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*Language and Identity: Imagined Identities and Investment in Foreign Language Learning among Students in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo*

*Jezik i identitet: Zamišljeni identiteti i ulaganje u učenje stranog jezika kod studenata Odsjeka za engleski jezik i književnost na Filozofskom fakultetu u Sarajevu*

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## ABSTRACT

Identity has been a topic of numerous discussions and researchings. Different researchings of language and identity contributed to the emergence of the new concepts, such as: "imagined" identity, "imagined" community, and "investment". This research paper leads us to better understanding of these concepts. This research paper includes the notion of imagined identity, imagined community and investment. This research paper includes and explains teaching strategies, learning styles, and role of a teacher and of a learner in learning process. This research paper includes the role of the gender in learning process.

The main purpose of this research paper is to show whether the concept of imagined identity is developed among adult students in English Department. In order to achieve valid results, the investigation had been conducted in English Department among adult students of fifth year of four Master programmes. The results of the first questionnaire reveal the development of the concept of imagined identity among adult students in English Department. The results of an interview reveal adult students' motivation and investment in learning English. The overall results of the research paper show a positive attitude of adult students towards the concept of imagined identity.

Key words: imagined identity, imagined community, investment, adult students

## SAŽETAK

Identitet je bio tema brojnih diskusija i istraživanja. Različita istraživanja jezika i identiteta doprinijela su nastanku novih pojmova kao što su: "zamišljeni" identitet, "zamišljena" zajednica i "ulaganje". Ovaj istraživački rad vodi nas ka boljem razumijevanju ovih pojmova. Ovaj istraživački rad uključuje pojam zamišljenog identiteta, zamišljene zajednice i ulaganja . Ovaj istraživački rad uključuje i objašnjava nastavne strategije, stilove učenja i ulogu nastavnika i učenika u procesu učenja. Ovaj istraživački rad uključuje ulogu roda u procesu učenja.

Glavna svrha ovog istraživačkog rada je pokazati da li pojam zamišljenog identiteta razvijen među studentima na Odsjeku Anglistike. Kako bi se postigli valjani rezultati, istraživanje je provedeno na Odsjeku Anglistike među studentima pete godine četiri master programa. Rezultati prvog upitnika otkrivaju razvoj pojma zamišljenog identiteta među studentima na Odsjeku Anglistike. Rezultati intervjua otkrivaju motivaciju i ulaganje studenata u učenju engleskog jezika. Ukupni rezultati istraživanja pokazuju pozitivan stav studenata prema pojmu zamišljenog identiteta.

Ključne riječi: zamišljeni identitet, zamišljena zajednica, ulaganje, studenti

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992, the English language has become an important way of communication in this country. Since this period, the English language has become the first foreign language taught in primary and secondary education, and later it became an important language at universities. When learning English as a foreign language, adult students develop a new identity. This new identity being coined in the process of learning a foreign language is known as imagined identity. In order to develop the imagined identity, adult students need to use the English language both in its oral or written mode. When students use English in different situations, even if they just imagine themselves speaking it with native and non-native speakers, they become a member of an imagined community. Students who study English at a university do not use it just in the course of their study, they also travel abroad and have other opportunities to become competent and proficient speakers of English. Learning a foreign language, the concept of imagined identity in language learning cannot be avoided. Students have a huge motivation to master the English language and it contributes to the process of developing the concept of imagined identity and investment. Human beings love to imagine themselves in different selves, and have an identity apart from what they are or what they want to become in the future.

The concept of imagined identity has been researched by a number of scholars. According to Block (2007, p.27), the imagined identity can be thought of as “socially constructed, self-conscious, ongoing narratives that individuals perform, interpret, and project. Identities are about negotiating new subject positions at the crossroads of the past, present and future.” According to Block, 2007; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Pavlenko & Norton( 2007 ), language learners’ identities are multi-layered, fluid, dynamic, contradictory, and constantly changing across time and space. Some theoretical concepts such as investment and imagined communities have been highlighted in identity theory and have become influential concepts that have furthered our understanding of L2 learners’ identity. Investment is a notion that emphasizes the efforts learners put into learning with the anticipation of acquiring tangible or intangible returns that will “increase the value of their cultural capital” (Norton, 1995, p. 17). Norton & Toohey(2011) argued that different from motivation, which is generally considered a fixed psychological construct, investment should be regarded as a social construct that is

subject to an embedded social environment. In other words, the concept of investment should be understood within a social context in which L2 learners who are social beings interacting with other social actors in social practices would make contextualized investments that in turn yield symbolic or material gain for the learners themselves. In addition, the term 'imagined communities, coined by Anderson (1983) and developed by Norton Pierce (1995, 2006), refers to the communities that are constructed through learners' imagination. They embody the communities that learners wish to join and become a member of in the future, and learners' imagined identities—a desired sense of self that learners project for themselves in the future. Therefore, imagined communities and identities can play a critical role, influencing the learners' agency to make different learning decisions that may contribute to the shaping of the learners' learning paths. Kanno and Norton (2003) argued that since our actions will be driven by our aspirations, "our identities then must be understood not only in terms of our investment in the real world but also in terms of our investment in possible worlds."

This research paper focuses on different factors which contribute to the structuring of adult students' imagined identities during their process of learning English. In the first section of this research paper, the theoretical background, we focus on discussion and understanding of language and identity, explaining the relationship between them. Further, this section also involves the explanation of the notion of imagined identity, motivation and investment. The theoretical part also discusses the relationship between motivation and investment. These two factors go together in the process of developing the concept of imagined identity. Motivation creates different desires and goals for learning language, while on the other hand, investment helps to fulfill these goals. Students can be motivated to learn a foreign language, but investment plays an important role in fulfilling this goal. The theoretical part also emphasizes the factors that contribute to the development of the concept of imagined identity, such as teaching English, strategies used in teaching English and learning styles. It also emphasizes the importance of roles of the teacher and learner, as well as the importance of gender in the process of learning a foreign language.

The main goal of this research paper is to show whether the concept of imagined identity is developed among the students in the English Department at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo. This research paper reveals how the notion of imagined identity emerges through the process of learning English, how students perceive themselves through the process of learning and how they invest in learning English. In order to achieve

previously mentioned purposes, two questionnaires have been designed. In the first questionnaire, a quantitative method of research is used. It consists of twenty questions. The main goal is to investigate whether the concept of imagined identity is developed among students through different aspects of English usage. In the second questionnaire, a qualitative method of research is used and it consists of three open-ended questions. The main goal is to investigate whether the adult students are motivated to learn English and how they "invest" in learning English.

The main research question in this paper is:

- Does imagined identity influence investment in and learning of a foreign language among the students in the English Department at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo and if so, to what extent?

## **2.THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

The theoretical framework is structured in such a way as to present several of theories of language and identity, taking into account the notions of imagined identity, motivation and investment and their relationship. It also discusses teaching English to foreign learners, the role of the teacher and learner, strategies in teaching adult students, learning styles, the notion of gender and its role in learning a foreign language.

### **2.1. Language and Identity**

Language consists of chains of signs, in which two components, a signifier (sound or written image) and signified (meaning), are related to each other in an arbitrary way. Language clearly serves as a vehicle for communication. Through language we explain others who we are and what we represent, but also how others perceive us. People are also categorized by other people according to the language they speak. Language is acquired naturally and may be taught formally, and both natural acquisition and formal teaching create, strengthen or weaken links between language and identity. People communicate with each other using a shared language of their group.

