

ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES AND TEACHERS' TEACHING CLASSROOM STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING STUDENT MOTIVATION IN ELEMENTARY EFL SETTINGS

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Abstract

Student motivation plays an important role in English language learning, particularly in elementary EFL classrooms. This study explored English teachers' perspectives on student motivation, the classroom strategies they employed to enhance motivation, and the perceived effectiveness of these strategies. A qualitative descriptive design was adopted involving nine English teachers from elementary schools in Jeumpa District, Southwest Aceh Regency, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through semi-structured face-to-face interviews and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis supported by NVivo 15. The findings revealed that teachers viewed motivation as students' enthusiasm, curiosity, confidence, and active participation. They employed various strategies, including games, songs, flashcards, storytelling, collaborative activities, positive reinforcement, and educational technology. These strategies were perceived to improve students' participation, confidence, and willingness to learn English. The study highlights the importance of teachers' motivational practices in creating engaging elementary EFL classrooms and offers practical implications for English language teaching.

Keywords: Classroom strategies; elementary EFL; English teachers' perspectives; Student motivation.

INTRODUCTION

Student motivation is widely recognized as a key factor in successful language learning. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, motivated students are more likely to participate actively, persist in learning, and achieve better learning outcomes. This is especially important in elementary schools, where young learners are developing both their language skills and attitudes toward English. As English is learned as a foreign language, students require continuous encouragement and meaningful learning experiences. Therefore, teachers play an essential role in creating supportive classroom environments that foster students' interest, confidence, and engagement.

Motivation has been extensively discussed in language learning theories. Dörnyei (2001) argues that teachers play a central role in generating and maintaining students' motivation through enjoyable learning experiences and appropriate motivational strategies. Likewise, Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020) suggests that students become more motivated when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are supported. These perspectives indicate that teachers' beliefs and instructional practices strongly influence students' motivation to learn English.

Previous studies have consistently highlighted the importance of motivation in EFL learning. Alizadeh (2016) found that motivation significantly contributes to

language learning success because motivated students are more willing to participate, practice, and overcome learning challenges. Lamb (2017) emphasized that teachers' classroom practices greatly influence students' motivation and engagement. Similarly, Papi and Hiver (2020) argued that motivation is dynamic and shaped by classroom experiences, teacher support, and social interaction. In addition, studies have shown that strategies such as games, songs, storytelling, collaborative learning, visual media, and educational technology can effectively enhance young learners' motivation and classroom participation. Despite these findings, several research gaps remain. Most previous studies have focused on the relationship between motivation and academic achievement, teaching methods, or digital learning media, particularly in secondary schools and higher education. In contrast, relatively few studies have examined English teachers' perspectives on student motivation and the classroom strategies they use in elementary EFL settings. Furthermore, research in Indonesian elementary schools, particularly in rural areas where English is taught as a local content subject, remains limited. Since teachers often adapt their instructional practices to students' needs and classroom contexts, understanding their perspectives is essential.

Addressing this gap is important because teachers' perspectives provide valuable insights into how student motivation is understood, fostered, and maintained in elementary EFL classrooms. These findings may contribute to the improvement of instructional practices and offer practical recommendations for teachers, schools, curriculum developers, and policymakers.

Therefore, this study aims to explore English teachers' perspectives and classroom strategies for enhancing student motivation in elementary EFL settings. Specifically, it investigates the factors influencing student motivation, identifies the classroom strategies teachers employ, and examines the perceived effectiveness of these strategies. The study is guided by three research questions concerning the factors affecting student motivation, the classroom strategies used to enhance motivation, and the perceived effectiveness of these strategies. The findings are expected to contribute to a better understanding of motivational practices in elementary EFL classrooms and to support future research in similar contexts.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore English teachers' perspectives on student motivation and the classroom strategies they used to enhance motivation in elementary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. A qualitative descriptive approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to obtain an in-depth understanding of teachers' experiences, beliefs, and instructional practices in their natural teaching contexts. According to Leavy (2022), qualitative research is appropriate for exploring, describing, and interpreting participants' perspectives to understand the meanings they assign to their experiences. This approach enabled the researcher to collect detailed information about teachers' perceptions of student motivation, the factors influencing learners' motivation, and the instructional strategies they implemented to promote engagement and participation in English learning.

