

UNIVERSITY OF SZEGED
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF EDUCATION



**Learning and Teaching
English for Medical Purposes in Hungary:
Investigating Student Motivation and Teacher Perspectives**

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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION SUMMARY

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1. Overview of the dissertation structure

This study-based dissertation comprises five interrelated peer-reviewed articles that investigate the learning and teaching of English for Medical Purposes (EMP) from both learner and teacher perspectives in Hungary. Situated within the domain of education, it addresses motivational, professional, and contextual dimensions of EMP. One study is a focused narrative literature review (Q3), four are original research papers (Q1–Q2 in SJR; see Table 1). Although each study constitutes an independent, self-contained inquiry, all share a common conceptual framework and coherent methodology, forming an integrated research program. Taken together, they offer a holistic and comprehensive picture of EMP instruction within Hungarian higher education.

The work follows a theory-to-practice trajectory: a conceptual re-examination of EMP (Study 1) is followed by the development and validation of an L2-motivation-based instrument (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009) tailored to Hungarian medical students (Study 2). It continues with the quantitative modeling of motivational patterns underlying medical students' effort to learn EMP (Study 3) and expands toward the professional identity of Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) (including EMP) teachers (Study 4). Finally, it concludes with a comparative synthesis of learner and teacher perceptions of medical students' motivational drivers and barriers in learning EMP (Study 5).

Table 1 Summary table of the published studies included in the dissertation

	Reference according to APA 7	SJR	In-text citation
Study 1 <u>MTMT</u>	Stötzer, A., & Farkas, É. (2024). ContEMPorary matter: Updating our understanding of English for Medical Purposes. <i>Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes</i> , 12(3), 741–754. https://doi.org/10.22190/JTESAP241006055S	<i>Education</i> Q3	Stötzer & Farkas, 2024
Study 2 <u>MTMT</u>	Stötzer, A., Farkas, E., & Bagyura, M. (2025). From theory to instrument: Developing an L2 motivational self system-inspired questionnaire. <i>Educational Process: International Journal</i> , 16, e2025252. https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2025.16.252	<i>Education</i> Q2	Stötzer et al., 2025c
Study 3 <u>MTMT</u>	Stötzer, A., Bagyura, M., & Farkas, É. (2026). Running a diagnostic on motivation: Exploring motivational dynamics underlying non-Anglophone medical students' efforts to learn English for Medical Purposes. <i>Educational Process: International Journal</i> , 20, e2026001. https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2026.20.1	<i>Education</i> Q2	Stötzer et al., 2026
Study 4 <u>MTMT</u>	Stötzer, A., Bagyura, M., & Farkas, É. (2025). Self-appointed and self-taught? Professional characteristics and challenges of LSP teachers in Hungary. <i>English Teaching & Learning</i> , 49(4), 889–915. https://doi.org/10.1007/s42321-025-00207-1	<i>Education</i> Q2 <i>Linguistics and Language</i> Q1	Stötzer et al., 2025b
Study 5 <u>MTMT</u>	Stötzer, A., Bagyura, M., & Farkas, É. (2025). Motivational drivers and barriers in learning English for Medical Purposes: Perceptions of Hungarian medical students and EMP teachers. <i>Social Sciences & Humanities Open</i> , 12, 102024. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssho.2025.102024	<i>Social Sciences</i> Q1 <i>Decision Sciences</i> Q2 <i>Psychology</i> Q2	Stötzer et al., 2025a

2. Research background

EMP, a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), addresses the language and communication needs of healthcare professionals and medical students in clinical, academic, and professional settings (Maher, 1986; Tweedie & Johnson, 2022). EMP learners form a diverse group, ranging from undergraduate students in medicine or pharmacy to practicing health professionals seeking to enhance their competence in international or multilingual environments (Sarré & Whyte, 2016). Despite this diversity, their shared aim is to gain the linguistic skills required for professional medical contexts.

In this dissertation, EMP is used in a narrower sense, referring specifically to English instruction for undergraduate medical students. As noted in Study 1 (Stötzer & Farkas, 2024), the term often appears in the literature as an umbrella concept covering several subfields within health sciences. Because linguistic needs and communicative competences differ across health disciplines, this research focuses exclusively on medical students enrolled in programs in which the medium of instruction is Hungarian.

In Hungary, as in other non-Anglophone contexts, EMP courses are usually taught by language professionals with backgrounds in English teaching, applied linguistics, or translation (Szymańska-Tworek & Makowska-Songin, 2019; Vega Umaña, 2020). Few instructors have formal medical training; most acquire domain-specific expertise through self-directed learning. Consequently, EMP teaching occupies an interdisciplinary space at the crossroads of language teaching and medical communication.

