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## Students' Perceptions of the Most and the Least Motivating Teaching Strategies in ESP Classes

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### ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have examined the significance of motivation in learning English as a Foreign Language. However, only a few studies have focused on English for Specific Purposes settings. The current study examined the students' perception of motivating teaching strategies in ESP classrooms. One hundred and sixty-three ESP students from a public university in Indonesia participated in the study. They completed a questionnaire which reflected their perceptions on the most and the least motivational teaching strategies. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 was used to analyze the data. The results show that ESP students preferred teaching practices that provided them with a comfortable and enjoyable environment as the most motivating ones. On the other hand, they perceived teaching strategies that were related to activities and assignments as the least motivational ones. The results of the study provide guidelines that may help the teachers to employ appropriate strategies that can motivate students in ESP classes.

**Keywords:** motivation; teaching strategies; teaching practices; ESP; language learning

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## Introduction

Motivation is considered as one of the fundamental factors that determine the accomplishment in the field of foreign/second language (L2) learning. It refers to a personalized attribute that assists students to possess the quality of persistence and perseverance in acquiring the target language (Dörnyei, 2001; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Motivation performs as the primary device that drives the language learning process, and, later, it is utilized as a continuing driving force that assists the rigorous and laborious journey in mastering a foreign language (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). Although many conditions are required to attain successful L2 learning, most teachers would agree that motivation is indeed a primary stimulus that determines learning attainment (Dörnyei, Csizér, & Németh, 2006). Without adequate motivation, even the cleverest students will encounter difficulties to endure the long process of achieving the proficiency of the target language (Dörnyei, 1998). Neither suitable curricula nor noteworthy teaching method can guarantee the students' achievement in acquiring L2 without the element of motivation. On the other hand, highly motivated students can attain a significant amount of target language knowledge regardless of their language ability, cognitive characteristics, or learning environment (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Dörnyei, 2001). Thus, L2 teachers tend to utilize motivation in describing successful or unsuccessful learners (Dörnyei, 2001). The learners' passion, enthusiasm, commitment, and perseverance are key elements of acquiring L2.

Furthermore, students' attainment is positively interrelated with teachers' ability and teaching style (Maeng & Lee, 2015; Westwood, 2004). A number of researches have reported the significance of teacher motivation as a vital element that positively affects the students' L2 acquisition (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008; Bernaus, Wilson, & Gardner, 2009; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Maeng & Lee, 2015; Roohani & Dayeri, 2019). Teachers' abilities are significant factors in the integration of motivational strategies into curricula as teachers' implementation of motivating strategies relates positively to students' motivation (Bernaus et al., 2009; Dörnyei, 2001). The higher the teachers' motivation in teaching L2, the better the students perceive them as motivating teaching strategies (Bernaus et al., 2009).

Motivational strategies are the implementation of instructional mediation conducted by teachers or language instructors to stimulate and encourage students' motivation (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). When implemented, motivational strategies need four elements so they can be employed successfully, a) creating basic motivational conditions; (b) generating initial motivation; (c) maintaining and protecting motivation; and (d) encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation (Dörnyei, 2001). Those dimensions are cyclical and interrelated which means they cannot be conducted separately. Furthermore, there are four levels of motivation according to Crookes and Schmidt (1991): micro-level, classroom level, syllabus level, and extracurricular level. Micro-level is the effects of motivation in stimulating the L2 cognitive process. The classroom level focuses on the teaching method and activities during L2 acquisition. Syllabus level is associated with the content of the knowledge that is based on students' need analysis whereas extracurricular level refers to informal and non-class activities that support motivation.

Employing motivational strategies need basic conditions. According to Dörnyei (2001), three preconditions should be obtained: (a) appropriate teacher behaviors and a good relationship with the students; (b) a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere, and (c) a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms. Since motivational strategies aim to attain systematic and durable positive effect, recognizing the students' goal-related behavior is important. Thus, before determining how and when to use motivational strategies, it is important to understand different kinds of students' learning motivation (Lee & Yi, 2017).

To this end, the current research aims to find out the students' perceptions of the most and the least motivating teaching strategies in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes. ESP class focuses on the utilization of English as a medium of communication in a specific discipline of study or profession (Basturkmen, 2010). Different from the general EFL class, ESP class utilizes more varieties of language or registers such as English in Accounting, English in Medicine, English in Banking, etc. ESP language is designed to assist learners to master the linguistic efficiency in a specific environment; thus, it needs specific syllabus and teaching methods. One concern related to ESP classes in Indonesia, especially, is that most of their classes are conducted in a short period of time. The situation requires teachers to exploit the available time effectively. Furthermore, since the students learn English as an additional subject, their motivation and their willingness to acquire the language are also varied. Thus, it is important to look at the students' perspective on how they perceive the teaching strategies that can motivate them to acquire the target language.

