Table 8.

<sup>12</sup> We should bear in mind that these items were reversely coded, thus they represent *liberalism*.

TABLE 8: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: LPF ON THE ATTITUDE SCALE

LANGUAGE PURISM FACTOR	N	M	SD	SE	MIN	MAX
Philological course	56	9.48	3.24	0.43	2	14
General course	57	8.56	3.60	0.48	2	14
Faculty of Philology	50	8.42	2.86	0.40	3	14
Faculty of Economics	60	9.12	2.70	0.35	2	13
<b>Total (max.14)</b>	223	8.91	3.13	0.21	2	14

According to the sex criterion, a statistically significant difference was found, again in favour of females, with a weak effect size ( $t(221)=-2.068; p=0.040; \eta^2=0.02$ ). No difference was found by the educational profile criterion in ANOVA test.

## DISCUSSION

In order to summarise the results of the present study, let us go back to the set aims briefly. The first aim was to determine the attitude structure. With regard to it, many scholars maintain that all four attitude components cannot and should not be investigated in isolation, because they are closely intertwined and make up a general evaluative set of information (Grubor, 2015, 2018a; Crites et al, 1994; Zanna & Rempel, 1988). Due to this, the total score on the attitude scale served as an indicator of general attitude of the participants. On the other hand, with a view to determining the structure of the participants' attitudes and testing whether behavioural intentions would single out as a single factor, we have conducted factor analysis (exploratory and confirmatory respectively).

The scale designed for this research showed good internal consistency, which confirms its reliability. After deleting three items from the scale (exploratory factor analysis), a three-component structure was extracted to include: 1) behavioural & emotional factor (BEF); 2) cognitive & instrumental factor (CIF); and 3) language purism factor (LPF), and these three components accounted for a great deal of the variance. The confirmatory factor analysis gave us further support for the obtained structure (two more items were deleted). There was a statistically significant difference between *Phil* and *non-Phil* students in both age groups on GA. As regards the individual factors, a significant difference between

*Phil* and *non-Phil* students was found on BEF in both age groups (in favour of *Phil*-oriented groups). Similarly, following the same direction, a significant difference was detected on CIF between *Phil* and *non-Phil* in secondary school students, but not university students (one more difference was found between General Course and Faculty of Economics). There was no difference on LPF. This finding is vital because it indicates that the sample is tolerant to English and regard it as useful and important (in secondary schools, *Phil*-oriented students believe it is more useful and important than *Non-Phil*), but the participants differ in the degree to which they are determined to learn it.

In view of the extracted factors, Factor 1 (BEF) brings novelty to the attitudinal theory. All the items expressing firm determination (behavioural intentions) to engage in the given behaviour were grouped around this factor, which is in line with the theory of planned behaviour, according to which intention is an immediate antecedent of behaviour. However, these items were also accompanied by those closely connected with affections relative to LE (e.g. IT10 *I enjoy learning English*, IT17 *I find English boring*). This is interesting because there are authors who emphasise that the emotional dimension of the attitude is the most dominant one (eg Breckler & Wiggins, 1989; Forgas, 2011; MacIntyre, 2002). The results of the current study *reconcile* these two views in that that behavioural intentions and emotions have *merged* into one factor. This finding may imply that both dimensions are essential, but inextricably intertwined. More specifically, the intensity of individuals' intention to perform certain behaviour is stronger if such behaviour is associated with positive emotions, and the reverse. This may be supported by the results, namely the fact that BEF was reported to be significantly higher in *Phil*-oriented students, if we bear in mind the fact that *Phil* groups, as a general rule of thumb, have better knowledge of English. All in all, the analysis suggests that the intensity of BEF differed in the groups of the sample.

CIF was shown to be the most dominant in students of Economics and Philology Course, whereby the instrumental aspect of learning English is emphasised. Its limited effect in students of the Faculty of Philology may imply that philology university students learn English because they have strong affinity for it (the intrinsic value), and not because of the practical benefits of learning it. Philology Course students, being adolescents, are most likely under greater influence of their parents in comparison to university students of philology, who have completely formed their personality and might push this practical aspect into the background. Moreover, the students of economics most likely find the instrumental value of English very significant due to their future job requirements, which might be the reason why they had so high scores on this factor.