The study was conducted in elementary schools located in Jeumpa District, Southwest Aceh Regency, Indonesia. The participants consisted of nine English teachers selected through purposive sampling. This sampling technique was chosen

because the participants possessed relevant knowledge and teaching experience that matched the objectives of the study. All participants had experience teaching English at the elementary level and were actively involved in designing and implementing classroom activities to motivate young learners. Their teaching experiences provided valuable insights into the realities of English instruction in elementary EFL classrooms, particularly in schools where English is offered as a local content subject.

Data were collected through semi-structured face-to-face interviews. This method was selected because it allows researchers to explore participants' responses in greater depth while maintaining consistency across interviews. An interview guide was developed based on the research questions and relevant literature concerning student motivation and English language teaching. The interview questions focused on teachers' understanding of student motivation, factors affecting learners' motivation, classroom strategies used to enhance motivation, the perceived effectiveness of these strategies, and challenges encountered while motivating elementary school students. Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes and was conducted in a comfortable environment to encourage participants to express their experiences openly. With participants' permission, all interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the collected data (Poland, 1995).

The interview data were analyzed using the thematic analysis framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This approach was selected because it provides systematic procedures for identifying, organizing, and interpreting patterns within qualitative data. The analysis followed six stages: familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Throughout these stages, the researcher repeatedly compared codes and themes to ensure that they accurately represented participants' responses.

To support a systematic analysis, NVivo 15 software was used to organize interview transcripts, facilitate coding, categorize data, and identify recurring patterns across participants' responses. The software improved data management and enhanced consistency during analysis. Finally, the identified themes were interpreted in relation to the research questions and relevant theoretical perspectives to provide a comprehensive understanding of English teachers' perspectives on student motivation and the classroom strategies they employed to enhance motivation in elementary EFL settings.

RESULT

Description Of The Participants

This study involved nine English teachers representing nine elementary schools in Jeumpa District, Southwest Aceh Regency, namely SD 1 Jeumpa, SD 2 Jeumpa, SD 3 Jeumpa, SD 4 Jeumpa, SD 5 Jeumpa, SD 6 Jeumpa, SD 7 Jeumpa, SD 8 Jeumpa, and MIN 7 Southwest Aceh. All participants were actively teaching English during the study. Recruiting teachers from different schools provided diverse perspectives on student motivation and the classroom strategies used to enhance it.

Data Analysis Procedures

1. Interview Procedures

The interview sessions took place over the course of 1 week, from June 8 to June 13, 2026. A total of nine English teachers participated in the interviews, providing qualitative data for the study. To ensure convenience and maximize participation, the interview schedule was arranged based on each participant's availability, and all interviews were conducted at their respective schools.

Table 1. Interview Procedures

Participant Names	Interview Duration (Minutes)	Amount of Words (in Indonesian)
Teacher 1	25:27	1884
Teacher 2	17:52	1038
Teacher 3	09:38	565
Teacher 4	18:21	757
Teacher 5	14:12	838
Teacher 6	11:13	770
Teacher 7	10:32	537
Teacher 8	19:20	1239
Teacher 9	15:24	887
Total	02:21:59	8515

Based on Table 1, the interviews were conducted face-to-face at the participants' respective schools. The duration different of each interview ranged from 9 minutes to more than 25 minutes, depending on the participants' responses and the depth of the discussion. Overall, the interviews lasted 2 hours, 21 minutes, and 59 seconds, producing a total of 8,515 words in Indonesian. On average, each interview took approximately 16 minutes. All interviews were completed within a one-week period. To maintain participants' privacy and ensure research confidentiality, the researcher assigned pseudonyms to replace the participants' real names. This ethical practice was implemented to protect participants' identities and maintain the confidentiality of the information they provided.