The need for discipline-specific language education has grown with globalization and academic mobility. As university language programs increasingly emphasize professional relevance (Einhorn, 2022; Hyland, 2022; Supunya, 2023), LSPs have gained visibility in Hungarian higher education. Although the national Program and Outcome Requirements (Act CCIV of 2011 on Higher Education, Section 16/A) mandate that medical graduates communicate effectively in foreign languages, implementation varies across universities. Recent developments, however, have created momentum for change. Act LIX of 2022 amended the Hungarian Higher Education Act (Act CCIV of 2011), establishing students' legal right to profession-specific language instruction. This policy shift formally legitimized LSP (including EMP) within university programs. Yet implementing the reform requires not only administrative will but also pedagogical insight: universities need evidence-based tools to assess motivation, design curricula, and support teachers. We hope that our research will contribute meaningfully to this process. However, at the time of the national survey, only two of Hungary's four medical schools had explicit graduation requirements related to EMP in the form of a compulsory medical language examination.

Although the recent development further reinforces the importance of LSP provision, obliging universities to support profession-specific language competence, the role of LSP instructors remains ambiguous: their work is essential yet lacks formal recognition. Most are employed as general language teachers, despite the additional disciplinary expertise their work demands. Professional communities such as the Hungarian Association of Teachers and Researchers of Languages for Specific Purposes (SZOKOE) have sought to address this gap, providing forums for research and professional exchange. Still, tensions persist between

institutional expectations and professional identity, underscoring the need for continued inquiry into the status and development of LSP teacher training and LSP education in Hungary.

3. Problem Statement

Despite the growing recognition of English as the global *lingua franca* of medicine, research exploring the motivational processes that underpin the learning and teaching of EMP remains scarce. Most empirical studies on second language motivation have been conducted in general English or ESP contexts, offering limited insight into the professional, psychological, and contextual factors that shape medical students' engagement with EMP. In non-English-medium (non-EMI) medical programs (where English is not the language of instruction yet remains essential for study, research, and clinical communication) this gap is particularly pronounced. Existing motivational frameworks and measurement instruments, largely designed for general language learning, have not been adequately adapted or validated for EMP contexts. As a result, there is a lack of reliable, theory-informed tools that can capture the distinctive motivational dimensions of medical students learning English for professional purposes.

In parallel, research on LSP and EMP teachers has remained strikingly scarce, despite their pivotal role in mediating linguistic and disciplinary domains. These educators often operate in hybrid professional spaces (balancing the demands of language teaching, translation, and medical communication) yet their professional identities, career trajectories, and challenges are rarely investigated. The absence of systematic inquiry into both how medical students learn EMP and how EMP teachers navigate their professional contexts has left a major gap in understanding the dual-sided nature of EMP in higher education.

4. Rationale

Empirical studies on learner motivation within the domains of LSP (including EMP) remain limited both internationally and in Hungary. The LSP (and within it, EMP) learning environment is inherently different from general language education in that it integrates linguistic development with the acquisition of specialized disciplinary knowledge (Hyland, 2022). It operates at the intersection of language and profession, where learners are not merely expected to achieve communicative competence, but to internalize the linguistic norms, genres, and discursive practices of their future professional community. Consequently, the motivational landscape of EMP learning is shaped by factors that extend far beyond the traditional parameters of second language motivation.

At the same time, EMP teachers' professional realities have received little scholarly attention, even though they frequently navigate hybrid roles as language teachers, university instructors, and mediators between language and content. Their professional identities often develop in the absence of clearly defined institutional career structures or dedicated training opportunities. Understanding both the learner and teacher sides is therefore essential to constructing a comprehensive picture of EMP education.

This dissertation was conceived as a response to these gaps. Its guiding rationale was twofold: first, to capture the motivational disposition of Hungarian medical students, and second, to understand the professional identity and agency of the teachers who deliver EMP courses.

5. Theoretical Framework

Motivation has long been a central theme in second language research (Lamb, 2017), yet studies focusing specifically on EMP remain scarce. Learning EMP differs fundamentally from general English learning in both purpose and context, as medical students are driven by complex combinations of personal interest, academic obligation, and professional ambition.

Language motivation research conceptualizes motivation as a dynamic, multidimensional process influenced by cognitive, affective, and social factors (Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998; Szászkó, 2020). Within this tradition, Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017) (SDT) distinguishes intrinsic from extrinsic motives along a continuum of autonomy. While some medical students may learn EMP out of genuine interest or professional vision, others are guided by external pressures, such as exam requirements or career expectations.

Earlier models of language motivation differentiated between *integrative* and *instrumental* orientations (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). *Integrative* motivation reflects a desire to belong to the target language community, while *instrumental* motivation involves using the language as a tool for academic or professional advancement (Csizér & Kormos, 2007). In the Hungarian context, integrativeness extends beyond cultural identification to include participation in the global medical discourse community (Dörnyei, 2005; Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005).

Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) synthesizes these perspectives by linking language learning to one's self-concept. Motivation is shaped by three interrelated components: the *Ideal L2 self*, the *Ought-to L2 self*, and *Learning experiences* (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). For EMP learners, this means envisioning themselves as competent medical professionals communicating effectively in English.

Empirical findings from ESP and EMP contexts (Tomak & Šendula-Pavelić, 2017; Wette, 2018) confirm that motivation in professional English learning is primarily practice-oriented. Learners perceive English as both an instrument of belonging to the international medical community and a prerequisite for academic and professional success.

6. Aims of the dissertation

The dissertation aims to make a meaningful contribution to both theoretical advancement and pedagogical practice in the field of EMP. Its overarching goals are:

1. clarifying the conceptual boundaries of EMP and establishing its relevance and legitimacy as a distinct subfield within ESP;
2. developing and validating an adapted, theory-informed questionnaire grounded in Dörnyei's L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009) and contextualized for Hungarian medical students learning EMP;
3. investigating the motivational profiles of medical students in non-EMI medical programs and identifying the key factors that shape their intended learning effort;
4. exploring the professional characteristics and institutional positioning of EMP instructors, with particular emphasis on their qualifications, career paths, challenges, and emerging professional identities;
5. comparing and contrasting student and teacher perspectives on the major drivers and barriers of EMP learning.

Taken together, these objectives reflect a dual-lens design that foregrounds the dynamic relationship between learner experience and teacher agency. In doing so, the dissertation addresses persistent gaps in the EMP literature and proposes contextually grounded insights to enhance EMP teaching and learning in higher education.

7. Overview of methodology

Following recommendations by Creswell and Guetterman (2024) and Gustavii (2012), the dissertation employs a *study-based format*, where independent but interconnected articles build cumulative knowledge. This structure allows each publication to stand on its own while contributing to a coherent theoretical and methodological whole.

Study 1 (Stötzer & Farkas, 2024) is a focused narrative literature review. Methodologically, the review followed a structured process of source selection, relying on backward snowballing, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and thematic synthesis.

The empirical components of the dissertation (Studies 2–5) were based on questionnaire surveys conducted among Hungarian medical students and LSP (including EMP) teachers. Two parallel instruments were thus employed: one for medical students and one for LSP (including EMP) teachers. The student questionnaire was designed to capture Hungarian medical students' motivation to learn EMP. Drawing on Dörnyei's L2MSS, the instrument adapted established scales (Brady, 2019; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi et al., 2009) to the context of learning EMP, ensuring that each item reflected students' real-life academic and professional experiences. The student questionnaire, developed and validated in Study 2 (Stötzer et al., 2025c), underwent a pilot phase conducted at the University of Szeged (between November and December, 2022), followed by a nationwide survey (between February and April, 2024) across all four Hungarian medical schools. In Study 3 (Stötzer et al., 2026), the validated questionnaire was used to build a mediation model that explored how both 'core' motivational variables and 'supplementary' variables influence medical students' (n=283) Intended Learning Effort (ILE). Data analysis involved linear regression and mediation analyses to identify direct and indirect predictors of ILE.

To gain a broader understanding of the teaching context, the survey targeting EMP teachers was extended to include LSP teachers as well. The teacher questionnaire, developed for Study 4 (Stötzer et al., 2025b) combined closed and open-ended questions. The distribution of this questionnaire was supported by the Hungarian Association of LSP Teachers (SZOKOE), which helped reach respondents teaching in diverse institutional and disciplinary contexts.

Importantly, both instruments (student and teacher questionnaires) contained an identical section asking respondents (in a *forced-choice design*) to evaluate what facilitates and what hinders medical students' learning of EMP. This mirrored structure enabled the comparative analysis in Study 5 (Stötzer et al., 2025a), which juxtaposed student and teacher (EMP teachers only, n=20) perceptions to reveal converging and diverging views on the drivers and barriers of EMP learning.

Together, these methodological components ensured triangulation across participant groups and data sources. The integrated design enabled the dissertation to capture the complex interplay between learner motivation, teacher agency, and institutional context, contributing to

a nuanced and contextually grounded understanding of EMP education in Hungarian higher education.

8. Summaries of the Studies

Study 1 – ContEMPorary Matter: Updating Our Understanding of English for Medical Purposes

Study 1 (Stötzer & Farkas, 2024) presents a focused narrative literature review that examines persistent conceptual and pedagogical ambiguities within EMP, a specialized branch of ESP that has gained increasing visibility in medical education. Despite this prominence, EMP remains inconsistently defined across institutions and disciplines. The paper calls for terminological precision and proposes a functional distinction between EMP, used for medical students and physicians, and EHSP, encompassing related disciplines such as physiotherapy, dentistry, and nursing.