Students learn a foreign language through listening to, speaking, writing, watching and acquiring a language being exposed to in different ways. Students learn a foreign language as they use it to communicate their feelings, thoughts, experiences, establish relationships with family members and friends and strive to make sense and order of their new world. Learning a foreign language occurs in specific contexts for specific purposes, such as learning about a particular topic, participating in the community, pursuing work and leisure activities. By learning and incorporating new language structures into their repertoire and using them in a variety of contexts, students develop language fluency and proficiency. Students strive to achieve proficiency in language in many ways. Proficiency in language helps them to feel of as being part of a certain community, seeing self as an ideal one in learning or speaking of a foreign language. Positive learning experiences in language rich-environments enable students to leave school with a desire to continue to extend their knowledge, skills, strategies, and interests. School and faculty provide environments where students continue to develop language knowledge, skills, and strategies to achieve personal, social and academic goals.



Language development is responsibility of all teachers. They help students to develop and apply strategies for comprehending, composing, and responding to a variety of situations. Language enables students to play an active role in various communities of learners within and beyond the classroom. According to Byram (2006) the link between language and identity is inevitable. Learning a foreign language in certain circumstances may be experiencing a new identity, although certain methods of teaching may also prevent this. People belong to many social groups and may have many social identities. Each group has its own language or a variety of a language. Speaking that language or a variety of that language gives a sense of belonging to the group.

Identity is expressed in and through the language. Every time students speak, read or write the target language, they don't just exchange information with the members of the target language community, they are also expressing a sense of who they are and how they relate to social world. Norton (2013, p.4) claims that students are engaged in identity construction. Identity is the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the future is central to the lives of many language learners. Norton (2013, p.2.) also emphasizes the theoretical relevance of identity affecting the learning of a foreign language. The arguments for this type of observation are: Work on identity offers the field of language learning a comprehensive theory that integrates the individual language learner and the larger social world. A fully developed theory of identity highlights the multiple positions from which language learners can speak, and how sometimes marginalized learners can appropriate more desirable identities with respect to the target language community. Norton (2013, p.2-3) further claims that identity, practices and resources are mutually constitutive. This suggests that identity is influenced by practices common to institutions such as homes, schools and workplaces, as well as available resources, whether they are symbolic or material. Through human agency, language learners who struggle to speak from one identity position may be able to reframe their relationship with others and claim alternative, more powerful identities from which to speak, read or write, thereby enhancing language acquisition. Many students maintain their identity through language. Whenever students use a foreign language, new identities emerge with them. Identity is never unified and it is conceptualized as a process of continual emerging and becoming. Identity can be comprehended as self-defined. One defines one's own identity and self-perception through interaction, language learning and language use. Identity is a part of

everyday life. For example, through learning a foreign language at school, students might develop a completely different identity that emerges with another language.

## **2.2. Imagined Identity**

Norton and Toohey (2011) claim that imagined identity refers to the ideal self that second language learners aspire to become in the future. The importance of imagined identities can be related to what can be explained as "the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for future." Understanding language learners' empowering capacity is to construct self-identification through imagined identities. Limited imagined identities as English learners confine their learning investment to the school context, while more extended imagined identities such as an expert English user and English teacher guide them to make more varied investment in both formal and informal contexts. Imagined identity is related to imagined communities. According to Norton (2013, p. 8) imagined communities refer to the groups of people with whom we connect through the power of imagination. Norton (2011) claims that participants' imagined identities could act as a beneficial impetus for action, motivating them to make corresponding investments in their learning contexts. Imagined identities can also play a negative role, triggering the participants' resistant acts that lead to reduced learning investment in the future.

Learners' imagined identities are desired sense of self that learners project for themselves in the future would simultaneously be formed and developed along the construction of their imagined communities. Imagined communities and identities can play a critical role, influencing the learners' agency to make different learning decisions that may contribute to the shaping of the learners' learning paths. In imagining ourselves bonded with citizens across time and space, we can feel a sense of community with people we have not met yet, or hoping to meet them one day. Imagined communities in language learning enable learners to explore their affiliation with such communities and may affect their learning path. Such communities include future language relationships that are present only in learner's imagination. Imagined communities are the ones in which a learner has a daily engagement in speaking another language and it might have impact on their current actions and investment. Education of adults, professional opportunities, studying abroad, and other

opportunities have become a component of students' imagined futures and imagined identities.

### **2.3. Motivation and Investment**

Motivation is an important factor that can greatly influence second or foreign language acquisition. The role of motivation in the field of second language acquisition field has been a topic studied by many researchers, since the understanding of motivational characteristic helps teachers to better address diverse individual learner needs, and it enables educators to adopt different strategies to motivate learners. However, over time, the theoretical framework examining the nature of learner motivation has changed. Especially, the globalization of the world, and the new status of English as an international language affected the learners' motivation to learn a new language along with their needs. There are several types of motivation to be distinguished: instrumental, integrative, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

*Instrumental* motivation in second language acquisition occurs when a learner has a functional goal, such as to get a job with a new language, pass an examination, meet the educational requirement, use the language in his/her job, on holiday in the country in which that language is spoken, read useful material in the target language and discover something more about members of the foreign culture, etc.

*Integrative* motivation occurs when a learner wishes to identify with the culture of L2 group. Integrative motivation is the desire on the part of a language learner to learn the second language in order to communicate with, or find out about members of the second language group.

*Intrinsic* motivation implies that a language learners engages in activities for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. People seem to engage in the activities for their own sake and not because they are led to an extrinsic reward. Intrinsically motivated behaviors are aimed at bringing about certain internally rewarding consequences, namely, feelings of competence and self-determination.

*Extrinsically* motivated behaviors, on the other hand, are carried out in anticipation of a reward from outside and beyond the self. Typical extrinsic rewards are money, prizes, grades, and even certain types of positive feedback. Behaviors initiated solely to avoid punishment are also extrinsically motivated, even though numerous intrinsic benefits can accrue to those learners who punishment avoidance as a challenge that can build their sense of competence

and self-determination. The concept of L2 motivation is part of a learner's identity and it includes other concepts such as self and identity. Motivation is closely related to investment and plays an important role in learning a foreign language. Norton (1995) claims that investment represents a learner's commitment or motivation to learning with an expectation of getting material or symbolic rewards as a result. Norton (1995) also defines investment as a notion that emphasizes the efforts learners put into learning with the anticipation of acquiring tangible or intangible returns that will increase the value of their cultural capital. A learner may be highly motivated to learn a language, but may have little investment in the language practices of a given classroom or community. Norton (2013) gives a series of examples how the teacher and his or her teaching methods influence the process of learning a foreign language in the classroom. The main motivator in this process is the teacher. Motivating learners to participate in the classroom practices contribute to the learners' investment in learning a foreign language. Therefore, investment contributes to the development of another identity. Investment has become an important construct in language learning and teaching. Investment sees the language learner as having complex identities, which change across time and space, and which are constructed on the basis of socially and individually struggled for. Investment is rather seen as a sociological construct, and seeks to make connections between the learner's desire and commitment to learn language and their changing identities. During learning of a foreign language, some students resist their position verbally in the classroom, while others seem content to remain silent, investing more in written activities. It could be said that they don't invest in the language practices of their classroom. If students invest in the target language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wide range of symbolic and material resources, which will increase the value of their cultural capital and social power. Norton (2000) suggests that investment in the language learning is the best understood as investment in the learner's own identity. Within investment and second language learning emerges the concept of imagined identity. As previously mentioned above, Norton and Toohey (2011) define imagined identity as the ideal self that L2 learners aspire to become in the future. Kano and Norton (2003) further explain that imagined identity is a critical factor that can guide learners to make a learning investment that they believe would in turn reward them with the social capital for which they yearn. The notion of imagined identity emerges within the notion of "imagined community" and it was coined by Anderson (1991) in an attempt to redefine the notion of nationalism. He believed that a nation should be viewed as an imagined political community (Anderson, 1983). He further claims that our sense of nationalism is created through our imagination that enables us to bond with others we don't

know. Conversely, Norton (2001) argues that lack of awareness of learners' imagined communities and imagined identities can hinder a teacher's ability to construct learning activities in which learners can invest. Every time learners interact in the second language, whether in oral or written mode, they are engaged in imagined identity construction.