If we look at the mean values of these factors on the attitude scale, we may notice that the mean values of BEF are significantly higher in *Phil* groups, which

suggests that Phil groups are more determined to master English as well as they can, and that the scores of CIF, which are quite high in all groups, are actually quite balanced in philology course and economics students. In a word, all the participants recognised the pragmatic aspect of learning English, but the mentioned two subgroups placed it in the forefront. As regards LPF, the highest scores were in the same two groups (philology course students and students of economics), which signifies that these two groups were found to be the most liberal of all, i.e. most open to language changes in their own mother tongue (L1) that come from the English language (L2). This finding is slightly surprising because it was expected that students of philology would certainly fall into the similar pattern of thought, as philology course students. Differently put, if we assume that Phil groups are more acquainted with the target language culture in its broadest sense, not only because of the curriculum, but also because of their personal affinities, it would be reasonable to infer that these participants would be more flexible about and tolerant of language changes coming from English. A different interpretation could be that philology students might have been subjected to highly prescriptive ideologies in the course of their education and therefore display less tolerance in this respect. It is interesting to note, though, that the groups who had the highest scores on CIF also showed the highest values on LPF. Consequently, one line of thought that we might adopt at this point is that the participants who believe they need English in a *practical* sense are the most liberal to language changes coming from that very language (i.e. using English as a means to get across and/or put into practice their business ideas/plans, conduct interviews, hold meetings etc, in contrast to the study of language for its own sake).

The second aim was to determine general attitude of the participants (its direction and intensity), and the initial hypothesis was that GA was moderate and more favourable in the participants who had chosen to learn English of their own free will. The results show that general attitude of the sample was predominantly positive, not moderate, as initially hypothesised. The reason for this may be found in the fact that English is a global language, which is present not only in international communication between native and non-native speakers, and among non-native speakers themselves, but also in globalised media (films, music, Internet etc). Accordingly, English can be found to be both useful to its speakers in a wide array of ways. Its speakers are most likely acquainted with it through constant exposure to it and thus they do not regard it either as a *foreign body* or a threat, but rather as part of a modern-day identity. With regard to the second part of the premise, Phil-oriented secondary school students did show significantly higher values in GA, whereas this difference was not found in university students. The reason for this may lie in the fact that both educational types recognise the importance of the English language nowadays. Students of



philology because they have chosen to study it and consequently it will be their future job, and students of economics because they need it in practical terms for their career due to the global market of the present age.

As regards the limitations of the study, we need to point to the fact that female participants greatly outnumbered male participants. However, this *obstacle* seems to be commonplace in language acquisition studies since the majority of language students happen to be girls. There is one limitation overseen in the present study that can be changed in future research into ALE, though: to include more items dealing with the *expectancy value* on a personal plane (easy – difficult). This is important because the expectancy value can be connected to and indicative of perceived behavioural control, which, according to the theory of planned behaviour, is assumed to influence intention as an antecedent of behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011). Initially, such an item (*I believe learning English isn't easy*) was excluded from further analysis because it was extracted as a single factor. Therefore, future versions of the scale should be modified in such a way as to include more items reflecting this dimension.

## CONCLUSION

As stated earlier in the paper, this study is part of much broader research which ultimately aimed at determining whether L2 attitudes may predict achievement in the L2. Nevertheless, due to the limitations of space and the importance of the attitude construct itself (explored *independently* and not as an interchangeable equivalent to motivation), we have focused on determining its structure herein.