The review situates EMP within the broader ESP framework, noting the global dominance of English in medicine and academia (Di Bitetti & Ferreras, 2017; Heming & Nandagopal, 2012) and emphasizing that EMP differs fundamentally from general English (EGP/EFL) through its content-based, purpose-driven orientation aligned with learners' professional communication needs (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Pavel, 2020). It argues that traditional needs analyses should extend beyond linguistic target descriptions to include learners' motivational factors, study habits, and preferences for instructional format (Bui & Huong, 2023).

Further, the article discusses the complex professional profile of EMP teachers, who often lack formal medical training and rely on self-directed learning and collaboration with medical specialists (Bajzát, 2020; Chateaureynaud & John, 2022). Referring to EU-level initiatives such as TRAILS and CATAPULT, it highlights the urgent need for formal competence frameworks and structured career pathways for LSP/EMP educators (Sarré et al., 2021).

Overall, the study provides the conceptual and terminological grounding for the dissertation's subsequent empirical research. By advocating for clearer definitions, context-sensitive pedagogy, and institutional support, it establishes both the theoretical and practical foundations for advancing EMP instruction in higher education.

Study 2 – From Theory to Instrument: Developing an L2 Motivational Self System-Inspired Questionnaire

Research on motivation in EMP learning remains scarce, and existing instruments fail to reflect its specific psychological and professional dimensions. Addressing this gap, Study 2 (Stötzer et al., 2025c) develops and validates a new questionnaire (EMP Motivation Questionnaire [EMP-MQ]) grounded in Dörnyei's L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009) to measure Hungarian medical students' motivation to learn EMP.

The survey involved 283 students from the four medical schools in Hungary (attending non-EMI programs). Following a pilot phase, the data were analyzed using Principal Component Analysis (PCA), with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's tests confirming sampling adequacy. Cronbach's α and McDonald's ω established internal reliability. The final instrument included nine motivational dimensions: Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to L2 Self, Integrativeness,

Instrumentality (Promotion and Prevention), Attitude toward EMP, Self-Efficacy, Self-Confidence, and L2 Anxiety.

Findings showed that students' motivation was primarily driven by their Ideal L2 Self (the vision of themselves as competent English-using professionals) and by Self-Efficacy, reflecting their belief in their ability to learn EMP successfully. Instrumentality–Promotion, representing recognition of academic and career benefits, was another strong factor, whereas Ought-to L2 Self (external obligation) played a minor role. The results thus confirmed that goal-oriented and self-referential motives dominate EMP learning, while some attitudinal variation suggests the presence of anxiety or resistance among a minority of students.

The study's major contribution lies in offering a validated, context-sensitive measurement tool that extends motivational research beyond the traditional integrative–instrumental dichotomy. It provides both a methodological model and practical implications for curriculum design. By aligning instruction with students' motivational profiles (through authentic materials, simulation-based learning, and anxiety-reducing strategies) educators can foster stronger engagement and professional self-concept.

Overall, the study bridges theoretical and applied perspectives, supplying an empirically grounded framework for future EMP motivation research and for refining pedagogy in non-EMI medical education.

Study 3 – Running a Diagnostic on Motivation: Exploring Hungarian Medical Students' Effort to Learn EMP

Study 3 (Stötzer et al., 2026) examines the motivational dynamics underlying non-Anglophone medical students' engagement with EMP. While EMP has become integral to global medical education, motivation in this domain has rarely been modelled through contemporary frameworks such as Dörnyei's L2MSS. This study bridges that gap by developing a context-sensitive model of medical students' Intended Learning Effort (ILE) grounded in L2MSS and expanded with psycho-social constructs.

The research involved 283 Hungarian medical students enrolled in Hungarian-medium (non-EMI) programs across the four Hungarian medical schools, all of whom had completed at least one EMP course. Using the validated EMP-MQ from Study 2, using the variables of Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to L2 Self, Integrativeness, Instrumentality (Promotion and Prevention), Attitude toward EMP, Self-Efficacy, Self-Confidence, and L2 Anxiety, the study employed linear regression and mediation analyses to map direct and indirect predictors of ILE.

Three key motivational components (Integrativeness, Ideal L2 Self, and Instrumentality–Prevention) directly predicted students' ILE. Among them, Integrativeness was the strongest factor, redefined here not as cultural assimilation but as identification with the international medical community. Students are motivated to learn EMP to participate in global research, publishing, and collaboration rather than to integrate into Anglophone culture. The Ideal L2 Self, representing a clear vision of oneself as a proficient user of medical English, also strongly predicted effort. Instrumentality–Prevention played a secondary role, reflecting students' wish to avoid professional disadvantages due to weak EMP skills.

Instrumentality–Promotion and Ought-to L2 Self showed no direct impact but influenced effort indirectly through their effects on Integrativeness and Ideal L2 Self, suggesting that external and aspirational motives operate through internalized self-concepts.