2. Transcription and Data Preparation

The interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, meaning that every spoken response was converted into written text exactly as expressed by the participants during the interviews. This approach was adopted to enhance the trustworthiness of the qualitative data (Poland, 1995). Once the transcription process was completed, each transcript was carefully examined and prepared before being imported into NVivo 15 for qualitative data analysis. This preparation included reviewing document formatting, ensuring consistent font styles and headings, and correcting spelling or typographical errors to achieve uniformity across all transcripts. Well-prepared and systematically organized transcripts provided a solid foundation for the subsequent coding process and

thematic analysis.

An important stage of the data preparation process involved reviewing the transcripts to clarify and standardize informal expressions and colloquial language found in the interview data. As an illustration, one of the original interview excerpts is presented below:

“Children usually use flashcards, then they are asked to say what picture is this, and then after they answer, we make it into a song, because they like singing. For example, regarding vocabulary, we also asked, 'What is this in English?' because elementary school students are still children, right?” was revised to “Young learners were engaged in learning activities using flashcards, where they identified pictures and named the corresponding vocabulary in English. Afterward, the teacher reinforced the vocabulary through songs, as singing was considered an enjoyable and age-appropriate activity for elementary school students.” (Teacher 4, personal communication, 00:18:21)

In addition, unnecessary filler words, repetitive expressions, and minor grammatical inaccuracies were carefully revised or removed while preserving the participants' intended meanings. According to Silverman (1997), refining qualitative data through the careful elimination of filler words and the correction of grammatical errors, without changing the substance of participants' responses, contributes to the trustworthiness and validity of qualitative research findings.

English Teachers' Perspectives and Classroom Strategies

1. Overview of themes

To gain a deeper understanding of English teachers' perspectives and classroom strategies for enhancing student motivation in elementary EFL settings, the interview data were carefully examined and classified into key themes and supporting subthemes. These categories illustrate teachers' perspectives on student motivation, the classroom strategies they employ, the factors influencing students' motivation, and the challenges encountered in motivating young EFL learners. The table below presents the major themes and the associated subthemes, offering a detailed overview of the ways in which English teachers perceive and foster student motivation in elementary EFL classrooms.

Thematic/Concept Map



The thematic map presents an overview of the interview findings, with participants' responses organized into three major themes and several related subthemes to illustrate English teachers' perspectives, classroom strategies, and the effectiveness of the approaches used to enhance students' motivation in elementary EFL classrooms.

2. Teachers' Perspectives and Classroom Strategies

This section presents the three major themes that were identified from the interview findings to address the study's research questions addressed in this study. The main themes include the effectiveness of strategies in enhancing students' motivation, teachers' perspectives on student motivation, and the classroom strategies used to foster motivation in elementary EFL classrooms. The details of each theme are presented below:

a) Theme 1: Effectiveness of Strategies

Drawing on the analysis of interviews with 9 English teachers, this

section presents the first major theme concerning the effectiveness of classroom strategies in fostering student motivation in elementary EFL settings. The analysis revealed that all nine participants perceived the strategies they implemented as effective in increasing students' motivation to learn English. A total of 111 references from 41 codes across 9 sub-themes supported this theme, reflecting teachers' diverse experiences in evaluating the effectiveness of their instructional practices. These sub-themes included changes in students' motivation, evaluation of teaching strategies, identification of motivated and less motivated students, improving one aspect of teaching, support needs, school conditions, support for students with low motivation, difficulties faced, and motivating students individually and in group settings. When the researcher asked whether the classroom strategies they used effectively enhanced students' motivation, one participant expressed agreement with the following statement:

"I use several methods. First, I see how many students raise their hands during speaking challenges compared to the beginning of the semester. Second, I pay attention to how long they can focus without being distracted. And I watch their reactions when they mispronounce words. If they don't get upset or silent, but instead smile and are willing to try again, that's a sign my strategies are successful in making them feel safe and motivated." (Teacher 8, interview, 00:19:20) Teacher 8, one of the English teachers participating in this study, believed that the classroom strategies she implemented were effective in strengthening students' motivation for English learning. She explained that the success of these strategies could be evaluated by observing students' willingness to participate in speaking activities, their ability to maintain attention during the lesson, and their responses when making pronunciation mistakes. According to her, students who remained confident, smiled, and were willing to try again after making mistakes indicated that the learning environment was supportive and motivating. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of classroom strategies can be reflected not only in students' academic achievement but also in their increased participation, confidence, and positive learning behaviors. This finding is consistent with Dörnyei (2001), who argues that supportive classroom environments and motivating teaching practices play an important role in fostering learners' motivation and active participation in EFL classrooms. Furthermore, Ryan and Deci (2020) emphasize that students are more motivated when they feel psychologically safe, competent, and supported while participating in learning activities.

Consistent findings were obtained from the remaining 8 participants (Teacher 1, Teacher 2, Teacher 3, Teacher 4, Teacher 5, Teacher 6, Teacher 7, and Teacher 9). They agreed that the classroom strategies they employed successfully enhanced students' motivation, although the indicators they used to evaluate effectiveness varied across participants.

Teacher 5 explained that the effectiveness of teaching strategies was evaluated by observing students' attention, participation, willingness to speak English, and their ability to remember and apply the learning materials:

"I evaluate it by observing whether students pay attention and participate during the learning activities. I also look at how many students are willing to speak and try. In addition, I assess whether they are able to remember and use

the material that I have taught.” (Teacher 5, interview, 00:14:12).

Here, Teacher 5 indicated that the effectiveness of her teaching strategies was evaluated through students' behavioral and learning responses during classroom activities. She observed students' attentiveness, active participation, willingness to speak and try using English, as well as their ability to remember and apply the learning materials. According to her, these indicators reflected whether the instructional strategies had successfully enhanced students' motivation. This finding is consistent with Ryan and Deci (2020), who explain that students are more motivated when learning environments support their sense of competence and encourage active participation. Similarly, Mercer and Dörnyei (2020) emphasize that engaging classroom practices and supportive teacher–student interactions play a significant role in sustaining learners' motivation and participation in EFL classrooms.

b) Theme 2: Perspectives

The following section is devoted to the second major theme that emerged from interviews with 9 English teachers. The discussion focuses on teachers' perspectives regarding the enhancement of students' motivation in elementary EFL settings. The analysis revealed that all nine participants shared positive perspectives regarding the importance of student motivation in English language learning. A total of 68 references from 23 codes across 5 sub-themes supported this theme, reflecting teachers' diverse viewpoints and experiences in motivating young EFL learners. The five sub-themes included the definition of motivation, the importance of motivation, the teacher's role, factors affecting students' motivation, and challenges in enhancing students' motivation. Although all participants agreed that motivation is an essential component of successful English learning, they described different perspectives based on their classroom experiences. When the researcher asked about their perspectives on student motivation in elementary EFL classrooms, one participant expressed the following view:

“Students' learning motivation is encouragement from within and outside that makes them enthusiastic about following lessons. Usually this can be seen from curiosity, being active when singing or playing and daring to try new words without fear of making mistakes.” (Teacher 9, interview, 00:15:24)

Teacher 9 statement emphasized that students' learning motivation is influenced by both internal and external factors that encourage them to participate actively in classroom activities. According to her, motivated students demonstrate curiosity, actively engage in singing and games, and are willing to use new English vocabulary without fear of making mistakes. This finding suggests that teachers perceive motivation as being reflected through students' enthusiasm, confidence, and active participation during the learning process. Likewise, Mercer and Dörnyei (2020) emphasize that supportive classroom interactions and meaningful learning experiences encourage young learners to participate actively and develop confidence in learning English.

