

Understanding ESL Novice Teachers' Use of Motivational Strategies: A Qualitative Perspective

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ABSTRACT

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The current study investigated the ESL novice teachers' use of the motivational strategies, particularly on their perceptions and actual classroom practices of the said strategies. Despite the extensive number of studies on motivational strategies, most are largely emphasizing on the quantitative methods; hence, there is limited in-depth research which has been done especially among novice teachers' implementation of the motivational strategies in the classroom contexts. This qualitative case study involved three novice teachers from secondary school in Klang Valley and data were collected using semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion alongside with document analysis and thematic analysis were used to analyze the data collected. The findings revealed that the teachers generally posit positive perceptions on the use of motivational strategies primarily in improving students' engagement, learning experience and teacher-student relationships. Some of the actual classroom practices also include giving rewards and recognition, providing feedback in motivated manner and building a classroom environment that are supportive to both academic and emotional needs. Overall, this study emphasizes the influence of contextual factors that shape the implementation of motivational strategies in ESL classrooms.

Contribution/Originality: This study provides qualitative insights into ESL novice teachers' perceptions and practices of motivational strategies, addressing the gap in existing quantitative research. It highlights how teachers' beliefs and classroom contexts shape the implementation of these strategies, offering practical implications for improving ESL teaching and learning.

1. Introduction

For many decades, motivation is widely known as one of the major critical factors that contributes to the success of second language learning. In this field of study, motivation has been regarded as a method that facilitates both students and teachers in teaching and learning of the second language. According to Dornyei (2001), motivation is commonly acknowledged as an important trait of a learner or educator as it is a crucial element that ensures that one would be able to endure and become persistence in the journey of mastering and learning the second language. This is because, Dornyei (2005) further explained that the lack of motivation in both teaching and learning would eventually lead to underperformance despite the existence of well-constructed curriculum and excellent teaching approaches. Additionally, Lamb (2017) stated that motivation is perceived as a key component in assisting learners to further progress and improve in their learning of the English language. Due to this, motivation has always been emphasized as a crucial factor in the field of second language learning as it plays a vital role in enhancing the progress and learners' achievement in learning English. In a recent study by Faizil Anuar et al. (2022), they claim that motivation is very much needed in second language education as it boosts students and teachers' goal-oriented behavior. Due to this, the topic of motivation in second language learning has consistently been revised over the years to sustain both teachers' and students' motivation.

Over the years, there have been numerous studies that have been conducted with regards to second language motivation and its relation to second language learners. Visser-Wijnveen et al. (2014) posit that the topic of motivation research has long been acknowledged due to its great importance in empowering second language learners' learning progress. With this idea, it gives an indication that motivation in L2 learning has become a widely acknowledged topic which plays an utmost significant to the current area of studies. Despite the extensive number of studies on motivational strategies particularly in ESL classrooms, there is a lack of in-depth understanding as to how novice teachers perceive and use the motivational strategies in actual classroom contexts. This is primarily because the existing literatures mainly emphasized on studying the motivational patterns and their importance using the quantitative approaches; hence, there is a possibility to overlook the complexity and context-specific nature of teachers' understanding and classroom practices (Ushioda, 2016). To add, Papi et al. (2019) highlighted that motivation is well-known for its dynamic and context-sensitive nature due to the influence of classroom interaction and individual teacher experiences. Consequently, the lack of qualitative insights has made it challenging to truly comprehend how the novice teachers adapt and make decision particularly when using the motivational strategies in the actual classroom. This gives an indication that there is a growing need to address this gap from the lens of novice teachers. Therefore, this study is conducted to further explore the novice teachers' perceptions and actual use of motivational strategies in ESL classroom.

1.1. Research Questions

This study aims to examine the novice teachers' perceptions and actual classroom practices of motivational strategies in ESL classroom. To achieve this, the following research questions have been developed to provide a much clearer prospect of this study.

- i. What are the ESL novice teachers' perceptions on the advantages of using the motivational strategies in an ESL classroom of a secondary school in Klang Valley?
- ii. How does the ESL novice teachers practice the motivational strategies in an ESL classroom of a secondary school in Klang Valley?

2. Literature Review

2.1. L2 Motivation

Dornyei (2001) defined motivation as an extent or degree to which a person works to learn a particular target language out of personal desire or might be caused by one's satisfaction in experiencing the learning process. When learning the second language, it is essential to note that motivation is very much needed to enhance one's language proficiency. Owing to this, Cheng and Dornyei (2007) has stated in their studies that motivation should be perceived as an element that facilitates both teachers and learners in their process of teaching and learning the second language. This is due to motivation acts as a critical factor in language learning and not only learners, but teachers will struggle to progress with their teaching without sufficient motivation despite the years of experiences (Al-Hoorie, 2017). Additionally, Henry and Thorsen (2018) noted that both teachers and learners' motivation can be enhanced with the right use of motivational strategies in their classroom activities, provided that they have to be meaningful and aligned with their teaching and learning goals. Therefore, the use of motivational strategies is very much needed in the classroom activities as these are the moving power that helps to boost teachers and students' motivation.