The current study tries to yield the theoretical and practical implications of motivational strategies in teaching ESP students. Theoretically, an investigation into the students' perceptions of motivational strategies, specifically the most and least motivating ones, can contribute to the teachers' knowledge of determining the appropriate methods, techniques, and strategies in teaching ESP students. In particular, teachers and researchers can raise some inquiries regarding the students' attitudes toward teachers' teaching methods or strategies and their impact on L2 learning in ESP settings, especially in Indonesia. Practically, by relating the students' attitude toward the teachers' teaching methods or strategies, the results of the study are projected to assist teachers to determine the appropriate strategy that can motivate learners in ESP classes. Thus, the research questions of the current study are;

1. What is the most and the least motivational conceptual domain of teaching practices in ESP class?
2. What are the most and the least motivational teaching practices in ESP class?

## **Review of Literature**

To date, several empirical studies have investigated the importance of motivation strategies the teachers possess in enhancing the students' motivational level during the teaching and learning process. These studies have demonstrated consistent findings that teachers' motivational strategies have a positive correlation with students' achievement (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008; Bernaus et al., 2009; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Kumazawa, 2013; Maeng & Lee, 2015; Moskovsky, Alrabai, Paolini, & Ratcheva, 2012; Song & Kim, 2016). Dörnyei and Csizer (1998) proposed 'Ten commandments for motivating language learners' as a compilation of macro strategies that are developed to improve students' motivational level. In their study, they established a set of motivational strategies in L2 class as the ability to motivate learners can be seen as the core of teaching efficacy. It is also revealed that the students' motivated learning behavior is highly influenced by the teachers' motivational practice which is demonstrated by the amount of students' attention in class as well as the degree of their participation in classrooms tasks (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). Furthermore, the teachers' motivation in using the motivational strategies during classroom activities is also related to the students' motivation and their attainment (Bernaus et al., 2009; Moskovsky et al., 2012).

Some studies have examined the students' motivational state and attitude in learning L2. It is stated that students' anxiety has a significant contribution to students' performance in attaining L2 knowledge (Liu & Huang, 2011). Thus, students' attitude toward classroom language is strongly influenced by their ideal L2 self (Lee & Yi, 2017). Ideal L2 self entails abilities that one needs to acquire to prevent possible negative outcomes in learning L2 (Dörnyei, 2005). Therefore, intrinsic motivation such as determination and personal goal, in general, has proven to have positive relations with students' motivation in achieving L2 knowledge (Carreira, 2011; Chang, 2010; Ghanizadeh, Amiri, & Jahedizadeh, 2020). Furthermore, external factors also contribute to the students' motivational state. Students' interaction and association with their classmates reflect a significant level of students' motivation. Students who are associated with more motivated classmates tend to have high motivation, whereas those who are in an unresponsive group of classmates will reflect demotivated behavior (Chang, 2010). Students are also most susceptible to be demotivated if they feel that they have less L2 learning experience and are less-proficient (Falout, Elwood, & Hood, 2009).

Several studies mentioned the influence of environment and external factors as important elements in improving motivation. Fandiño, Munoz, and Velandia (2019) conducted a study to investigate students' motivation in e-learning settings. It revealed that their motivation to study English as a foreign language was strongly influenced by external factors such as the quality of teachers' assistance and teaching strategies. Furthermore, Partovi and Razavi (2019) also found out that game-based learning as an external motivation has proven to improve the students' academic motivation. Kulakow (2020) mentioned that a student-centered approach creates more positive motivation in the academic setting compared to the teacher-centered approach. This means that one of the ways to improve the students' self-perception of motivation is through competence-based learning environment where the students are given more opportunities to interact with their peers. In other words, student-centered learning is highly correlated with self-determined motivation in the learning situation (Kulakow & Raufelder, 2020). Students who have stronger beliefs in attaining certain knowledge demonstrated greater motivation during the learning process (Baker & Anderman, 2020).

A few studies also focus on intrinsic motivation as the major factor in the language learning process. Cao and Meng (2020) conducted a research to investigate the personality traits and motivation as the predictors of English achievement in a Chinese University learning environment. This study found that conscientiousness and extraversion are two motivating factors that highly contributed to the development of English achievement. Oga-Baldwin and Fryer (2020) found out that the students' motivation in learning the native language and foreign language is not different as their motivation is influenced by their self-determination. Furthermore, in the study by Nakamura (2019), students' second language motivation is highly influenced by their ideal-self as a future competent second language user. This result is similar to Wen and Piao's study (2020) that mentioned the students' learning experience also influences their motivational profiles. Students with positive concept-related motivation and aspiration tend to have stronger desire and persistence in the language learning process.