Teacher 5 also expressed a comparable opinion, describing students' learning motivation in a manner similar to Teacher 9. She believed that motivation is reflected in students' enthusiasm, curiosity, and willingness to learn English without being afraid of making mistakes. She also emphasized that motivated students continue striving to master the learning materials even

when they find them challenging.

Teacher 5 defined student motivation as students' enthusiasm, desire, and curiosity to learn English. She emphasized that motivated students are willing to try, are not afraid of making mistakes, and continue striving to master the learning material despite experiencing difficulties. She explained:

"For me, motivation is the enthusiasm, desire, and curiosity of students to try to learn English, not being afraid of making mistakes, and striving to master the material even when it feels difficult." (Teacher 5, interview, 00:14:12).

Teacher 5 defined student motivation as students' enthusiasm, desire, and curiosity to learn English. She emphasized that motivated students are willing to try, are not afraid of making mistakes, and continue striving to master the learning materials even when they find them challenging. This statement was in line with Teacher 9 perspective, which highlighted that student motivation is driven by both internal and external encouragement and can be observed through students' curiosity, active participation, and confidence in trying new English words without fear of making mistakes.

Thus, Teacher 5 viewed student motivation as students' enthusiasm, curiosity, and willingness to learn English despite facing difficulties, while Teacher 9 emphasized that motivation is driven by both internal and external encouragement and is reflected in students' active participation, curiosity, and confidence to try without fear of making mistakes. Together, these perspectives suggest that motivated students are characterized not only by their enthusiasm for learning but also by their persistence, confidence, and active engagement in classroom activities. These findings are consistent with Ryan and Deci (2020), who explain that students' motivation is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that encourage sustained engagement in learning. Similarly, Mercer and Dörnyei (2020) argue that supportive classroom environments and meaningful learning experiences foster students' confidence, curiosity, and active participation in EFL classrooms.

c) Theme 3: Classroom Strategies

The following section focuses on the third major theme generated from the interview findings. It examines the various classroom strategies employed by English teachers to foster students' motivation in elementary EFL settings. The analysis revealed that all nine participants reported implementing various classroom strategies to motivate students during English lessons. A total of 48 references from 26 codes across 5 sub-themes supported this theme, reflecting teachers' diverse instructional practices and experiences. These sub-themes included teaching strategies, activity design, specific classroom activities, the use of media or technology, and adjustments to teaching strategies based on students' needs and classroom conditions. Although the participants employed different approaches, they shared the common goal of creating engaging and motivating learning experiences for their students. When the researcher asked about the classroom strategies they used to enhance students' motivation, one participant explained the following:

Teacher 8 : "I implement games or learning through play. I use physical games like Simon Says to teach verbs. I also often use interactive quizzes like Quizizz because they really help make learning more fun and engaging. I also use songs in my lessons, such as ones with movements to teach body parts."

(Teacher 8, interview, 00:19:20)

Teacher 8 statement highlighted the use of game-based learning, interactive quizzes, and songs as classroom strategies to enhance students' motivation in learning English. She explained that physical games such as *Simon Says*, interactive quizzes through Quizizz, and songs with movements created an enjoyable learning atmosphere that encouraged students to participate actively during English lessons. These strategies not only increased students' enthusiasm but also provided meaningful opportunities to practice English in an engaging way. This finding is consistent with Mercer and Dörnyei (2020), who emphasize that engaging classroom practices and supportive teacher–student interactions contribute significantly to learners' motivation and participation in EFL classrooms. Likewise, Ryan and Deci (2020) explain that enjoyable and meaningful learning experiences strengthen students' intrinsic motivation and encourage them to participate actively in the learning process.

The other participants expressed comparable views (Teacher 1, Teacher 2, Teacher 3, Teacher 4, Teacher 5, Teacher 6, Teacher 7, and Teacher 9). One participant, Teacher 5, shared a similar perspective to Teacher 8 by emphasizing the importance of creating enjoyable and student-centered learning experiences through songs, games, and positive reinforcement.