2.2. Motivational Strategies

Throughout the years, many recent studies have constantly shown the influence of teachers in shaping the students' motivation with the right use of motivational strategies. According to Alharbi (2020), teachers are regarded as a primary role in influencing the students' L2 motivation with the correct implementation of motivational strategies in ESL classrooms. Lin and Lee (2025) revealed that the said strategies help language educators to translate motivational theories into actual classroom practices which can improve students' participation and involvement with the L2 learning. However, the concept of motivational strategies continues to evolve and prosper over time, hence, several studies have collectively portrayed that motivational strategies are perceived as practical tools in developing students' L2 motivation. A quantitative study by Zainol et al. (2024) noted that teachers' beliefs and their years of experiences as well as classroom contexts may influence the actual implementation of motivational strategies in classroom settings. In a more current study, Uras Eren (2025) highlighted that motivational strategies are perceived as techniques that are being deliberately employed by teachers from different background with the aim to provide sufficient language support and sustain students' motivation throughout the process of learning. By putting all these together, the above-mentioned studies have clearly demonstrated that motivational strategies are the primary element in ensuring the success of L2 learning and this could only be made possible with

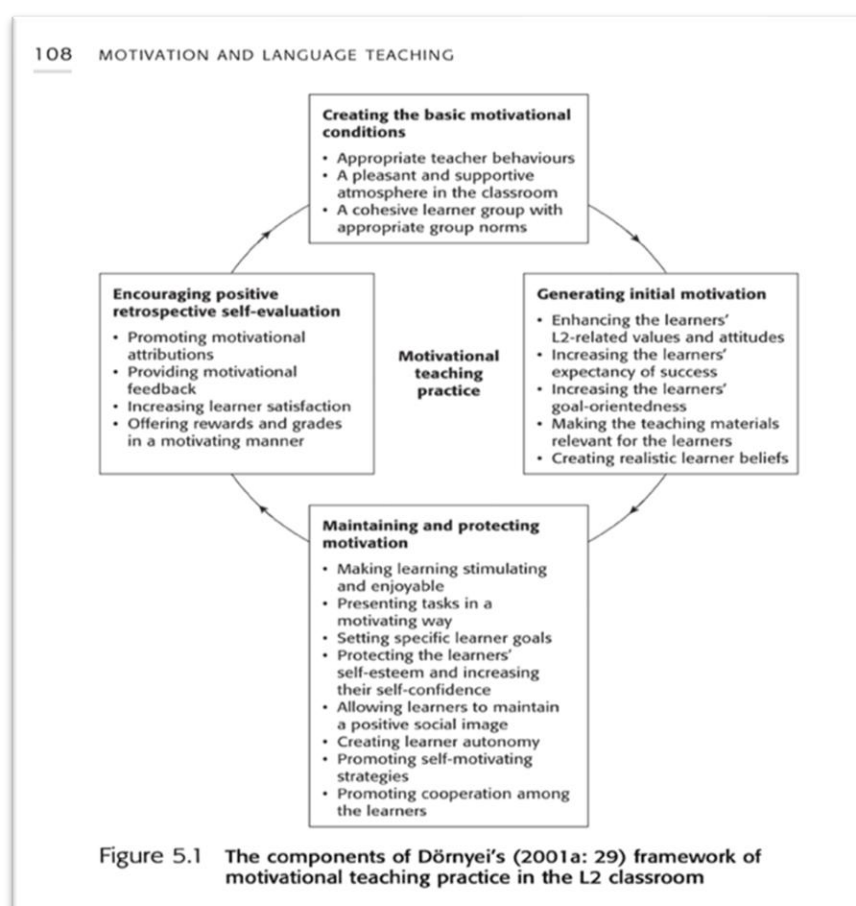
the influence of teachers and contextual factors in ensuring the sustainability of students' L2 motivation and consistent engagement in the classroom setting.

2.3. Motivational Strategies (Theoretical Framework)

This research is based on the theoretical framework by Dornyei (2001), which is known as The Components of Motivational Teaching Practice Model in the L2 classroom. The framework is referred from the latest edition book written by Dornyei & Ushioda (2011) entitled "Teaching and Researching Motivation". Referring to the figure 1 below, Dornyei (2001) has listed out four major components in motivational teaching practices which are establishing basic motivational conditions, generating students' motivations, sustaining and protecting motivation and promoting positive self-evaluation.

Figure 1: Theoretical framework of the present study

The Components of Dornyei's Framework of Motivational Teaching Practice in the L2 Classroom



(Dornyei, 2001, as cited in Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011)

Based on this model, it can be perceived that each of the components act as the primary motivational strategies which is also known as macro-strategies, and these are supported by sub motivational strategies (micro strategies). In this model, the first aspect requires the teacher to create a conducive and appropriate conditions in the classroom to ensure students' motivation. For example, the teacher can establish such conditions by creating a healthy relationship with the students, provide a supportive classroom surrounding and foster cohesiveness among the students (Sugita & Takeuchi, 2009). Next, the second aspect

of this model focuses on establishing initial motivation among the students and this can be achieved by creating or using relevant teaching materials for the learners. According to Alrabai (2014), this will further encourage learner to progress in their learning of the second language as the materials used are more relevant; hence, leading them to have more interest towards L2 learning. To add, Guilloteaux (2013) stated that this aspect also emphasizes on promoting the learners' confidence to succeed in learning the L2 and most importantly, to facilitate the students to have a much clearer and achievable goal when learning the second language. Meanwhile, the third aspect of this model highlights on the need to maintain and protect the students' motivation. As for this dimension, it involves in ensuring that learning is engaging and stimulating for the students, sustaining learners' self-esteem, promoting their confidence and further encourage cooperation among the students. Lastly, the fourth aspect of this model emphasized on the techniques and methods in encouraging students to have positive self-assessment. In this last component, Bernaus & Gardner (2008) stated that the strategies involve facilitating students to develop motivational attributions among them, providing encouraging feedback based on their performance, giving rewards, or celebrating their success based on their progress in learning.