Among the supplementary variables, self-confidence most strongly predicted both Integrativeness and Ideal L2 Self, while self-efficacy reinforced goal orientation and L2 anxiety correlated with prevention-based motives.

Pedagogically, the findings support authentic, simulation-based instruction that helps students envision themselves as competent English-using professionals. Collaborative teaching between EMP and medical faculty, real-world scenarios, and supportive, low-stakes classroom environments can reduce anxiety and strengthen self-efficacy, translating potential motivation into sustained engagement.

Although conducted in Hungary, the model is transferable to other non-Anglophone contexts. By linking L2MSS with psycho-social dimensions, this study contributes a comprehensive motivational framework and practical guidance for EMP course design, enhancing both learners' linguistic development and their participation in the global medical discourse.

Study 4 – Self-Appointed and Self-Taught? Professional Characteristics and Identity of LSP Teachers in Hungary

Study 4 (Stötzer et al., 2025b) shifts to the teacher perspective and explores the professional background, self-concept, and challenges of LSP teachers in Hungarian higher education, a group largely overlooked in language education research. Although the demand for ESP and EMP instruction is increasing, the professional status of LSP teachers remains ambiguous in Hungary, with no dedicated qualification pathways or recognized career category. Consequently, many perceive themselves as self-appointed (entering the field without formal disciplinary credentials) and self-taught, acquiring subject-specific and pedagogical expertise independently.

The study was based on a national questionnaire survey distributed with the support of SZOKOE and university language centers in Hungary. The sample included 44 LSP teachers from 15 Hungarian higher education institutions, covering a wide range of disciplines and teaching experience.

The questionnaire combined closed-ended items on teachers' educational background, workload, and institutional affiliation with open-ended questions on their career trajectories, professional support, and perceived challenges. Findings revealed a hybrid professional identity shaped by adaptability, institutional marginality, and a lack of structural support. Respondents cited heavy curricular workloads, limited cooperation with disciplinary specialists, and scarce opportunities for targeted professional development.

Many participants described themselves as educational mediators rather than disciplinary insiders, highlighting issues of professional legitimacy, unclear career progression, and insufficient institutional recognition. Yet, alongside these constraints, the data also pointed to strong professional resilience and learner-oriented dedication, suggesting that self-directed learning and intrinsic motivation sustain their work in the absence of formal frameworks.

The study provides one of the first empirical portraits of LSP instructors' professional realities in a Central European context. The study highlights the urgent need for structured professional development and recognition systems that value LSP expertise as both pedagogical and disciplinary competence.

Study 5 – Motivational Drivers and Barriers in Learning English for Medical Purposes: Perceptions of Hungarian Medical Students and EMP Teachers

Study 5 (Stötzer et al., 2025a) explores factors that enhance or hinder medical students' motivation to learn EMP from both learner and teacher perspectives. Using parallel forced-choice questionnaire items, it compares student and teacher perceptions. The study responds to the limited research on EMP learning motivation in Hungarian higher education, where EMP courses were offered either as compulsory or elective subjects within the Hungarian-medium medical curricula but their motivational effects remain underexamined.

A forced-choice questionnaire was completed by 283 medical students and 20 EMP teachers. Participants selected the three most important motivational drivers and barriers to EMP learning from pre-defined lists adapted from Mezei and Fejes's (2020) study on the TARGETS motivational framework, modified for higher education.

Findings revealed a strong alignment between medical students and their EMP teachers regarding major motivational drivers: career goals, personal interest, and a sense of achievement—dimensions closely linked to Dörnyei's L2MSS (2005, 2009), particularly the Ideal L2 Self. Teachers additionally highlighted their own personality and innovative methods as key enablers, indicating professional awareness of their motivational impact.

Similarly, both groups identified heavy academic workload, language anxiety, and fear of failure as major barriers. While students emphasized peer disengagement, teachers were more critical of instructional shortcomings such as limited feedback or inadequate materials, reflecting a sense of pedagogical responsibility.

By comparing learner and teacher perspectives, the study offers a rare dual insight into motivation in EMP contexts. It underscores the importance of career-relevant and psychologically safe classroom environments, rich feedback practices, and institutional support for EMP instructors. Identifying where perceptions converge and diverge provides valuable guidance for developing more motivation-sensitive EMP curricula in higher education.