Teacher 5 explained that she implemented enjoyable and student-centered teaching strategies to increase students' motivation in learning English. Before beginning the lesson, she usually engaged students through English songs and word-guessing games. She also incorporated flashcard guessing activities and provided rewards or praise to encourage students and strengthen their motivation to learn. She stated:

“The teaching strategies I use are enjoyable and student-centered. Before starting the lesson, I usually sing English songs or play word-guessing games. I also use games such as flashcard guessing activities. In addition, I give rewards or praise in front of the class to encourage students and increase their motivation to learn.” (Teacher 5, interview, 00:14:12).

Teacher 5 statement emphasized that enjoyable and student-centered classroom strategies could enhance students' motivation by creating a positive learning atmosphere. She believed that songs, games, flashcard activities, and positive reinforcement encouraged students to participate more actively and confidently during English lessons. Similar views were also expressed by another participant Teacher 4, who highlighted the importance of adapting classroom activities to the characteristics of young learner.

Int: "What classroom strategies do you use to enhance students' motivation?"

Teacher 4: "I usually use flashcards and ask students to identify the pictures. After they answer, we sing together. For example, when learning vocabulary, I ask them the English words because elementary school students enjoy learning through songs and interactive activities." (Teacher 4, interview, 00:18:21).

The results demonstrate that adopting engaging, interactive, and learner-centered teaching strategies promoted higher levels of student participation and

enthusiasm in elementary English classrooms. The integration of games, songs, flashcards, interactive quizzes, and positive reinforcement created meaningful learning experiences that increased students' confidence and willingness to engage in classroom activities. These findings are supported by Mercer and Dörnyei (2020), who argue that engaging classroom practices and supportive teacher student interactions play an important role in sustaining learners' motivation and active participation in EFL classrooms. Similarly, Ryan and Deci (2020) explain that meaningful learning experiences and supportive learning environments strengthen students' intrinsic motivation and encourage greater engagement in the learning process. Therefore, the perspectives of Teacher 8, Teacher 5, and Teacher 4 complement one another, indicating that implementing enjoyable, interactive, and student-centered classroom strategies is an effective way to enhance students' motivation in elementary EFL settings.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive understanding of English teachers' perspectives on student motivation, the classroom strategies they implement, and the perceived effectiveness of these strategies in elementary EFL settings. The discussion is organized according to the three research questions and interpreted in relation to previous studies and relevant theories.

1. Teachers' Perspectives on Student Motivation in Elementary EFL Classrooms

The first finding revealed that all participating teachers viewed student motivation as an essential element of successful English learning. Rather than defining motivation only as academic achievement, the teachers associated motivation with students' enthusiasm, curiosity, confidence, willingness to participate, and persistence when learning English. According to the participants, motivated students are willing to answer questions, participate in games and songs, try to speak English even when they make mistakes, and remain interested throughout classroom activities. These findings suggest that teachers perceive motivation as a multidimensional concept involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement rather than merely students' test performance.

This finding is consistent with Dörnyei (2001), who argues that motivation is one of the most influential factors affecting second language learning because it determines learners' effort, persistence, and willingness to participate. Teachers play a central role in creating classroom environments that stimulate students' interest and maintain their motivation throughout the learning process. Similarly, Ryan and Deci (2020), through Self-Determination Theory, explain that students become more motivated when their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled. The teachers in this study emphasized creating supportive classroom environments where students feel confident to participate without fear of making mistakes. Such classroom conditions support learners' sense of competence and belonging, which are fundamental components of intrinsic motivation.

Another important finding is that teachers considered motivation to be influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors included students' curiosity, self-confidence, willingness to learn, and personal interest in English. External factors included teacher support, classroom atmosphere,

instructional strategies, learning media, peer interaction, school facilities, and parental support. This finding reflects the dynamic nature of motivation proposed by Papi and Hiver (2020), who argue that language learning motivation continuously changes according to learners' experiences and social interactions. Likewise, Mercer and Dörnyei (2020) emphasize that motivation develops through meaningful relationships between teachers, students, and the learning environment rather than through individual effort alone.