Referring to the explanation above, it can be deduced that this framework is most relevant and suitable for the current context of study as the techniques and strategies provided are comprehensive and focuses on wider scope of motivational strategies. Therefore, it provides more rooms for those strategies to be used as reference and guidance in different learning circumstances. In addition, this framework model is most fitting for this study as this research primarily focuses on exploring the teachers' perceived advantages on the motivational strategies which lie under the four key aspects as mentioned above. Thus, through this research, we will be able to view how the novice ESL teachers perceive the motivational strategies; hence, allowing us to identify whether they are aligned to this motivational teaching practice framework model built by Dornyei (2001).

2.4. Teachers' Perceptions of Motivational Strategies

Based on past studies, it can be identified that motivational strategies have been used widely by the language teachers to further enhance students' motivation in acquiring the second language. According to Johnson et al. (2022), the use of motivational strategies among language teachers are very much needed as it has proven to promote students' interest in learning the L2; however, the success of the implementation highly relies on how the teachers employ those strategies in the ESL classroom. Owing to this, there are multiple views and perceptions on how motivational strategies are perceived and used by the L2 teachers.

In a study by Bamuhiga and Kimambo (2025), they claimed that most Tanzanian English teachers in their context of study perceive that portraying appropriate teacher behavior such as promoting learners' autonomy, providing tasks in motivating way are some of the most used and preferred motivational strategies in the English classroom. This is because, the students tend to be heavily influenced by the teachers; hence, showing exemplary behavior is deemed as necessary to further improve students' engagement and ultimately, to sustain their L2 motivation in the long run. This way, it has proven to that such strategies are very much needed to create the basic motivational condition for the students. Similarly, a study by Omar et al. (2020) have posited that most teachers perceived Proper Teacher Behaviour as the highly-rated strategy due to its effectiveness in ensuring students' participation in learning; however, it was noted that students' L2 motivation are heavily shaped by the teachers' perceived motivation in teaching. In

contrast to Bamuhiga and Kimambo (2025), Omar et al. (2020) revealed that promoting learners' autonomy is less preferred and less practiced in class due to its impracticality in actual classroom setting.

Other than that, Gan et al. (2022) posited that in the context of pre-service teachers, having a growth mindset is the primary predictor in ensuring the teachers' use of motivational strategies in the ESL classrooms, particularly with the assistance of technology in classroom practices. This is primarily because, in order for the teachers to promote motivational attributions to the students, they themselves must first comprehend the idea of incorporating various instructive technology practices in their teaching to improve the students' motivation and do not highly rely on the use of chalk and paper most of the time. Additionally, a recent study by Yetis (2025) claimed that school climate and motivation to teach are some of the factors that influenced the teachers' decision making in utilizing the motivational strategies. It was revealed that positive school climate has improved teachers' motivation in using innovative practices to sustain the learners' language motivation (Yetis, 2025). Aside from that, Yang (2021) found that teachers are generally viewing motivational strategies as very much effective to improve learners' experiences in ESL classrooms and the strategies include the use of effective feedback, providing rewards and verbal encouragement, giving them appropriate recognition based on their achievements. The said strategies have been proven to be able to retain students' attention and ultimately, their motivation during the teaching and learning process. Similarly, Derakshan et al. (2020) indicated that teachers' consistent acknowledgment and recognition towards the students' effort and progress in L2 learning has proven to lead students to demonstrate better level of participation and interests. This implies that the application of motivational strategies in ESL classrooms must be consistent and not a one-time enhancement as it needs to be sustainable throughout the language learning process.

Despite all of the positive perceptions in regard to the use of motivational strategies in ESL classrooms, it is also equally important to note the negative views on the use of the said strategies. According to Ryan and Deci (2020), it was found that a few teachers were expressing their worries towards the idea of relying too much towards the use of rewards, particularly external rewards as this might not be sustainable in the long run and will only help the students' temporary engagement during the L2 learning process. Similarly, Gkonou et al. (2020) also revealed that the said strategies are viewed as demanding by some teachers as they need thorough planning and consistent effort from the teachers most of the time to ensure that all students feel included during the learning process. These outcomes indicated that while motivational strategies have consistently proven to be very much effective, there might be varying perceptions regarding it as these views are primarily influenced by the teachers' experiences and actual classroom contexts.

In terms of actual classroom practices, MacIntyre et al. (2019) indicated that teachers who have commonly practices the use of meaningful task and providing a supportive and engaging learning experience are proven to be more successful in boosting and sustaining the students' motivation. Also, Mercer and Dornyei (2020) found that creating a classroom environment that not only support the students academically but emotionally too has proven to be very much imperative in maintaining the students' motivation and learning engagement. They further highlighted that this goes hand in hand with the practice of building a positive teacher-learners relationship as supportive classroom environment are highly based on the relationship built between the two parties. Overall, it can be perceived that there are various perceptions as to how motivational strategies are perceived by L2 teachers along with the teachers' preference in implementing the said strategies in the

actual classroom. Therefore, it is imperative to note that not all strategies deemed effective are well-practiced as the actual practices may differ from one another depending on the current educational context.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Research Design

This research is conducted by using the naturalistic inquiry approach as it is done qualitatively to study in-depth the perceptions of the novice teachers of motivational strategies in ESL classroom. With regards to this, a qualitative method is employed to collect data and findings that necessary and relevant for this context of study. This study employs a case study research design as this research is involved with identifying the novice teachers' in-depth perceptions and the data collected will reveal variety of views and opinions; therefore, it is believed that a case study research design would be the most fitting to address the purpose and objectives of this study. According to Stake (2000), the use of case study is useful towards investigating individual deeper perspectives as well as to see how one's beliefs could influence their practices. With that being said, therefore, a case study research design is most suitable to investigate the teachers' perceptions and their actual classroom practices of the motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. In this research, the research is executed by conducting semi-structured interviews with the selected participants. Prior to that, the interview questions are constructed by the researcher and the questions are mostly emphasized on the novice teachers' perceptions of motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. Therefore, in-depth explanation on the data collected will be provided later in another of chapter of this report.