9. Discussion of the most important findings

Taken together, the five studies present a coherent picture of motivation in learning EMP as a multifaceted and context-bound phenomenon. Accepting that LSP differs fundamentally from general language instruction, the literature and our teaching experience suggested that EMP learners' motivational disposition also diverges: featuring stronger instrumentality, professional identity aspirations, and domain-relevant efficacy beliefs. Across all phases of the research, Hungarian medical students emerged as highly motivated learners whose engagement is primarily driven by professional aspirations rather than by purely linguistic or exam-related goals. Their vision of themselves as competent future doctors who can operate confidently in international settings (whether in research collaboration, patient communication, or postgraduate specialization) serves as a powerful motivational engine. In this respect, the findings reaffirm the centrality of the Ideal L2 Self and its ability to generate long-term effort through goal visualization and identity investment. These patterns align with international findings on the centrality of Ideal L2 Self (Fajt & Bánhegyi, 2023; Huhtala et al., 2019), although not in the domain of EMP. ILE correlated most with Ideal L2 Self and Self-Efficacy;

weaker links for negative attitudes may mask indirect effects via anxiety or confidence, echoing Brady (2019).

Because motivation is embedded in an instructional ecology where teachers are central (Alrabai & Alamer, 2024; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), Study 4 broadened the lens from EMP to the wider LSP field to capture structural patterns that cut across disciplines (Stötzer et al., 2025b). Hungarian LSP teachers often enter the field without formal content credentials and rely on non-formal development—trends echoed elsewhere in Europe (Bocanegra-Valle, 2023; Jurkovič et al., 2024). As shown in Study 4 (Stötzer et al., 2025b), Hungarian LSP and EMP teachers display remarkable resilience and professional commitment despite operating within ambiguous institutional frameworks. Their motivation is sustained by intrinsic factors (such as professional pride and autonomy) but undermined by limited recognition, isolation, and the absence of structured career progression. This imbalance between dedication and systemic support suggests that teacher motivation, much like student motivation, is socially situated and dependent on contextual affordances.

The comparative analysis in Study 5 (Stötzer et al., 2025a) ties these strands together by demonstrating that student and teacher perceptions of students' EMP learning motivation largely converge on the importance of career relevance, authentic communication, and professional identity. Item-level and aggregated analyses (organized by L2MSS; Dörnyei, 2005, 2009) showed broad convergence: Ideal L2 Self dominated as a driver (career goals, personal interest, achievement). L2 Learning Experience was next, with students emphasizing mastery-related achievement (Bandura, 1997) and teachers highlighting instructor personality and innovative methods. These patterns align with SDT's emphasis on autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000) and with sociocultural views of co-constructed learning (Vygotsky, 1978).

As for barriers, both groups pointed to heavy schedules and language anxiety—consistent with affective filter and cognitive-load perspectives (Krashen, 1982; Sweller, 1988). Students stressed peer disengagement; teachers emphasized structural obstacles (large groups, equipment) and were more self-critical regarding feedback and materials, signaling professional responsibility. Teacher-student relations ranked low as demotivators, suggesting generally positive classroom climates. The findings highlight complementary lenses on the same ecology and point to interventions that address both structural and affective dimensions.

Overall, the dissertation advances a view of motivation as an ecological system in which individual, interpersonal, and structural dimensions interact. Rather than treating motivation as an inner trait, it conceptualizes it as an emergent property of educational relationships, i.e., an energy that circulates between students, teachers, and institutions. This relational understanding extends Dörnyei's L2MSS (2005, 2009) to professional learning contexts, emphasizing that motivation in EMP entails not merely learning a language but constructing a professional self within a multilingual world.

10. Pedagogical and practical implications

The five studies collectively yield practical guidance for EMP teaching and curriculum design in non-EMI medical programs, spanning instructional strategies, curriculum integration, teacher development, and institutional supports.

A consistent theme is the centrality of the Ideal L2 Self in sustaining engagement with EMP. This future-oriented vision is best activated through authentic learning environments: both content-based (language through disciplinary texts, cases, lectures) and context-based (language embedded in communicative roles and settings such as consultations, ward rounds, and academic talks). Across Studies 3 and 5, authenticity emerged as a strong lever for motivation and self-efficacy; thus, scenario-based simulations (e.g., clinical role-plays, simulated doctor–patient interactions) and other professionally meaningful tasks should mirror real clinical and academic practices (Stötzer et al., 2025b).

Curriculum should also pursue meaningful integration of EMP with medical subjects. As argued in Studies 1 and 4 (Stötzer & Farkas, 2024; Stötzer et al., 2025b), collaboration between EMP instructors and medical faculty can produce interdisciplinary modules and co-supervised projects (e.g., Scientific Students’ Association work) where students read, research, and present in English while deepening domain knowledge. Parallel delivery of EMP alongside content courses reinforces domain-specific knowledge and professional language skills, simultaneously activating instrumentality–promotion (concrete academic/career benefits) and integrativeness (participation in the global medical community as reframed in Study 3). Such integration requires coordination and curricular flexibility but promises substantial pedagogical gains.