## **2.4. Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adult Learners**

As a result of globalization, which has grown during the past few decades more and more, adults of different nationalities seek the help of English instructors because they want to find employment abroad, to communicate more effectively at work, to resort to overseas travels, or just to enjoy various types of social situations. In any of these cases, English learners are highly motivated to study this particular subject. However, those who teach adult learners must be aware of the differences between the teaching – learning patterns specific to adults on the one hand, and those that generally function with children, on the other. Even if not, most of the scholars share this opinion, there seems to be a general consensus that the learners' age is associated with specific needs, competences and cognitive skills which involve characteristic teaching and learning patterns.

It is widely agreed that motivation represents a factor of central importance for successful learning. Unlike younger learners, adults almost always have a sound reason why they are studying, and that reason will be their primary motivation. Perceiving education as a way to improve their self-image and reach various personal goals, adult learners are usually highly motivated from the very beginning of the instructional process, and this makes it much easier for the teacher to perform his/ her task as a motivator. Adults are certainly more cooperative learners, and what is more important, their cooperation comes as a natural consequence of their seeing the point of the various instructional situations in which they are involved. At the mature age students have more learning experience behind them, and this aspect can prove to be both beneficial and problematic. Thus, on the one hand, adult learners have well-developed learning strategies that have served them well in other settings, and the teacher can help them to use these strategies to their advantage in language learning, too. On the other hand, adult learners come to the English language classroom with certain expectations about the learning process, and in case these expectations are not met, the learners may become critical towards the new context of instruction. Teachers of adult learners are less likely to deal with the

ongoing daily discipline problems that generally occur with younger students. This happens because, in most of the cases, adults adopt a type of behaviour which shows that they take the instructional process seriously: they come to the class with the necessary materials (books, paper, pen, etc.), do not ask questions which are irrelevant for the topic being discussed, let the teacher know in advance if they must miss a class or an exam, and, generally tend to be honest with their teachers. If adult learners feel that they are treated as equals in the instructional process, they are generally willing to cooperate with the teacher towards the achievement of the educational objectives. Adult learners come into the English classroom with a rich range of experiences – regarding not only learning, but also life in general. Teachers can take advantage of these experiences, expand upon them whenever possible, and connect them to the new learning. The learning tasks must be practical, must have a clear purpose, and must be relevant to important issues in the adults' lives. Moreover, since adult learners associate their language knowledge and skills with the ability to function in the world, they need immediate application of what they are learning.

A student in an English Department who usually has integrative motivation, identifies to at least some degree with the subject of his study and wishes to make his own the good things he finds in the cultural, literary and aesthetic life of English-speaking countries. With the growth of English as an international language, there has been a corresponding increase in the teaching of specialised English. Adult language learners are goal oriented and directed to their learning to fulfill particular needs or demands: to advance their studies, to progress up the career ladder, to follow business opportunities, to pass a driving test, to assist their children with homework, or simply to be successful users of the language. They usually require immediate value and relevance from their studies, and they often learn best when they are engaged in developing their own learning objectives. Research has also shown that adult learners have greater cognitive and linguistic capabilities and conceptual complexity than younger learners although these capabilities (e.g., attention span, information processing of a rich and complex range of input, memory storage capacity) may vary from learner to learner. Both in the community and in the classroom, adult language learners need an accepting, secure, and supportive environment that engages them. So the teacher must foster willingness in students to cooperate and collaborate with each other. By listening actively, eliciting and asking questions, and sharing opinions, students learn together and develop into a cohesive group. Therefore teachers should access or develop materials that meet the specific needs of adult language learners in their particular contexts, whether EFL or ESL, workplace or academics. (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavel, Hill & Pincas, 1980)

## 2.5. Role of the Teacher

As Harmer (2001) points out, the role of the teacher depends on what the teacher wants his/her students to achieve. The teacher should be able to switch between various roles and be aware of how to carry them out. The roles of the teacher changed in the history of language teaching with the change of teaching methods. As Richards and Rodgers (2001) claim, some methods depend on the teacher as a source of knowledge, others see his/her role as a learner, facilitator, organizer etc.

One of the major roles of the teacher is that of a motivational instructor. These teachers are unique, and they have their own style and strengths. Research, observation and common sense are the major elements of their teaching. There are five pillars in teaching adults: expertise, empathy, enthusiasm, clarity, and cultural responsiveness. While teaching adult learners, these pillars can be learned and improved through practice and effort. Teachers create, compose, and perform for the benefit of learners. Some people call these pillars substance, knowledge, or competence. Teaching adults is completely unlike teaching young learners and adolescents because adult learners are more pragmatic. They want their learning help them to solve problems, build new skills, advance in their jobs. They want to do something valuable to them. The next role of teacher of adult learners is an organiser. It requires immediate planning and organisation of instruction and materials for a lesson or learning activity. But while teaching adults, teachers must set the stage for performance and be familiar with the materials, have a quality of voice, and emphasis in response to signs and insights. Empathy plays a significant role in teaching adults. The most of adult learners have a specific purpose of their learning. It is usually based on what they think and want. If their learning process doesn't meet the goals they want, it will have very little meaning for learners. With the help of empathy, a teacher knows how to motivate students in the learning process.

Compassion, understanding, and consideration convey how essential empathy is for life. In empathy, the most important element is listening. When we listen for understanding, learners are more likely to feel understood and respected. Enthusiasm has a significant role in teaching adult students. Enthusiastic teachers are those who appreciate their subject matter. They teach in the way that evokes learners' feelings. The encouraging and motivating of learners to participate in the lesson is important for the subject matter. It motivates us to have a rapport with learners. It is also used to increase learners' motivation and achievement.

Teaching clarity is something that is easy to understand and it helps learners to follow the lesson easily. Clarity is positively associated with learning. Effective teachers are well organised and thoughtful of teaching procedures. For instance, the teacher can use communication skills to promote the learning and engagement of English language learners. Wlodkowski (2008) further claims that cultural responsiveness of a teacher to adult learners is related to the fact that respect is essential to the motivation of adults. It is necessary to show respect for diversity, and be aware that people are different as a result of history, socialization, experience, and biology. Social responsibility emerges from the respect for diversity. A teacher of adult learners should foster effective learning with attention to the collective good of society.