3.2. Research Participants

In this study, the participants who are involved consist of three novice English teachers who are currently working in a public and private secondary school in Kuala Lumpur, with teaching experience of 4 years and below. The selected participants are teaching English in their respective schools to students of upper and lower secondary level. To add, the participants are female and male teachers, and their age is range between 25 to 29 years old. These participants are selected based on their experience in using the motivational strategies during their teaching of the English language. In order to ensure that these participants have a background knowledge or understandings with regards to the motivational strategies, a list of strategies will be given to them prior to the interview to ensure that the participants understand and have experienced in implementing the strategies in their teaching. According to Creswell (2009), it is imperative to become very specific in selecting the participants especially for qualitative study as this will determine the input that we will gain from the participants; therefore, providing specific criteria is crucial to obtain the correct participants for the study. In addition, it is hoped that these participants will be able to provide fresh and new opinions in relation to their experience with using the motivational strategies as these generations may have a different approach of employing the strategies in the ESL classroom. This is because, Kourtizin & Vizard (1999) claimed that beginner teacher or novice teachers tend to have different perspectives with regards to their teaching practice; hence, it is useful to further explore their ideas as they might bring new insight towards the literature.

3.2.1. Teaching Experience

These participants were selected purposely among the novice teachers with teaching experience of 4 years as below as a large number of previous studies have been focusing on well-experienced teachers. With regards to this, it is interesting to explore the novice teachers' perceptions of the motivational strategies as they may have different opinions and experience in using such strategies. Therefore, these participants may provide a much updated and current perceptions on the motivational strategies used in their respective classrooms which may be beneficial for this current context of study.

3.2.2. School

In addition, these participants are currently teaching in different schools (public and private schools) located around Klang Valley. The reason behind this selection is mainly because the researcher seeks to investigate various opinions from the novice teachers who have experienced teaching in a different teaching environment with students of different level of English proficiency.

3.3. Research Procedures

With regards to the research procedure, this study is executed by employing the qualitative method in which it involves the use of both semi-structured interviews and focus group interview. All the interview sessions are conducted via online platform using the Google Meet applications. Therefore, all interviews will be video recorded for transcriptions purposes. In addition, these interviews are semi-structured interviews; hence, all the interview questions are consisting of open-ended questions that are prepared and constructed by the researcher prior to the interview sessions. Also, since this research is aimed to study in-depth on the novice teachers' perceptions; hence, it is believed that semi-structured interviews along with focus group interview would be the most suitable and feasible method of collecting data as the researcher is able to add on additional questions that are deemed appropriate during the interview in order to elicit more detailed and valuable responses from the selected participants. Besides, it is also imperative to note that the focus group interview was conducted to answer additional follow up questions that are deemed necessary to further elicit detailed responses from the selected participants and most importantly, to identify consistency in their answers based on the individual semi-structured interviews. According to Nyumba et al. (2018), the use of focus group interview is crucial as it will allow researchers to gain an in-depth understanding and responses from the participants as such interview allow more rooms for probing and sharing of opinions. Also, another instrument that is used for this research include document analysis whereby the researcher will look at the lesson plans of the selected novice teacher to further validate their responses that were given during both interviews.

3.4. Data Analysis

Since this study uses semi-structured interviews method, all the interview sessions are recorded. Prior to the interview, the selected participants are briefed about the interview protocol to ensure that all of them are well-informed with the format of the interview. This will likely ease the process of the interviews and that participants will become more anticipative and confident to respond to the interview questions asked by the researchers. Each of the interview sessions are recorded using the recorder and transcribed before the

data will be presented in the form of interview transcriptions. This way, it will be much easier for the researcher in terms of handling and extracting to gather the findings. After the transcribing process has finished, all the transcriptions are then further analyzed to answer the research questions. Apart from that, focus group interview is also used for this context of study. The reason of doing the focus group interview is to further explore and probe into the novice teachers' perceptions of motivational strategies in ESL classroom and most importantly, to seek consistency based on their responses. Also, this is done to ensure the trustworthiness of this research. Next, to ensure the anonymity of the research participants, the participants' responses will be presented using the pseudonyms such as Participant A, B and C with the aim to protect their privacy. Lastly, the data gathered will be analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) Six-Phase Framework of Thematic Analysis. The findings will then be further discussed in the following chapter of this research.

3.5. Research Ethics and Trustworthiness

When conducting this study, there are a few ethical considerations that must be considered prior to executing the interviews. Firstly, before conducting the interview, the participants' consent must be obtained to ensure that they are able and willing to participate in this research. With regards to that, the research has prepared a consent form for each of the participants, and it was emailed to them to obtain their permission before the interview sessions can be conducted. Furthermore, since the interviews are taped and transcribed, the researcher must acquire the participants' permission which will be included in the consent form to record their respective responses during the interview sessions. Also, the participants were informed that their identity are protected and will not be disclosed in this research as a precaution measure to protect the confidentiality of the participants. Therefore, all the participants are labelled anonymously for this study.