Equally important are the affective and psychosocial conditions of learning. Studies 3, 4, and 5 show that L2 anxiety, low self-efficacy, and fear of failure can depress participation, especially early in training. A psychologically safe, feedback-rich classroom (using formative assessment, scaffolded instruction, differentiated tasks, flipped delivery, and collaborative work) helps lower anxiety and build autonomy and confidence (Stötzer et al., 2025a). Low-stakes, scaffolded tasks (e.g., voice-recorded interpreting exercises) and structured peer collaboration (Branden, 2006) let learners rehearse performance without high pressure, turning latent motivation into sustained effort.

These implications recalibrate expectations for EMP teachers in non-EMI contexts. Instructors increasingly act as mediators who design authentic, professionally grounded tasks and collaborate across disciplines, i.e., work that is expertise-intensive and time-consuming. Studies 1, 4, and 5 show that many EMP teachers lack formal medical training and operate with limited recognition and professional development opportunities. Institutions should acknowledge the specialized expertise EMP teaching demands, incentivize structured collaboration with content faculty, and offer targeted in-service training in LSP methodology, needs analysis, and outcome-oriented design, including learning-outcome-based planning (Farkas, 2017) and backward design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

A promising support is formal mentoring for novice EMP instructors. Systematized, resourced mentoring (observation, co-teaching, material development, and reflective practice under experienced supervisors) would professionalize entry into LSP/EMP teaching. Complementary micro-credentials could certify modular competencies (needs analysis, authentic materials, backward design, interdisciplinary collaboration), validating non-linear professional growth and providing clearer career pathways.

Finally, to achieve deeper pedagogical authenticity, teachers need proximity to the target discourse communities. Mobility, study visits, and interdisciplinary placements in clinical settings (domestic or international) can refine instructors’ understanding of medical

communication and inform task design. Such initiatives require institutional advocacy and funding.

Together, the studies argue for learner-centered, motivation-sensitive, and contextually integrated EMP education, aligning learner profiles, teacher responsibilities, and institutional infrastructures. Many colleagues already enact outcome-oriented, interdisciplinary, learner-centered practices; however, without formal frameworks, policy support, and workload recognition, these remain invisible and unsustained. Realizing their full impact will require top-down reinforcement to match ongoing bottom-up innovation.

11. Limitations

While the five studies provide a comprehensive view of EMP-related motivation and teaching in Hungarian higher education, several limitations should be acknowledged. Reaching and engaging LSP/EMP teachers proved difficult due to their dispersed and often invisible institutional status. Although 44 LSP (including 20 EMP teachers) participated, the findings primarily reflect the perspectives of this self-selected sample and should not be generalized to all instructors. Similarly, recruiting medical students was challenging given their heavy workloads and survey fatigue, factors that likely affected participation.

Methodologically, the research relied on cross-sectional self-report data, offering valuable snapshots but limiting causal inference and temporal insight. The validated EMP motivation questionnaire was developed in a specific national and disciplinary context; thus, future studies should seek cross-institutional and cross-cultural validation. In the qualitative strand, the absence of follow-up interviews restricted the depth of interpretation regarding teacher identity.

Finally, the project's interdisciplinary scope (spanning motivation research, language pedagogy, and medical education) posed challenges in aligning theoretical frameworks and publication venues. Nonetheless, these constraints were the result of deliberate methodological choices that, while complex, also contributed to the dissertation's originality and breadth.

12. Future directions

While the five studies provide a solid empirical foundation, they also open new avenues for research and practice. Future work should explore motivation longitudinally, tracing how the Ideal L2 Self and self-efficacy evolve as students transition from pre-clinical studies to residency and professional life. Extending the EMP-MQ to related fields such as nursing, physiotherapy, and pharmacy would enable comparative analyses across healthcare disciplines.

Parallel efforts should focus on the professionalization of LSP teaching. Establishing mentoring networks, national workshops, and micro-credential programs could institutionalize the expertise that currently develops informally. Collaborative research between language educators and medical faculty members could further integrate EMP into disciplinary curricula.

Ultimately, the dissertation aspires not merely to describe motivational phenomena but to transform educational practice. By aligning theoretical insight with institutional change, it seeks to embed EMP within the very fabric of professional development in healthcare, fostering a generation of physicians and educators who view language learning not as an external requirement but as a natural extension of their professional identity.

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List of Related Publications and Conferences¹

Article Publications [*First and Corresponding Author]

Stötzer, A.*, Bagyura, M., & Farkas, É. (2026). Running a diagnostic on motivation: Exploring motivational dynamics underlying non-Anglophone medical students' efforts to learn English for Medical Purposes. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 20, e2026001. <https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2026.20.1>

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Conferences

Stötzer, A., & Farkas, É. (2025, November 21–22). *A „kompetenciás tengeren” innen és túl – szaknyelvtanárok új elvárások és kihívások között* [Navigating the “Sea of Competencies” – New Expectations and Challenges for LSP Teachers] [Hungarian plenary presentation]. 25th SZOKOE Annual International Conference entitled Competences, Languages for Specific Purposes, Domains: Shifting Boundaries, Miskolc, Hungary.