## **2.6. Role of the Learner**

Harmer (2005, p. 37) points out that the age of learners is a major factor in teacher's decisions about how and what to teach because learners of different ages have different needs, competences, and cognitive skills. Teachers at universities focus on adult learners when preparing and planning the course. Adult learners differ from "typical" or "traditional" students as they bring a great deal of life experience and cognitive maturity to the classroom. Adult learners have the need and capacity to be self-directing, i.e., to a certain extent direct their own learning. This is also stressed in the CEFR in connection to autonomous learning that is regarded as an integral part of language learning. CEFR (2011, p. 141) notes that students are aware of the way they learn, the options open to them and they opt for those that suit them best. Adult learners are psychologically vulnerable, perhaps in a way that children are not. They can feel shame when the inadequacies in their results occur. It is associated with fears of failure, with the feelings of dissatisfaction and of social uncertainty. Harmer, (2005, p. 41) points out that teachers can diminish this fear and feelings by offering activities which are achievable. Adult learners have their goals and reasons why they are learning, they have priorities that children usually do not have. They are at school because they want to be there. Other special characteristics of adult learners as noted by Harmer (2005, p. 40) include having expectations about the learning process, having their own set patterns of learning, tending to be more disciplined than younger learners, using more abstract thought and being more critical of teaching methods. Motivation of students is very important. It means a kind of internal drive which pushes students to do things in order to



achieve something. Motivation caused by outside factors is called extrinsic motivation, for example, the need to pass an exam, financial reward, the possibility of future travel etc.

Harmer (2005) explains that intrinsic motivation comes from the inside, for example, students may be motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process itself or by a desire to feel better. Some learners are better at languages, some are worse. It is very important when teachers plan activities for adult students to be aware of the fact that there are different individuals with different learning styles in the classroom.

In foreign language learning, the learners are in the centre of teachers' attention and teachers should make efforts to provide language learning environment to meet learners' professional needs, individual learning styles (visual, auditive, kinaesthetic, learning by activity, observing, etc.) and the ability to learn at his/her own pace. Albrecht (2006) noted that foreign language learners need to have access to a computer and the Internet and also sufficient motivation to work in the language learning environment. It is necessary for them to be prepared for work with information and communication technologies. Those students who are afraid to communicate with teachers face-to-face and express their views, online communication can be used to facilitate expressing or generating their ideas and remarks and students are prevented from the feeling of social isolation.

The use of Internet technologies in the learning process makes it possible for students to significantly increase their social network and to get to know their peers from other universities. Autonomy, responsibility and discipline are key factors in the student centred systems of teaching and learning. Autonomy is defined by Holec (2005) as the ability to take charge of one's own learning, which means to have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning. The degree of learner autonomy should be sufficient to meet the demands of lifelong learning, as the implementation of lifelong learning requires a high degree of autonomy of learners (Cerna, 2005, p.20).

## 2.7. Strategies in Teaching Adult Learners

Most of the instructor-teachers have influences on students' attitudes, ideas, way of thinking and objectives in a certain way. Teachers want learners to feel positively towards learning. Explaining, arguing and cajoling are usually inefficient in helping someone to develop a positive attitude towards learning. All these methods simply imply that a teacher wants to talk their students into learning. However, it is best not to try to talk adults into learning. There are more powerful ways in which a teacher can make an adult learner interested in the subject matter. From the sociocultural view, relevance and choice are the two qualities that determine a positive attitude among adult students. Whenever teachers want to teach, they want to establish a learning environment in which attitudinal directions are positive and unified. Adults' attitudes focus on four directions: (1) toward the instructor, (2) toward the subject, toward the adults themselves as learners, and (4) toward the adults' expectancy for success. If any of these attitudinal directions become negative for the adults, his or her motivation to learn can be very low. A learner could respect the instructor-teacher, feel confident as a learner, expect to do well but still dislike the subject area. A learner's negative attitude toward the teacher makes a barrier between the material to be learned and the learner. A learner may feel dissonant and psychologically tense because a disliked teacher is offering an attractive lesson. In the learning processes, adult students will be more open, accepting, and responsive to materials and tasks they receive from the teacher they like and respect. The situation will be quite opposite with a disliked teacher. It is also evident that adult learners react differently to specific areas of content, such as a foreign language. Adult learners are usually anxious while speaking in front of others. Whatever teachers do to minimize such adults' negative attitudes and to develop their positive attitudes toward learning a foreign language and instructional process will improve the learners' will to learn. Wlodkowski (2008) suggests the following strategies in teaching a foreign language:

1. *Eliminate or minimize any negative conditions that surround the subject.* When a learner is presented with an item or subject and is at the same time in the presence of negative conditions, that item or subject becomes a stimulus for avoidance behavior. There are always some things that frighten adults and it is necessary to avoid some of the following conditions: pain, poorly fitting equipment, fear and anxiety, frustration, humiliation, and boredom. The learning environment must have positive conditions.

2. *Ensure successful learning with mastering learning conditions.* Most of the learners like a subject when they are successful in it. Bloom (1981) suggests that most learners can master what is generally taught. Some learners spend more time learning than others. Some adults learners may be discouraged when they see how much extra time they need to master what the teacher is teaching. The teacher can positively influence learners' attitudes toward learning: quality instruction that will help them learn if they try to learn, concrete evidence that their effort makes a difference, continual feedback regarding the progress of their learning.

3. *Encourage the learner.* Within encouragement of any type, the teacher shows the learner that he/she respects him or her as a person, and that he/she trusts the learner and believes in his/her efforts. The main foundation often encouragement is the teacher's acceptance of the learner. The acceptance creates the context in which the teacher chooses a strategy that will enable them to show confidence and personal regard for the learner's efforts. These strategies may include the following: giving recognition for learning, minimizing mistakes while the learner is struggling, emphasizing learning from mistakes as a way to improve future learning, working with the learner at the beginning of difficult tasks, and affirming the process of learning.

4. *Help learners accurately attribute their success to their capability, effort, and knowledge.* This is a strategy that focuses on the learning outcome. The outcome implies passing a test, receiving a good grade, correctly answering the problem. For teachers, there is one important factor: when learners have had a learning success, it will enhance learners' self-efficacy, and their motivation will help them to believe in their own capability, effort, and knowledge. Their motivation helps them to believe that factors such as capability, effort, and knowledge are the main causes of the success.

5. *A teacher helps learners to understand that knowledge and effort can help them to avoid failure at learning tasks that suit their capability.* The term failure refers to errors, lack of completion, poor test results, low grades, and unskilled performance. If a learner experiences an unsuccessful learning outcome, there is little he or she can do to improve it. Bad luck, too difficult task, and lack of good materials are all attributions learners might make if they believe that personal effort will only have a small impact on their future performance. These attributions may ease learners' frustration.

6. *Use relevant models to demonstrate expected learning.* A teacher can improve learners' expectancy for success by taking real - life situations into the teaching process. For example, by using film or video technology, teachers have excellent ways to organize and demonstrate what learners are expected to achieve.

7. *Announce the expected amount of time needed for study and practice for successful learning.* Time is precious to adult learners. It is usually difficult for adult learners to estimate the amount of time in a given task of any type because some of the learners will underestimate it. On the other hand, some learners will procrastinate it. What learners need to know is whether an activity requires a significant amount of time. Their planning of time to do the task will be more effective in that case.

8. *Make the learning activity an irresistible invitation to learn.* The first teaching impression is the most important and usually it has long-lasting impact. To accomplish this effect, a learning activity should meet the following five criteria: *Safe* - There is little risk of the learners suffering any form of personal embarrassment from lack of knowledge, personal self-disclosure, or a hostile or arrogant social environment. *Successful* - The learners are effective when their effort is a worthwhile investment connected to making progress.