Since this study is conducted using qualitative method; hence, the issue of trustworthiness is one of the essential elements that need to be included in this context of study. First, to ensure the credibility of this study, the triangulation method will be used in conducting this research. In this case, the triangulation method was done by interviewing multiple participants who are currently teaching in different schools and classes to cross-analyze the findings. All the findings from the selected participants were then be cross-checked with one another to establish the credibility of this study. Furthermore, the email interviews will be conducted to further strengthen the triangulation of the given data. By doing so, the researcher would be able to monitor the consistency of the responses provided by the participants during the interview. In addition, to ensure the dependability of this study, all the interview questions are constructed, structured, and asked without having any biasness to the participants' experience or strength in teaching. This is because, it will help to avoid any potential biasness that may arise when developing and asking the interview questions to the selected participants. Also, all the interview questions will be reviewed by a few peers and a lecturer to further confirm the accuracy of the questions that have been prepared by the researchers. Lastly, to establish the confirmability of this research, all the interview recordings were recorded using an appropriate and reliable recording device that is deemed suitable for this context of study.

4. Results

4.1. The Advantages of Using the Motivational Strategies in the ESL Classroom as Perceived by Teachers

The following section will further discuss on the first research questions, which mainly emphasizes on the ESL novice teachers' perceptions on the advantages of using the motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. Therefore, the data presented below are the result for the first research question.

4.2.1. Increase Students' Engagement and Level of Productivity

During the interview sessions, majority of the participants indicated that the use of motivational strategies in the ESL classrooms has further enhanced the students' engagement along with their productivity level. One participant claimed that the motivational strategies used have increased the students' participation during the English lesson and her students appeared to be more engaged during discussion or any classroom activities which require individual and group participations. She further added that such improvements were prominent after she has used one of the motivational strategies such as portraying appropriate behavior with the students.

".....i think uh, these motivational strategies help them to you know more engaged and motivated to learn something, that's when they will able to you know, complete the task and participate better in the classroom."

(Participant A)

Also, Participant A further stated in the interview that her students who used to be very passive have now become more excited and eager to learn. These students portrayed active participation and seemed to be even more motivated to become volunteers for any activities that require representative from each group. Similarly, Participant C also mentioned during the interview that some of her students portrayed better engagement in terms of their participation in the class. This is because, she identified that her students provided prompt response especially during the questions and answers session. For instance, she mentioned that one of her students portrayed better engagement by taking more notes when she was teaching and promptly asked questions right after that. This implies that the motivational strategies used by the teacher has proven to be advantageous to the students' learning process.

To add, Participant B further expressed her opinions in the focus group interview by stating that the use of motivational strategies in the classroom has facilitated her to promote students' engagement as well as increase their productivity level.

"So, it's – in my opinion I think this strategy – the main benefit or the main advantage is to increase student engagement in class as they become more interactive in the lesson. Uhm....the the learning become more engaging you know, and some of them have become more productive than before. Yeah, so that's on the positive side."

(Participant B)

Through this statement, it can be deduced that the use of motivational strategies is effective for students especially in motivating them to portray active engagement and improve their productivity level in the classrooms. This is because, some students may portray to be less motivated and refuse to engage with classroom activities; thankfully, with the implementation of motivational strategies, it has increased their engagement to become more productive and efficient in their learning. Therefore, the responses given by these participants have suggested that the use of motivational strategies is beneficial towards the students' learning as it is proven to elevate their engagement and

productivity. Hence, this has provided them with better opportunities to further improve their progress in learning and teachers too would feel more motivated to further practice the motivational techniques after witnessing the students' positive engagement in the classroom.

4.2.2. Enhance the Teacher's Teaching of English

Furthermore, most of the participants commented that the use of the motivational strategies has indirectly helped them to enhance their teaching of English. This is because, one of the participants highlighted the fact that she becomes more enthusiastic in her teaching, and this is influenced by the motivational strategies that she implemented in the classroom.

"...I guess it does enhance my teaching because when the students are motivated, I'm even more excited.... Um, so with motivational strategies and if it works on your students, I think it allows you as a teacher to feel better about yourself and your teaching and for you to know that okay, some – these things work to these students."

(Participant C)

From this statement, it can be indicated that Participant C has become more excited when students become more motivated in their learning. Thus, she further claimed that this is because the motivational strategies have proven to be effective for the students; hence, giving better impact on her teaching of English. Additionally, Participant A and D also claimed to share similar stance as Participant C during the focus group interviews. Participant A stated that motivational strategies are crucial in enhancing her teaching of English because such techniques have facilitated her to portray positive perceptions towards English language specifically among students of low level of proficiency. The reason is simply because these students lack in familiarity with the language; hence, the use of motivational techniques has bridged this disparity by further empowering her approach in teaching the language to the students. Similarly, Participant B reported that even though her students are of high proficiency level, the use of the motivational strategies is beneficial for her English teaching as it paves ways for her to have two ways learning with her students. This is because, such strategies have allowed her to better understand her teaching as she gets to learn from the students' perspectives regarding her way of teaching. For instance, some of the strategies encouraged both students to provide reflection based on the teaching methods. This way, it gives more room for the teachers to better comprehend the students' needs; hence, further improving her teaching of English based on the comments or suggestions provided by the students. By referring to these responses, it can be perceived those motivational strategies have provided teachers with better opportunities to further enhance their teaching. Therefore, all the participants have reacted positively towards the motivational strategies as they have helped them to develop their progress in the teaching of English.