These findings also support previous studies conducted by Alizadeh (2016) and Lamb (2017), who found that motivated students are more willing to participate actively, practice the target language, and overcome learning challenges. However, the present study extends previous research by focusing specifically on elementary English teachers' perspectives in Indonesian rural schools. Unlike many previous studies that investigated students' motivation quantitatively, this study demonstrates how teachers interpret motivation through their daily classroom experiences. This contribution enriches the understanding of motivation from the teachers' perspective and highlights the contextual characteristics of elementary EFL classrooms in Indonesia.

2. Classroom Strategies for Enhancing Student Motivation

The second finding demonstrated that teachers employed various classroom strategies to enhance students' motivation. These strategies included games, songs, storytelling, flashcards, collaborative learning activities, positive reinforcement, educational technology, and differentiated instruction. Although each teacher implemented different techniques according to classroom conditions, all participants shared the same objective of creating enjoyable, interactive, and student-centered learning experiences.

Games emerged as one of the most frequently mentioned strategies because they encouraged students to participate actively while reducing anxiety during English learning. Teachers explained that activities such as Simon Says, vocabulary guessing games, and interactive competitions helped students practice English naturally without feeling pressured. This finding supports Dörnyei (2001), who states that enjoyable classroom activities increase learners' willingness to communicate and sustain motivation throughout language learning.

Songs were also widely used because elementary students enjoy singing while simultaneously learning vocabulary and pronunciation. Teachers believed that combining language learning with music made lessons more memorable and increased students' attention during classroom instruction. This finding is consistent with Mercer and Dörnyei (2020), who argue that emotionally engaging learning experiences contribute significantly to language learners' motivation and participation.

Another important strategy involved the use of visual media and educational technology, including flashcards, videos, Quizizz, and interactive learning platforms. Teachers reported that technology attracted students' attention and created more engaging learning experiences. These findings align with previous research suggesting that digital learning media can increase students' motivation by making language learning more interactive and meaningful (Lamb, 2017). Nevertheless, teachers emphasized that technology should complement, rather than replace, effective teaching practices because the

teacher remains responsible for selecting appropriate learning activities according to students' needs.

Positive reinforcement also emerged as an effective motivational strategy. Teachers frequently praised students' efforts, gave rewards, and encouraged students who were reluctant to participate. Instead of focusing on mistakes, teachers attempted to build students' confidence by appreciating every learning effort. This finding strongly supports Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020), which emphasizes that positive feedback strengthens learners' sense of competence and encourages sustained motivation.

Furthermore, teachers adapted their instructional strategies according to students' individual characteristics. Students with lower motivation received additional support through simpler tasks, individual guidance, and personal encouragement, while highly motivated students were provided with more challenging activities. Such differentiated instruction reflects teachers' awareness that motivation varies across learners and therefore requires flexible instructional approaches.

Overall, these findings indicate that effective motivational strategies involve not only enjoyable learning activities but also supportive teacher-student relationships, meaningful learning experiences, and adaptive instructional practices that address students' diverse learning needs.

3. The Perceived Effectiveness of Classroom Strategies

The third finding revealed that all participating teachers considered their classroom strategies effective in improving students' motivation. Rather than evaluating effectiveness solely through examination scores, teachers assessed success by observing students' classroom behaviors. Indicators included increased participation, longer attention spans, greater confidence in speaking English, willingness to answer questions, reduced fear of making mistakes, and stronger enthusiasm for classroom activities.