*Interesting* - the learning activity has some parts that are novel, engaging, challenging, or stimulating. *Self-determined* - learners are encouraged to make choices that affect their experience, basing these choices on their values, needs, concerns, or feelings. *Personally relevant* - the teacher uses learners' interests or prior experiences to create elements of the learning activity.

## **2.8. Learning styles**

Much has been said about how to maximize learning, with a heavy focus on learning styles. It is argued that addressing learners' preferred learning styles increases motivation, and therefore, success. However, the emphasis on learning styles has been a target of much criticism as well. Those who are skeptical of learning styles tend to argue that determining one's learning styles does not necessarily say much about the efficiency of learning as a result of learner engagement in different activities or tasks. Stahl (1999) asserts that matching learners' reading styles, for instance, with purposefully developed reading programs does not improve their reading skills. He also says that low reliability of learning style inventories

reduces their credibility, and that accommodating different learning styles in a class could easily cause chaos. Also, Cartney (2000) points out that learning styles can be subject to change due to the differing contexts in which learning takes place, causing a potential problem for the credibility of learning styles.

Grasha and Hurska-Reichmann were among the first educators to take an alternative approach, analyzing learning styles in terms of learners' attitudes to classroom activity. Grasha (2006) redefined learning styles as personal qualities that influence the student's ability to acquire information, to interact with peers and the teacher, and otherwise to participate in learning experience. Grasha later worked in collaboration with Hurska-Reichmann to develop an instrument to determine these preferred patterns and to categorize them. They categorized these learning styles into the following six categories:

*Competitive.* Competitive learners wish to get better results than their classmates. They like to be a center of attention, and want their achievements to be recognized by others. They like to have leadership roles. In general, they have high motivation for learning. Such learners, may not be good at interactive activities.

*Collaborative.* These learners believe that they can learn best by sharing their ideas and skills with others. They collaborate with their teachers and wish to work with other learners in small groups. They prefer seminars, and enjoy being involved in projects, they can contribute to the development of necessary skills in team work. They are likely to have problems to work alone and dealing with competition.

*Avoidant.* Avoidant learners are not very interested in the subject matter, and avoid taking active roles. They also tend to work alone. What is going on in the classroom may bore them. They do not like to be asked questions. One positive aspect about them is that they can avoid stress-arousing situations. These learners tend to take negative feedback as an indication of lack of success.

*Participant.* These learners enjoy going to classes and participating in classroom activities. They are willing to take up extra-curricular activities. They like discussions. They may, however, be too interested in other learners' needs at the expense of their own.

*Dependent.* Dependent learners do not appear to have much intellectual interest. They also tend to get by with the minimum requirements. They want to be directed in what they are supposed to do. These kinds of learners are interested in having a clear road-map with defined expectations and due dates. They cannot tolerate ambiguities and therefore may have difficulty in developing skills necessary for self-directed learning.

*Independent.* These learners think for themselves and have higher levels of self-confidence. They like to learn the content that they find important. They also like to work independently at their own pace. Assignments that encourage them to think independently make them happy. They also like student-centered classrooms. They tend to have the necessary skills for self-directed learning.

## **2.9. Gender differences in learning a foreign language**

According to Oxford Dictionary (2000), gender is the fact of being male or female. Different genders have different endings in grammar of some languages. The division of nouns, pronouns and adjectives into different genders is into masculine, feminine, or neuter. The concept of gender is completely different from the notion of sex. It's not biologically oriented. According to Butler (1990 p. 32), gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a 'natural' kind of being. Every society has a distinct gender identity and any individual living in them may or may not comply with the presumed gender identity. Gender, as a sociolinguistic variable, refers to social and cultural differences among men and women. Gender is a social property, something acquired or constructed through someone's relationship with others through individual adherence to certain cultural norms. Butler (1990) suggests that gender is not something we are born with, and not something we have, it is something we do, something we perform. Gender can also be related to learning of a foreign language. Understanding how males and females learn and use a foreign language may point to some of the main differences among males and females. In terms of gender, males and females use different strategies in language learning. There have been numerous studies which show the differences in learning a foreign language among males and females. Kettelman (1998) in his research study explains that females achieved better marks than males in various language tests, while some scholars couldn't find these differences. However, Oxford (1993) explains gender differences found in the frequency of strategy use, with females using particular strategies more often than males. Oxford (1993) claims that the choice of L2 learning strategy is often gender-linked, and this is influenced by the learner's preferred L2 learning style, which is also gender-linked. According to Ludwig (1983), males choose a foreign language for practical reasons, while females choose it because it seems interesting. Females learn a foreign language with a desire to improve their existing

knowledge as well. Other scholars also suggests that females are more interested in learning a foreign language than males. Oxford (1993) further claims that language classroom and gender are also linked, it encompasses other factors such as identity construction, the role of the classroom and the practices that take place within the classroom. The participation of gender behaviours in the classroom depends on teaching approaches and learner's opportunity to talk in the classroom and on the teacher's teaching methods.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This research was conducted by using two methods: quantitative and qualitative method. The first method was quantitative and it was conducted by a type of questionnaire with offered questions. The research was conducted among adult students of four master programmes in English Department at the Faculty in Sarajevo. The study programmes include: teaching, translating, linguistics, and literature. The second type of research was conducted by a qualitative method: an interview conducted among adult students in English Department at the Faculty in Sarajevo. In order to obtain valuable results of both methods, one study question must be examined:

- Does imagined identity influence investment in and learning of a foreign language among the students in the English Department at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo and if so, to what extent?

#### **3.1. PARTICIPANTS**

The participants of this research were adult students of four master programmes in the English Department at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo. All students are in their fifth year of study and it is expected from them to follow their learning programmes in English. The number of participants in both the quantitative and qualitative research was 34. The students come from different social and cultural environments, of different age and gender. This information is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Illustration of adult students' age and gender

Age	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
23-33	4	30	34

### 3.2. MATERIALS AND PROCEDURES

The format of the first questionnaire was borrowed and adapted from the earlier study done by Saed Rezaei in Iran in December 2013. Some elements of the questionnaire are equal to the original questionnaire - some questions are adapted to the context of this research. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions. These questions are selected for appropriateness for the research of imagined identity among adult students. The questionnaire examines how adult students develop the concept of imagined identity through different exposures to the English language.

The final version of the questionnaire consists of the statement type and question type item measured using the four item scale, ranging from disagree, slightly disagree to slightly agree and agree. Five factors are used to research the notion of imagined identity among adult students. These factors are illustrated below in Table 2:

Table 2.

COMPONENT	DEFINITION
1 Attachment to the language	This component refers to how adult students in Bosnia and Herzegovina think and feel about their language in comparison to the English language.
2 Pronunciation attitude	This component refers to adult students' attitude toward their pronunciation patterns in Bosnian and English and which pronunciation they perceive as desirable.
3 Language and social status	This component shows how individuals associate their social status with the language in which they speak.
4 L1 use/exposure in the society	It refers to the extent adult students use Bosnian in their daily life in comparison to the English



language.

5 Language knowledge

It refers to how much information Bosnian adult students have about their own language, history and literature.

6 Communication

It refers to how Bosnian adult students use English in comparison with their own language.

The second questionnaire (an interview) consists of three single questions. These questions are open-ended. This type of qualitative method was adapted from Norton (2013) and includes personal opinions of participants who learn English. Adult students in the English Department expressed their personal opinions about how English is taught at the Faculty. They also explained their motivation and investment in learning English.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Results of the first questionnaire

In this first section, the results of the first questionnaire are revealed and are followed by an analysis and discussion.