4.2.3. Improve Learners' Learning Experience

Based on the findings, the participants also reported that the use of motivational techniques in the ESL classroom have positively contributed towards improving the students' learning experience. This is evident as majority of the participants have provided similar views as to how their students' learning experience seem to improve with regards to the implementation of the motivational strategies.

".... Then, automatically they will practice English um, maybe not the technical aspects. but still- so, I still believe that that's um, why motivational strategies help in promoting a pleasant learning experience. It helps uh, their learning experience to be more pleasant, to be more meaningful because if the teacher always motivates you- gives you um, reasons or uh, yeah, reasons to learn and you see it clearly reflects in your lessons and everything...."

(Participant C)

"And then, another advantage I can think of maybe, to enhance the learning experience like, from the interest- if their interest is improved then of course the learning experience of the students uh, it's- it's enhanced as well, yeah."

(Participant B)

From these comments, it can be observed that Participant C perceived the motivational as beneficial for her students because it is proven to improve their learning experience. She claimed in the interview that the positive learning experience roots from the motivation that they received as students. To motivate the students, she utilized the suggested motivational strategies; hence, it has clearly contributed to provide pleasant learning experience and make meaning more meaningful for the students. Additionally, Participant B also reported that the use of motivational strategies has improved the students' interest in learning. Consequently, this has given a positive impact towards the students' learning experience as their involvement is heavily influenced by their interest. Thus, creating a better learning experience for them.

Based on the above responses, it has suggested that the use of motivational strategies has improved students' learning experiences as such techniques has proven to be able to further motivate the students which then resulting them to experience a better way of learning.

4.2.4. Establish Good Relationship Between Teachers and Students

Aside from learning experience, it was found that the participants perceived motivational strategies as effective and favorable because it provides opportunities for the teacher to create a good relationship with the students. Participant A claimed in an individual interview that such strategies have given her better ideas and exposure on how to build a better rapport with the students. For instance, she stated that her students become more opened in sharing their opinions and ideas through the use of motivational strategies in the classroom. They are no longer afraid to ask her questions or have small conversations that are non-education related with the teacher. This way, it has facilitated the teacher to portray as a reliable identity in the classroom. As a result, Participant A managed to establish a positive relationship with her class through such implementation of strategies. Similarly, Participant C further mentioned in the interview that her students become more comfortable to communicate with her and this is due to the implementation of motivational strategies in the classroom.

".....But the thing that I notice after that is they become more comfortable with you. So, when they become more comfortable with you then that's also a plus point you know, that helps them to motivate because ah okay so- I guess this is where it shows how it is important to have motivational strategies and how discreet it is!"

(Participant C)

From her comments, it can be indicated that such use of strategies has led the students to feel more relaxed to communicate with the teacher. This is evident as Participant C also

further strengthened this point in the focus group interview that she has developed a positive attachment with the students; hence, allowing her to communicate and exchange opinions with the students in a more pleasant way. This is because, the students did not feel pressured by the teachers; therefore, they have more freedom to deliver what they feel, and this has contributed to create a better relationship between teacher and students. Additionally, Participant A also has a similar perception on this aspect as she reported that her relationship with the students have become even better due to the influence of motivational strategies. Though it may not be generalized for all her students, she claimed that at least majority of them have established a good foundation of teacher-student relationship and this is a proof of how motivational strategies are useful for both teachers and students.

Therefore, from all of the above comments, it can be deduced that all of the participants view motivational strategies as advantageous and useful for both teachers and students in their teaching and learning of English language.

4.3. The Novice Teachers' Classroom Practices of the Motivational Strategies in the ESL Classroom

This section will discuss the findings based on the ESL novice teachers' actual classroom practices of the motivational strategies in their respective classrooms. Through these findings, we will further identify which motivational strategies are most preferred by the teachers and why it is needed in the teaching of English language.

4.3.1. Providing Rewards or Praises in a Motivating Manner

It was reported that most of the participants practiced giving rewards or praises as a motivational strategy to further enhance students' motivation. One participant claimed that offering rewards to her students has proven to be very effective in motivating them to better perform in their classroom tasks.

"...I always use this reward system. Because I believe that it works very well for my classrooms. So, mostly I use reward systems. So, when you ask them to write an essay, they will not write it. Especially in class. So, what I do is that, at the end of the lesson I will promise them to give a reward. For example, a simple notebook, or just a pen you know, things like that. So, they will be motivated to do it, or to complete it at the end of the lesson."

(Participant A)

From the statement above, Participant A has indicated that the use of reward system is one of the motivational strategies that she mostly preferred and used in the classroom. The reason is because students get more motivated to do the writing task when they are offered with physical reward.; thus, this strategy has been used by the teachers because offering reward in an encouraging manner is the key to promote motivation among students. In addition, Participant C has practiced the same strategy as Participant A whereby she perceives reward system as very much needed in her class because it is a good strategy to encourage participation especially among teenage learning. However, during the interview, Participant C claimed that her methods of giving rewards might be viewed as quite materialistic as she offered monetary rewards to the students.

"...Um, and as materialistic as it sounds, um money is a good- money is actually a good motivational strategy, to be honest."

(Participant C)

Given such statement above, this implies the notion that motivational strategy such as giving rewards to the students are deemed as effective and necessary and more matured learners such as the students of Participant B are more motivated towards money as the form of rewards. She further stated in the interview that her students are more encouraged when offered with money because they feel that such form of rewards are more valuable and can be used to treat themselves with something. Hence, Participant B practices the use of reward system in the form of money though she was initially afraid that it might be perceived as too materialistic. However, in a focus group interview, Participant A further commented that rewards system is something that is appropriate for as long as the students are matured enough to understand how to use the money appropriately. Therefore, it can be inferred that each teacher has their own ways in executing the motivational strategy depending on the students' needs and preferences.