This finding indicates that teachers perceive motivation as a behavioral and emotional outcome rather than merely an academic result. Students who actively volunteered to participate, smiled when making mistakes, and continued trying to communicate in English were considered motivated learners. Such findings support Ryan and Deci (2020), who explain that intrinsically motivated learners demonstrate greater persistence, engagement, and enjoyment during learning activities. Similarly, Mercer and Dörnyei (2020) emphasize that meaningful teacher-student interactions encourage active classroom participation and strengthen learners' confidence. The participants in this study consistently observed that students became more engaged when teachers created supportive classroom environments through games, songs, collaborative activities, and positive encouragement. This suggests that motivational strategies influence not only students' language performance but also their emotional readiness to learn.

Despite these positive outcomes, teachers also identified several challenges affecting the effectiveness of motivational strategies. Limited instructional time, differences in students' English proficiency, varying levels of parental support, and classroom management issues reduced opportunities to implement motivational activities consistently. These findings demonstrate that motivation is influenced by contextual factors beyond teachers' instructional

practices alone. Consequently, teachers need to remain flexible in adapting classroom strategies according to students' characteristics and available learning resources.

The findings further indicate that school support also contributes to the effectiveness of teachers' motivational practices. Adequate facilities, learning materials, and opportunities for professional development enable teachers to implement more creative and engaging instructional strategies. Therefore, improving student motivation should be viewed as a shared responsibility involving teachers, schools, parents, and educational policymakers.

4. Educational Implications

The findings of this study have several practical implications for English language teaching in elementary schools. First, teachers should recognize that student motivation extends beyond academic achievement and includes students' confidence, curiosity, participation, and willingness to communicate in English. Consequently, classroom instruction should prioritize supportive and enjoyable learning experiences that encourage active engagement.

Second, English teachers are encouraged to integrate games, songs, storytelling, visual media, educational technology, collaborative learning, and positive reinforcement into their instructional practices. These strategies create meaningful learning experiences that increase students' interest while reducing anxiety associated with learning a foreign language.

Finally, schools and educational policymakers should provide sufficient instructional resources, technological facilities, and professional development opportunities to help teachers continuously improve their motivational teaching practices. Strong collaboration among teachers, parents, and schools is also essential to sustain students' motivation both inside and outside the classroom.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing literature on motivation in elementary EFL education by providing insights into teachers' perspectives and classroom practices within the Indonesian context. Unlike many previous studies that primarily examine motivation from students' perspectives, this study highlights teachers' experiences as key contributors to creating motivating and engaging English learning environments.

CONCLUSION

This study explored English teachers' perspectives on student motivation and the classroom strategies they employed to enhance motivation in elementary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. The findings indicate that teachers perceive motivation as an essential factor influencing students' engagement and success in learning English. According to the participants, motivated students are characterized by enthusiasm, curiosity, active participation, confidence, and persistence in completing learning activities, even when they encounter difficulties. Teachers also emphasized that student motivation is shaped by both internal factors, such as learners' interest and self-confidence, and external factors, including teacher support, classroom environment, and meaningful learning experiences.

The study further revealed that teachers implemented a variety of motivating classroom strategies to promote students' engagement in English learning. These strategies included games, songs, storytelling, flashcards, collaborative learning,

positive reinforcement, and the integration of educational technology, such as interactive quizzes and digital learning media. The participants perceived these approaches as effective because they created enjoyable, student-centered, and interactive learning environments that encouraged students to participate actively, communicate confidently, and maintain their interest throughout the learning process. However, teachers also acknowledged several challenges that influenced the effectiveness of these strategies, including differences in students' learning characteristics, limited instructional time, varying levels of parental support, and classroom conditions. Consequently, teachers recognized the importance of adapting their instructional practices to address the diverse needs of young learners.

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on student motivation in elementary EFL contexts by providing insights into teachers' perspectives and classroom practices in Indonesian elementary schools. The findings offer practical implications for English teachers, school administrators, curriculum developers, and educational policymakers in designing supportive and motivating learning environments for young learners. Future research is recommended to incorporate classroom observations and students' perspectives, as well as to involve participants from different educational contexts, in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of student motivation and effective motivational practices in elementary EFL classrooms.

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