Table 3. Illustration of the results of the first questionnaire and adult students' opinions of having an imagined identity.

ITEMS	1	2	3	4
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1.I wish all my courses at University were taught in English.	0%	0%	0%	100%
2.I like attending classes taught in English more than those in Bosnian.	0%	10%	30%	60%
3.I love English and I would like to it to replace Bosnian as much as possible in all walks of life.	0%	10%	60%	30%
4.I think speaking English with a Bosnian is not bad.	0%	10%	30%	60%
5. I feel proud of speaking English without Bosnian accent.	0%	10%	60%	30%
6. I aspire to native-like pronunciation of English as much as possible.	20%	10%	30%	40%

7. I believe a person who can speak English very well has a better social status and respect in society.	0%	10%	60%	30%
8. I believe knowing English well means being respected in society in general, and in Bosnian society in particular.	0%	0%	60%	40%
9. When I speak English I feel I am superior to others.	0%	70%	20%	10%
10. I speak English a lot in my daily life.	0%	10%	30%	60%
11. I use English words a lot when I speak Bosnian.	20%	10%	60%	10%
12. I like to speak Bosnian rather than English with foreigners who know Bosnian.	0%	20%	20%	60%
13. I like to speak English rather than Bosnian with my friends and colleagues who know English.	0%	70%	20%	10%
14. I read and listen to news in English more than in Bosnian.	10%	20%	20%	50%
15. I would like to know more about history of Bosnian than that of English.	50%	20%	20%	10%
16. I would like to know more about Bosnian writers and poets rather than English ones.	0%	20%	70%	10%
17. I read poetry and fiction in Bosnian a lot.	30%	50%	10%	10%
18. I would like to know more about grammatical structure of English rather than Bosnian.	30%	50%	10%	10%
19. I use English more than Bosnian in my communication via e-mail and text messages.	0%	40%	40%	20%
20. I use English more than Bosnian in my communication on social media.	10%	50%	30%	20%

We can see from Table 1 that there are 30 female and four male participants in this study, which clearly indicates the predominance of female students in the English Department at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo. As for the age of participants, it ranges from 23-33 years. In the further analysis, the findings of the first questionnaire are revealed and they show the

students' attitude towards the concept of imagined identity. The items in the first questionnaire are related to the following components: Attachment to the Bosnian language, Pronunciation attitude, Language and social status, L1 use/exposure in society, Language knowledge, and Communication. Each component consists of items-questions. The questions of the first component are:

Q1: *I wish all my courses were taught in English.* In this question adult students' responses were answered positively. 0% of adult students disagree with this statement, 0% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 0% of them slightly agree with this statement, and 100% of adult students agree with this statement. The results of this question show the students' attitude toward learning English as a second language. All students wish they had all lectures in the English language. This also shows how much students want to "invest" in learning English.

Q2: *I like attending classes taught in English more than those taught in Bosnian.* The adult students' responses to this statement were mainly positive. 0% of adult students disagree with this statement, 10% of them slightly disagree, 30% of them slightly agree with the statement but 60% of adult students agree with this statement. The results shows that 90% of adult students are motivated to learn and explore more about English that contributes to students' investment in learning a foreign language. But 10% of adult students disagree with the statement.

Q3: *I love English and I would like it to replace Bosnian as much as possible in all walks of life.* Responses to this statement were mostly positive but small number of adult students disagree with the statement. 0% of adult students disagree with the statement, 10% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 60% of them slightly agree with the statement, and 30% of adult students agree with the statement. The results show that 90% of adult students would like to use English instead of Bosnian language in all walks of their life.

The second component of the first questionnaire is Pronunciation attitude. The questions of this component are:

Q4: *I think speaking English with a Bosnian accent is not bad.* The responses to this question vary. 0% of adult students disagree with the statement, 10% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 30% of them slightly agree with the statement, and 60% of them agree with the statement. A very small number of students disagree that speaking English with a Bosnian accent is inappropriate, while 90% of adult students agree with speaking English with a Bosnian-like accent. They also consider that accent is less important in learning English.

Q5: *I feel proud of speaking English without Bosnian accent.* The responses to this question were mainly positive. 0% of adult students disagree with the statement, 10% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 60% of them slightly agree with the statement, and 30% of adult students agree with the statement. However, these answers are opposite to the fourth question. Although the results indicate that accent is less important to adult students, they aspire to speak with an English-like accent as a component of English language competency and proficiency.

Q6: *I aspire to the native-like pronunciation of English as much as possible.* The responses to this statement were mainly positive. 20% of adult students disagree with the statement, 10% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 30% of them slightly agree with the statement, and 40% agree with the statement. The results indicate that 70% of adult students strive to have native-like pronunciation. However, 30% of adult students disagree that native-like pronunciation is unimportant in speaking of a foreign language.

The third component of the questionnaire is Language and social status. The questions of this component are:

Q7: *I believe a person who can speak English very well has better status and respect in society.* The responses to this statement are mostly positive. 0% of adult students disagree with the statement, 10% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 60% of them slightly agree with the statement, and 30% of adult students agree with the statement. 90% of adult students agree with the statement and the results show that adult students consider knowing English very well brings better status and respect in society. Only 10% of adult students slightly disagree with this claim. They consider that English is important for their personal goals, but not for better status and respect in society.

Q8: *I believe knowing English well means being respected in society in general, and in Bosnian society in particular.* 0% of adult students disagree with the statement, 0% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 60% of them slightly agree with the statement, and 40% of them agree with the statement. What is important to mention is that all students responses positively to this question and there were no negative responses at all. This means that 100% of the students find knowing English brings respect in society.

Q9: *When I speak English I feel I am superior to others.* 0% of adult students disagree with this statement, 70% of them slightly disagree with this statement, 20% of them slightly agree with this statement, and 10% of them agree with this statement. The responses to this question were mainly negative. 70% of the students do not feel superior to other people because they can speak English. But, 30% of the students agree with the statement.

The fourth component of the questionnaire is L1 use/exposure in the society. The questions of this component are:

Q10: *I speak English a lot in my daily life.* The responses to this statement were mostly positive. 0% of adult students disagree with the statement, 10% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 30 % of them slightly agree with the statement, and 60% of adult students agree with the statement. The results show that 90% of adult students use English on a daily basis. But, 10% of them slightly disagree with this connotation. This question can be related to students' investment and imagined identity in learning English language. In order to use English a lot on a daily basis, adult students have to improve their knowledge and expand their vocabulary constantly. Expanding their English language knowledge leads to the development of the concept imagined identity.

Q11: *I use English words a lot when I speak Bosnian.* The responses to this question were mostly positive, while a small number of adult students disagree with the connotation. 20% of adult students disagree with the statement, 10% of them slightly disagree, 60% of them slightly agree, and 10% of adult students agree with this statement. The results indicate that English becomes a part of students' life in almost every situation and that adult students share the concept of imagined identity in everyday life whether consciously or unconsciously.

Q12: *I like to speak Bosnian rather than English with foreigners who know Bosnian.* The responses to this question were mostly positive. 0% of adult students disagree with the statement, 20% of adult students slightly disagree with the statement, 20% of adult students slightly agree with the statement, and 60% of adult students agree with the statement.

Q13: *I like to speak English rather than Bosnian with my colleagues and friends who know English.* The responses to this statement were mostly negative. 0% of adult students disagree with the statement, 70 % of adult students slightly disagree with the statement, 20 % slightly agree with this statement, and 10 % of adult students agree with this statement.