4.3.2. Giving Motivational Feedback

Another motivational strategy that is most preferred by the novice teachers include the act of giving motivational/ constructive feedback to the students. According to Participant B, providing motivational feedback is deemed as very effective because her students are easily motivated when such strategy is practiced in the classroom.

"...I would give feedbacks like very motivational feedbacks like, memang kaw-kaw like, you would read and you would be like, "Oh my God, my work is amazing and my teacher appreciates it," something like that".

(Participant B)

From the above statement, it could be observed how such motivational feedback has impacted the students greatly. Given the instance of response provided above, it has shown that the use of giving constructive and motivational feedback based on students' outcome of the task are the primary element which ensure their motivation to be sustained throughout learning. Additionally, Participant B has further claimed in the focus group interview whereby she often provides the feedback with word of wisdom towards the end of each feedback either in written or verbal form. This is because, she believes that such additional element will help students to have positive evaluation of themselves despite the mistakes that they made. Thus, giving motivational feedback is deemed as necessary and a good motivational strategy that she practiced in the classrooms.

In addition, Participant A also stated a similar stance in which she too uses this strategy to empower students' motivation. During the interview, this teacher reported that motivational feedback has been an important motivational strategy in her class this will be used to correct the students' mistakes. However, she further commented that such feedback is best to be provided individually to avoid any unnecessary issue. This, she believes that the motivational feedback given is more personal and valuable for the students; hence, giving motivational/constructive feedback has always been her top used motivational strategy in the ESL classroom.

This practice is also supported by Participant C who mentioned that giving motivational feedback is her most preferred way to motivate students' learning particularly in teaching

writing. The reason is simply because she claimed that her students become more appreciative and has shown significant improvement in their writing skills when they are provided with motivational feedback. Thus, it can be seen that positive feedback is one of the strategies practiced by the ESL teachers in their respective classrooms.

4.3.3. Use Relevant Teaching Materials for Learners

Apart from providing motivational feedback, the use of relevant teaching materials for learners is another motivational strategy preferred by the ESL novice teachers. In this context, the relevant teaching materials refer to the use of materials/activities and topic that are within the students' interest. Participant A explained that her primary motivational strategy to promote motivation among students is by using relevant teaching materials that are suitable based on their age, proficiency, and topic of interest. She provided an instance where her students are inclined towards the topic of superhero; therefore, she opted to find relevant materials and activities that are within this range of topic so as to encourage students in their learning. As a result, the students of this class portrayed better participation and motivation in class after such strategy has been implemented in their teaching and learning process.

Similar to Participant A, Participant C reported that her students looked forward towards using fun and interactive materials in their learning.

"...the main motivational strategies is to implement lessons that are fun and interactive for them. So, you have to have uh, games or uh, task-based learning you know- all those things.."

(Participant A)

This is further proven in her lesson plans where this teacher mainly emphasizes on materials and activities that include interactive games and technology. To add, she claimed that her students preferred lessons that are task-based as they feel more engaged in their learning. Also, her additional claim in focus group interview indicated that she voluntarily developed the relevant teaching materials all by herself to customize them specifically for her students. The reason behind this is simply because she believes that teaching materials are prominent in generating students' initial motivation in learning. By referring to the comments and explanation above, it can be perceived that the use of relevant teaching materials are another primary motivational strategy employed by the novice teacher in the ESL classroom as it has proven to positively impacted the students.

4.3.4. Create a Pleasant and Supportive Atmosphere in the Classroom

In addition, another motivational classroom practices employed by the teacher are through establishing pleasant and supportive environment in the classroom. Participant B reported that in the interview that creating supportive learning environment for the students are the major strategy that she often included in her teaching.

"...I feel like, even if the environment- or sometimes of course, there are unpleasant environments but um, yeah, that is how a teacher will play their role to um, reverse the environment. Uh, maybe not on the spot but another day. You always have time to go back and do your research and then you reverse the situation another way, another day, yeah."

(Participant B)

Based on her comment above, it can be indicated that she tried to reverse the unpleasant environment of her classroom to a more supportive atmosphere because it is very much needed especially when teaching students of low-proficiency. To further understand this, an additional question was asked right after, and she commented that some of the students that she is teaching are of low proficiency and they tend to be intimidated by their friends' unintended action of correcting them. In such case, Participant B stated that she would always try to reflect after class and look for loopholes in the atmosphere and mediate the situation the next day. This way, it could avoid unnecessary confusion between students, and most importantly establish a motivating environment for the students.

Additionally, Participant A and C clarified that they tend to outlook this strategy because they used to believe that environment is a secondary technique to boost motivation. However, in the focus group interview, they claimed that a supportive and pleasant surrounding might help students to have positive perception towards learning English; therefore, teacher should create such environment for students in order to promote basic motivational condition for them. Thus, it can be seen that all participants have positive perception on this strategy even though two of them do not frequently practice such technique in their classroom.

4.3.5. Portraying Appropriate Teacher Behavior

Lastly, another motivational strategy identified to be practiced by the novice teachers includes the portrayal of appropriate teacher behavior. During the interview, one of the participants reported that she always tried to showcase an exemplary behavior in front of her students with the aim to create a good rapport with them.