General attitude of our participants was reported to be predominantly positive in both age groups (secondary school and university students) and educational profiles (Phil- and non-Phil-oriented students within their age groups). The attitude construct was shown to be made up of three dimensions: behavioural & emotional (BE), cognitions & instrumentalism (CI), and language purism (nationalism/liberalism) (LP). The most important finding is that behavioural intentions and emotions merged into one dimension, which is an innovation in attitude research studies. With regard to the scale employed in this study (EFLS-ALE scale), it has shown good psychometric properties. Therefore, it would be possible to administer it (in its original and/or translated form) in other EFL contexts and to other samples in order to determine the psychometric properties of the English (or other) version, and test the idea whether and/or how the attitude construct differs in terms of its structure with regard to social and cultural environment of the participants.

Finally, the attitude construct may well be closely connected with the concept of L2 identity and/or L2 self. Many authors maintain that people adopt different identities in different contexts, which is in line with theories of multiple identi-

ties, whereby identities are socially constructed<sup>13</sup>. If we, for example, take up the idea of *appropriation* in FLL, “whereby learners make a foreign language and culture their own by adopting and adapting it to their own needs and interests” (Kramsch, 1998, p. 81), we may assume that a student is becoming more determined to master an L2, while they are gradually ‘adopting’ an L2 identity; or else, a student is more open to developing an L2 identity if they are determined to master the L2. Consequently, it seems sensible to have the level of their determination followed by the emotions provoked by the attitude to learning the L2.

To conclude, our aim was to investigate the attitude construct more thoroughly. In future studies, however, we will further investigate the topic at issue and concentrate on factors influencing ALE, and finally whether attitudes may predict the behaviour in question (i.e. L2 achievement). Attitudes, as all other constructs, should be viewed within the “bigger picture”, thus it is reasonable to assume that in methodologically sound research they exert their greatest effect in combination with other variables, when it comes to their mediating role in successful mastery of L2 (cf. Grubor, 2012a; Grubor, 2018a; Miličević Petrović & Grubor, 2019).

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<sup>13</sup> For example, *A conceptual model of multiple dimensions of identity* (Jones and McEwen 2000).

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ЈЕЛЕНА В. ГРУБОР

Државни универзитет у Новом Пазару

Департаман за филолошке науке

Енглески језик и књижевност

## ШТА ЧИНИ СТАВ ПРЕМА УЧЕЊУ ЕНГЛЕСКОГ ЈЕЗИКА: *EFLS-ALE* СКАЛА

### *Сажетак*

Ставови су одувек мерени због своје предиктивне вредности, те су предмет нашег рада ставови средњошколаца и студената према учењу енглеског језика. С обзиром на то да је неопходно да се направи разлика између конструкта става и осталих варијабли које чине индивидуалне разлике (нпр. афективно-мотивационе), ставови и њихова структура се морају детаљније испитати пре него што се предузме наредни корак који представља успостављање везе између ставова и понашања (у нашем случају постигнућа у енглеском). У складу са наведеним, циљеви нашег истраживања су следећи: 1) да се изврши валидација примењене скале (*EFLS-ALE*); 2) да се испита структура става; 3) да се утврди генерални став испитаника према понашању (тј. учењу енглеског). Узорак је чинило 223 испитаника, а статистичке анализе спроведене су у програму *IBM SPSS 21*. Анализа поузданости скале је показала добру интерну конзистентност скале; генерални став је претежно позитиван код обе старосне групе (средњошколаца и студената) и оба образовна профила унутар старосних група (тј. филолошких и нефилолошких подгрупа); конфирматорном факторском анализом је утврђено да конструкт става чине следеће сложене димензије: 1) бихевиорално-емоциона; 2) когнитивно-инструментална; 3) језички пуританизам. Први фактор уводи новину у истраживање ставова јер су теоријски бихевиорална и емоциона димензија засебни елементи става, док су се у овом истраживању „спојили“ у један фактор. Најзад, будући да се бихевиорална димензија посматра као најбољи предиктор понашања, сматрамо да наставници могу да утичу на учинак својих ученика тако што ће радити на интензивирању бихевиоралних намера својих ученика.

**Кључне речи:** бихевиоралне намере; индивидуалне разлике; ставови према учењу енглеског; структура става; учење енглеског као страног језика.