The fifth component of the questionnaire is Language knowledge. The questions of this component are:

Q14: *I read and listen to news in English more than in Bosnian.* This question has more positive responses than negative. 10% of adults students disagree with the statement, 30 % of them slightly disagree with the statement, 20 % of them slightly agree with this statement, and 50 % of them agree with this statement. The results show that 70% of adult students read and listen to news in English and in that way "invest" in learning English.

Q15: *I would like to know more about the history of Bosnian than that of English.* This question has more negative responses than positive. 50% of adult students disagree with the

statement, 20% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 20% of them slightly agree with the statement, and 10% of them agree with the statement. 70% of adult students disagree with the statement. The results show that knowledge about history of English is more important to adult students because they can improve their vocabulary.

Q16: *I would like to know more about Bosnian writers and poets rather than English ones.* Most of the responses to this statement show students' agreement with it. 0% of adult students disagree with the statement, 20% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 70% of them slightly agree with the statement, and 10% of them agree with the statement. The overall results show that 80% of adult students agree with the statement. The results show that adult students want to keep their cultural identity.

Q17: *I read poetry and fiction in Bosnian a lot.* The responses to this question show that most of the students disagree with the the statement. They are in contradiction with question 16. 30% of adult students disagree with the statement, 50% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 10% of them slightly agree with the statement, and 10% of them agree with the statement. The results show that 80% of adult students disagree with the statement and that adult students don't read poetry and fiction in Bosnian language. But, 20% of adult students agree with the statement and this shows a very small number of readers of poetry and fiction in Bosnian language.

The sixth component of this questionnaire is Communication. The questions of this component are:

Q18: *I would like to know more about the grammatical structure of English rather than Bosnian.* Most of the adult students disagree with this question. 30% of adult students disagree with the statement, 50% of them slightly disagree with the statement, 10% of them slightly agree with the statement, 10% of them agree with the statement. According to these results, it is possible to see that 80% of adult students think that grammar of English is not more important than grammar of the Bosnian language. But, 20% of adult students consider that English grammar is more important than Bosnian.

Q19: *I use English more than Bosnian in communication via e-mail and text messages.* In this question 0% of adult students disagree with the statement. 40% of them slightly disagree with this statement. 40% of adult students slightly agree with the statement, and 20% of them agree with the statement. These results indicate that 60% of adult students use English in written form via e-mail communication and text messages.

Q20: *I use English more than Bosnian in my communication on social media.* Most of the students disagree with this statement. 10% of adult students disagree with the statement. 50%

of them slightly disagree with the statement. 30% of them slightly agree with the statement, and 20% of them agree with the statement. 60% of adult students disagree with the statement indicating that using Bosnian language prevail in communication on social media. But 50% of adult students use English in communication on social media.

In the text that follows we will try to correlate the results of the questionnaire with the research question. The results show that adult students "invest" in learning English. We can see that the concept of imagined identity depends on investment, but investment depends on a teacher and his/her teaching strategies. It is possible to conclude that students "invest" in learning English and thus, investment influences the development of the concept of imagined identity. The results show that studying English at the university level contributes to the adult students' imagined identities. The results of the first question show that adult students invest in learning English. Attending English instruction contributes to adult students' investing in learning English and therefore it contributes to the development of adult students' imagined identities. The results of the second and third question reveal adult students' wish to invest in learning English. The responses of fourth, fifth, and sixth questions have positive answers. Adult students think that accent and pronunciation are less important in speaking English, but 30% of adult students' responses of sixth question still strive to acquire a native-like accent. Responses to the seventh, eighth and ninth question are related to social status. The responses to seventh and eighth question showed that adult students agree that knowing English brings a better social status in society while they disagree that knowing English brings superiority to others. The responses of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth questions show the development of imagined identity among adult students in English Department. Performing English in different situations on a daily basis contributes to the development of imagined identity. The responses of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth questions are positive and negative. The fourteenth question shows that adult students develop their knowledge through reading and listening to. The thirteenth question has more negative responses. This shows that imagined identity isn't fully developed. Responses to the fifteenth question are more negative. Adult students think that knowing history of English is more useful than knowing history of Bosnian. Responses to the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth questions are mostly negative. The responses of these questions show a partially developed imagined identities among adult students. Responses to the nineteenth and twentieth questions show more adult students' disagreement than agreement. According to the responses of nineteenth question, imagined identity is developed while the responses of twentieth question is not fully developed. What is possible to conclude is that responses of the components *Attachment to*

*the language and LI use/exposure in the society* show to what extent adult students invest in learning English and to what extent they develop their imagined identities. But, responses of the other four components are positive and negative at the same time and it shows to what extent adult students do not invest in learning English and to what extent they do not develop their imagined identities.

## **4.2. Discussion**

The first questionnaire included 34 adult students, 4 males and 30 females. Adult students were able to answer 20 questions. According to the results, it is possible to conclude that the concept of imagined identity is developed among adult students in the English Department. Through the results of the first questionnaire, we can notice that usage of English language whether in written or oral mode, influences the adult students' investment in learning English and the development of imagined identity. If adult students do not use English, this means they do not invest in learning English and therefore the development of the imagined identity is questionable. The results further show how adult students develop their imagined identities. Through the results of the questionnaire we can notice that usage and learning English language contributes to the development of imagined identity. It is also evident that development of imagined identity depends on the contexts in which English language is used. For example, adult students prefer to use English via text messages and mails while on the other side, they prefer to use Bosnian language in their communication on social media. The significant differences in the use of English language of adult students show investment and the development of imagined identity. It is possible to conclude that imagined identity is developed to the extent of oral use of English language and partially developed to the extent of reading, listening to, and writing in English language.

## **4.3. Results of the second questionnaire ( an interview)**

The results of the second questionnaire ( an interview) are related to foreign language learners' agency, imagined identity, motivation and investment. All participants shared their English learning stories providing their answers to three questions:



1. What do you think about teaching English in the English Department at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo?
2. Are you motivated to learn English?
3. Do you invest in learning English?

This interview provided us with the opportunity to learn more about English learning experiences of our participants. The results of the interview reveal that all the participants in this study bring motivation and investment within their previous learning experience. The participants were required to write down their English learning experiences and also to reflect on teaching English in the English Department. Pavlenko (2001) claims that personal L2 learning experiences are valuable resources than can provide a glimpse into areas so private and intimate that are rarely breached in the study of SLA. Some of the positive and negative answers of adult students about teaching English at the Faculty of Sarajevo are:

- *" Teaching at the Faculty is of high quality. However, there is a lot emphasis on classes like literature and that makes adult students disregard the classes associated with grammar, which is a pity since the college is a last chance to correct the mistakes before they are permanently situated in the foundations of a language."*

On the other side, some adult students provided simple responses to this question would be like:

- *" My opinion about teaching English at the Faculty is positive."*

As matter of adult students' motivation to learn English the responses would be like:

- *"Yes, I'm motivated to learn English as I need it for my future career."*
- *"I'm always motivated lo learn, to explore, and improve my English language knowledge because I like English."*

Third question of the interview was about adult students' investment in learning English. The responses to this question would be like:

- *"I like reading in English. I often buy different books and literature to read."*

- *" Yes, I invest in learning English on a daily basis. I feel comfortable when I speak English."*
- *" I interact in English with my professors who help me to improve my speaking skills."*
- *"I am interested in learning grammar, as the grammar is major factor in usage of English."*