Stötzer, A., & Bagyura, M. (2025, November 13–15). *Motiváló és demotiváló tényezők az angol orvosi szaknyelv tanulásában: magyar orvostanhallgatók és szaknyelvtanárok nézőpontjai* [Motivational and demotivational factors in learning English for Medical Purposes: Perspectives of Hungarian medical students and EMP teachers] [Hungarian paper presentation]. ONK2025 – 25th Conference on Educational Sciences, Szeged, Hungary.

Stötzer, A., & Bagyura, M. (2025, May 22). *Az angol orvosi szaknyelv tanítását és tanulását célzó kutatás élethosszig tartó tanulás szempontjából releváns tanulságai* [Lifelong Learning Implications of an EMP Research Project] [Hungarian paper presentation]. A Lifelong Learning Ökoszisztemá Fejlesztésének kérdései és kihívásai/Trends and Issues of Developing Lifelong Learning Eco-systems: 21. MELLearN Lifelong Learning Konferencia, Szeged, Hungary.

Stötzer, A. (2024, November 29–30). *On the same page? – A Survey of Professional Pathways and Challenges of LSP Teachers in Hungary*. [English paper presentation]. SZOKOE 24th Annual International Conference: Repositioning the Teaching of LSP: Technological and Structural Challenges, Budapest, Hungary.

¹ The lists below present the related publications and conference presentations in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recently published/presented work.

Stötzer, A. (2024, September 20–21). *A questionnaire-based study of learning English for Medical Purposes among Hungarian medical students*. [English paper presentation]. 1st International Conference – Languages in Medicine: Teaching, Testing Practice, Krakow, Poland.

Stötzer, A. (2024, September 6–7). *Exploiting Synergies in “Bilingual” Medical Communication Classes*. [English paper presentation] 6th English for Healthcare Conference organized by European Association for Language Teachers for Healthcare (EALTHY), Brighton, UK.

Stötzer, A. (2024, May 29–June 1). *Self-appointed and self-taught? - A qualitative survey of LSP teachers in Hungary*. [English paper presentation] ATEE Spring Conference 2024 Teacher education research in Europe: trends, challenges, practices and perspectives, Bergamo, Italy.

Stötzer, A. (2024, May 24–25). *Exploring the Identity and Motivation of Teachers of English for Medical Purposes*. [English paper presentation and abstract]. 11th Austrian UAS Language Instructors’ Conference “Common Ground in ESP”, Wiener Neustadt, Austria.

Stötzer, A. (2024, May 24–25). *Medical Students’ learning strategies in learning English for Medical Purposes*. [English poster presentation]. 11th Austrian UAS Language Instructors’ Conference “Common Ground in ESP”, Wiener Neustadt, Austria.

Stötzer, A. (2023, October 26–28). *Orvostanhallgatók angol szaknyelvtanulási motivációja – egy pilotkutatás eredményei*. [Medical Students’ Motivation to Learn English for Medical Purposes – Findings of a Pilot Study] [Hungarian paper presentation]. ONK2023 – 23rd Conference on Educational Sciences, Budapest, Hungary.

Stötzer, A. (2023, October 26–28). *Szaknyelvtanári identitás és motiváció vizsgálatának elméleti háttere*. [Theoretical Background to the Investigation of LSP Teachers’ Professional Identity and Motivation] [Hungarian paper presentation]. ONK2023 – 23rd Conference on Educational Sciences, Budapest, Hungary.

Stötzer, A., Asztalos-Zsembery, E., & Csenki-Bozsó, R. (2022, November 11). *Konszekutív tolmácsolás órák a szaknyelvtanulás szolgálatában* [Consecutive Interpreting Classes in the Service of Language for Specific Purposes Learning]. [Hungarian paper presentation]. SZOKOE 22nd Annual International Conference: Working Together Nationally and Internationally to Promote Learning Languages for Specific Purposes, Szeged, Hungary.

Stötzer, A. (2022, September 16–17). *Quasi-Consecutive Interpreting Classes in the Service of Language Learning*. [English paper presentation]. 5th English for Healthcare Conference organized by European Association for Language Teachers for Healthcare (EALTHY), Belgrade, Serbia.

Stötzer, A. (2021, September 17). *English Communication Skills Training for Medical Educators – in the virtual classroom*. [English paper presentation]. EALTHY Virtual Symposium organized by European Association for Language Teachers for Healthcare (EALTHY), (online)

Stötzer, A. (2021, June 28–30). *A bilingual course for medical students on doctor-patient communication*. [English paper presentation]. 19th International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Communication, Medicine, and Ethics, Como, Italy. (online)

Stötzer, A. (2021, May 14). *Teaching Medical Interpreting Online*. [English paper presentation]. EALTHY Spring Symposium, Pécs, Hungary.