"...I think the way we uh, show ourselves to the students is very important because it will determine our relationship with the student. I also think that because they are actually learning from us, so, I should behave appropriately to gain their trust"

(Participant A)

Based on her statement, it can be deduced that Participant A practiced the motivational strategy by behaving in an appropriate manner in front of the students. This is because, she believes that students will look up on how she brings herself in front of the class; therefore, an exemplary behaviour is very much needed to encourage positive reaction from the students. Through this, it would motivate students to portray a good behaviour as shown by their teacher. In addition, Participant C supported the use of this strategy as she stated that her students her rapport with the students are heavily influenced by the portrayal of exemplary behaviour that has been showcased by her. This is because, she claimed that if teachers could not behave appropriately, it is very likely for students to lose respect in which it will then result to their decreasing in motivation in learning. While some may perceive this as very less of importance, these two teachers commented that portrayal of teacher behaviour is the key factor that could enhance students' motivation. With that idea in mind, thus, such strategy is applied in their respective classrooms. Overall, based on the findings on the second research question, it is evident that there are a few motivational strategies that have been practiced by the teachers religiously in their process of teaching and learning the English language.

4.4. Discussion of Findings

Referring to the study's findings, it can be deduced that the novice teachers posit positive perceptions towards the use of motivational strategies due its advantages in teaching and learning of L2. One of the benefits that is highlighted in this study include how the use motivational strategies has enhanced students' learning. This is because, the novice teachers perceived that the said strategies have led students become more engaged and interested to participate in the classroom activities. This is in accord with the study conducted by Han & Wang (2021) which emphasized on the idea that the use of motivational strategies has been effective towards empowering students' learning, specifically with their participation during the English lesson. Apart from that, another perceived advantage stated by the novice teachers is that motivational strategies are deemed necessary to enhance students' learning experience. This indicates that students' experience in learning can be improved and become more meaningful using the motivational techniques. This finding is in line with MacIntyre et al. (2019) which claimed that motivational strategies are the primary factors that could positively impact the students' learning experience of the second language.

Other than that, this study has also identified on the motivational strategies that are being practiced by teachers in the ESL classroom. One of the strategies that were employed by the teachers include establishing supportive and pleasant classroom environment for the students. This finding has further validated the framework proposed by Dornyei (2001) as creating a conducive and supportive classroom climate is one of the components of the motivational teaching practice model in the L2 classroom. In that framework, Dornyei (2001) accentuates the idea that supportive classroom environment is the foundation to create basic motivational condition for the students and this is also supported in a more recent study by Mercer & Dornyei (2022) . In addition, the finding of this study has also identified that providing rewards in a motivating manner is another motivational strategy practiced by the novice teachers. This is in line with Derakshan et al. (2020) alongside with Han and Wang (2021) who claimed that the use of rewards as one of the most used motivational strategies by L2 teachers to empower the L2 learners. However, this outcome is in contrast with the finding posited by Ryan and Deci (2020) who claimed that providing rewards are only effective for temporary enhancement and is not sustainable for a long period, hence, it is not well-recommended by few teachers. This somehow contradicts with the finding of this study and it may be due to the difference context in learning; hence, resulting to such differences. Lastly, another motivational strategy implemented by the teachers is the act of providing motivational feedback alongside with portraying proper teacher behaviour to the students. This outcome has further supported the study by Bahumiga and Kimbabo (2025) who stated that giving motivational feedback are the most used and effective strategies to be employed by L2 teachers. Additionally, the finding is also in accord with Omar et al. (2020) who claimed that portraying proper teacher behaviour is one of the most highly rated motivational strategies used by L2 teachers to enhance students' participation in their learning.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings, it has shown that the novice teachers' perceptions on the use of motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. This research has proven that there are several advantages which can be attained by the teachers when using the motivational techniques in their teaching and learning of English. Therefore, the researcher hopes that these outcomes can be used to spark interest and convince other teachers to employ these

motivational techniques in their respective ESL classroom. Through this study, it can be deduced that there are a few benefits that one can gain when using the motivational strategies. Aside from that, this research has also identified on the actual practices of the motivational strategies in the classroom. This is because, some teachers may perceive certain strategies as effective; however, it may not be the same with their actual classroom practices. Therefore, this study has managed to be identified some of the strategies that are perceived as doable and very much needed to be implemented in the teaching of English to improve and sustain students' L2 motivation. With that in mind, it is hoped that these identified strategies could create awareness among the teachers that not all strategies are doable; however, it can still be employed depending on various factors. Thus, these outcomes are hoped to facilitate teachers to become more attentive towards their students and further experiment on the strategies which might work to boost their students' motivation. Lastly, the researcher hopes that this research could be used as a guide for future studies. Also, future research should include a larger number of participants and longer time span in order to further explore the benefits and challenges in employing the motivational strategies in their L2 classroom. Perhaps, future studies could also employ different research methodology such as using action research to obtain a richer amount of data with regards to the topic of motivational strategies in the ESL classroom.

In conclusion, this study has delved further into the ESL novice teachers' perceptions on the use of motivational strategies as well as their actual classroom practices of the said strategies. Through the finding, it can be inferred that these strategies are perceived positively by the novice teachers due the abundance of advantages that come along with it. To add, through this research, several motivational strategies have also been identified as doable to be practiced by the teachers in their L2 classroom. Therefore, it is hoped that this study could help future teachers by providing more new insights and information which might be useful for their implementation of the motivational strategies in the ESL classroom.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

The approval for conducting the research was obtained from Ministry of Education. In addition, the permission was given by the school with the purpose of collection of data and the participation of the said participants in this study was voluntary.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors reported no conflicts of interest for this work and declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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