The analysis of these interviews provided us with the following results. What is common for all participants is their motivation and investment in learning English. 80% of students shared positive opinions and attitudes towards the first question. Students provided different but positive answers. They evaluated teaching English in the English Department as excellent and something they would like to do in the future. This evidence shows us that professors in the English Department use excellent strategies in teaching English. It is the most important factor in developing students' investment and imagined identity. But 20% of students emphasized the necessity for a change in teaching English. These 20% advocate for more practice but less theory, emphasizing that professors should use different methods and approaches while teaching different topics. All students shared the fact of being highly motivated to learn English emphasizing that motivation for learning English will benefit their future careers. Being motivated to learn English shows how much students "invest" in learning English. The students' answers to the third question reveal that they really "invest" in learning English. All of them provided positive answers. Their answers were related to attending their Master programmes and their answers also revealed how they buy and read books and textbooks in English, use English on a daily basis, and are exposed to different audio and visual materials. This investment is closely tied to their motivation, their satisfaction with the teaching process encourage them to put more and more effort in learning English. Analyzing all answers to these three questions, it is obvious that adult students "invest" in their learning English not just in academic performance but they also "invest" to become proficient users of English.

Table 4. Illustration of adult students' imagined identities and investment

PARTICIPANTS	IMAGINED IDENTITY	INVESTMENT
Adult students of teaching programme	English teacher, English speaker	Attendants of M.A. programme, working on

Adult students translating programme	English translator, English speaker	skills, textbooks Attendants of M.A. programme, different exposures to language
Adult students of linguistic programme	English teacher, English user	Attendants of M.A. programme, grammatical textbooks
Adult students of literature programme	English teacher, English user	Attendants of M.A. programme, reading English literature

#### 4.5. Discussion

Motivation and investment are crucial in learning a foreign language. According to leading motivation theories, students may be oriented intrinsically, instrumentally, extrinsically, or integratively to learn English. The focus in the second research was on motivation and investment. Results of the second research show that all adult students are motivated to learn English. The term "invest" (investment) is used to refer to the motivating components that drive adult students to achieve their goals in L2. All students' responses were positive. Adult students use various ways to become professionals and competent and proficient speakers in L2. The first question in the second research is in relation with investment, which undoubtedly depends on teachers and teaching strategies. Being satisfied with the teaching strategies their professors use, adult students see a role model in their professors aspiring to become one of them in the future. There is a certain percentage of the participants that would like to have more practice but less theory and they aspire for changes. Taking in consideration that practice is crucial to become proficient and competent in L2, this fact refers to those parts of the learning and teaching process which professors can change. But, without support of Ministry of Education the hands of professors are tied. From the results obtained from the analysis of the two further question in the interview, it is obvious that the participants' motivation to learn English enables them to "invest" more and more in learning English. The participants see their Master programmes as a part of investment in learning English. In the end, it is possible to say that if professors do not use appropriate strategies in their teaching and students do not "invest" in their learning English, there is little chance that students will develop the concept of their imagined identities. This concept might be developed partially but not completely fulfilled.

## 5. CONCLUSION

As previously mentioned, "imagined" identity refers to the ideal self that second language learners aspire to become in the future. Investment refers to the learner's commitment to learning a foreign language. Throughout the process of learning a foreign language, adult students are exposed to different audio, visual, and writing materials. Being exposed to a foreign language from different sources is an important prerequisite for foreign language learners in particular, and adult language learners in particular, for becoming competent and proficient users of a foreign language. Throughout this research paper, we could see the importance of engaging and motivating adult students in the process of learning a foreign language, which helps them to develop their imagined identities. Without investment, the concept of imagined identity cannot be developed.

In this research paper, two questionnaires were analyzed. The first questionnaire consisted of 20 items. The results showed to what extent imagined identity influenced investment and learning of a foreign language. According to the results, we could see what language materials adult students like and which language materials they dislike in the process of learning a foreign language. We could also see how they use a foreign language in social context.

The results of the second questionnaire (an interview) were analyzed. The results of the interview showed adult students' motivation and investment in learning English. All the participants are motivated to learn English when they have specific goals in learning, which compose their imagined identities. Every time language learners use English whether in an oral or written mode, they are engaged in the imagined identity construction and development. The results of the first questionnaire and of the interview showed that professors should provide a more motivating environment in academic context which can bring adult students to better investment in learning a foreign language and therefore enhance the development of their imagined identities. However, this investigation of the concept of imagined identity among adult students in the English Department at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo leads to understanding of the relationship between adult student's imagined identity and investment.

Additionally, future research can explore the imagined identity and factors which contribute to the development of imagined identity in order to enrich our understanding of imagined identity and investment.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE 1**



In this questionnaire, I plan to account for adult students' attitude towards the concept of imagined identity. This questionnaire reveals adult students' attitude towards a range of various exposures to English language suggesting whether these exposures influence the development of the concept of imagined identity among adult students at the Faculty in Sarajevo.

The questionnaire is anonymous. Please do not write your name on it. Mark the answer that suits you the best and put a × sign in the box after it.

Age:

Gender:      Male                       Female

Study programme:

1. I wish all my course at University were taught in English  
Disagree     Slightly Disagree                       Slightly Agree     Agree
2. I like attending classes taught in English more than those taught in Bosnian  
Disagree     Slightly Disagree                       Slightly Agree     Agree
3. I love English and I would like it to replace Bosnian as much as possible in all walks of life  
Disagree     Slightly Disagree                       Slightly Agree     Agree
4. I think speaking English with a Bosnian accent is not bad  
Disagree     Slightly Disagree                       Slightly Agree     Agree
5. I feel proud of speaking English without a Bosnian accent  
Disagree     Slightly Disagree                       Slightly Agree     Agree
6. I aspire to native-like pronunciation of English as much as possible  
Disagree     Slightly Disagree                       Slightly Agree     Agree
7. I believe a person who can speak English very well has a better social status and respect in society  
Disagree     Slightly Disagree                       Slightly Agree     Agree
8. I believe knowing English well means being respected in society in general, and in Bosnian society in particular  
Disagree     Slightly Disagree                       Slightly Agree     Agree
9. When I speak English I feel I am superior to others  
Disagree     Slightly Disagree                       Slightly Agree     Agree

10. I speak English a lot in my daily life  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree
11. I use English words a lot when I speak Bosnian  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree
12. I like to speak Bosnian rather than English with foreigners who know Bosnian  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree
13. I like to speak English rather than Bosnian with my Bosnian friends and colleagues who know English  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree
14. I read and listen to news in English more than in Bosnian  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree
15. I would like to know more about the history of Bosnian than that of English  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree
16. I would like to know more about Bosnian writers and poets rather than English ones  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree
17. I read poetry and fiction in Bosnian a lot  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree
18. I would like to know more about the grammatical structure of English rather than Bosnian  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree
19. I use English more than Bosnian in my communication via e-mail and text messages  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree
20. I use English more than Bosnian in my communication on social media  
 Disagree  Slightly Disagree  Slightly Agree  Agree

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **AN INTERVIEW**

The main goal of this questionnaire is to investigate whether motivation and investment influence learning English among adult students in the English Department. Questionnaire contains three questions which can be answered orally or noted in a given questionnaire.

Please answer the questions freely and write as many information as you can. Your personal opinion matters.

1. What do you think about teaching English in the English Department at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo?

2. Are you motivated to learn English?

3. Do you invest in learning English?