Previous studies also investigate the influence of teaching methods, styles, and teachers' behavior on the students' motivational state. Teachers' knowledge of students' personal goals in learning L2 is significant as students' motivation can be nurtured by assisting their awareness of proficiency, affinity, and cultural tolerance (McEown, Noels, & Saumure, 2014). Students' perceptions of teacher's support for autonomy have increased students' intrinsic motivation (Carreira, Ozaki, & Maeda, 2013). Students are also more motivated if they are exposed to creative technique pedagogy that creates a more interesting environment (Liao, Chen, Chen, & Chang, 2018; Schmidt & Watanabe, 2001). Other activities including preparing weekly quizzes, guiding extracurricular activities, and handling class size also influence the students' motivation since they develop and establish a good rapport between teachers and students (Daif-allah &

Alsamani, 2014). In addition, individual teacher behavior also demonstrates a significant role as it is reflected as one of the demotivating factors in L2 classrooms (Kikuchi, 2009).

Some researches emphasize the influence of the environment in motivating students' behavior. Growths in students' motivations are influenced by constant collaborations between their perceptions of social contexts and their ideal L2 selves (Du & Jackson, 2018). The environment that can provide the opportunity to create a good group of learners exerts a positive impact on enhancing motivation within the L2 classroom (Chang, 2010). The role of the environment is crucial as the improper learning condition such as the shortage of teaching utilities and equipment tend to be a demotivating factor for the students (Alavinia & Sehat, 2012). The availability of learning resources is a good mediation to create productive output in any learning context (Zheng, 2012). Additionally, perceived autonomy possessed by students is also significant in cultivating the pleasure of learning which enhances the level of motivation (Tanaka, 2017). In an Iranian setting, Birjandi and Tamjid (2010) reported the importance of self-assessment in improving Iranian students' motivation. Their study revealed that writing a journal on a regular basis has developed the students' motivation significantly. Moreover, Hosseini and Shokrpur (2019) also conducted a study in Iran to compare the learning motivation between the medical and nursing ESP language classes. The results showed that the medical ESP language class had higher motivation as it was influenced by the teachers' characteristics, teaching material, and personal aspirations.

Based on the discussions above, motivational strategies in the classroom play a significant role in shaping the students' motivated behavior. In the ESP setting, the motivational strategies have not been fully utilized. The studies presented above focus on the importance of motivational strategies in general L2 learning. As mentioned before, the context of ESP is different from English for General Purpose (EGP) which focuses on acquiring English for the general use of the language. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate the students' perceptions of the motivational strategies that can assist them in acquiring the target language in an ESP setting, especially in Indonesia. It is important to find out the students' perceptions and expectations of teachers' motivational strategies in learning English to maximize their competence in acquiring the target language. The present study tries to replicate Dörnyei and Csizer's (1998) study which investigated the macro-strategies and micro-strategies that motivate language learners. Different from the previous study which examines the teachers' perceptions, the current study investigates students' perceptions of those macro-strategies and micro-strategies in Indonesian ESP classes. It is believed that by knowing the students' perceptions, teachers can modify or develop their teaching methods based on the students' needs to create positive environments in the learning process.

## **Method**

### *Participants*

Since the current study emphasizes the students' perceptions in ESP settings, only the students enrolled in ESP classes in an Indonesian public university were included in the data collection process. The students involved were enrolled in the first level of ESP class from four study programs: library technician (n=33), tax management (n=41), physiotherapy (n=45), and radiology (n=44). The students mostly experienced learning English starting from junior high school. Therefore, prior to the enrollment to the university, they had learned English for about 6 years in a formal education. Hence, their English proficiency is between beginner and intermediate level. One hundred and sixty-three students reported basic demographic information. They ranged in age from 17-24. A total of 124 female students and 39 male students responded to the questionnaire.

### *Instrumentation*

The primary instrument used in the current study was based on a questionnaire developed by Dörnyei and Csizer (1998) which was utilized to rate the frequency and importance of different motivational strategies in the Hungarian English Classroom. They created a questionnaire comprising of 51 micro-strategies (teaching practices) and requested the teachers to rate the significance of the strategy used in the classroom. The motivational strategies were grouped into several conceptual domains or macro-strategies and each of them consisted of several micro-strategies. Conceptual domains covered larger classifications of associated micro-strategies. This questionnaire was used as it focused on the teaching practices implemented in the classroom and how they influenced the students' motivation.

The present study, conversely, asked the students to rate the importance of those micro-strategies in the classroom. The instruments were presented in both English and Indonesian to avoid students' misunderstanding of the items. Motivational strategies that did not apply to the ESP class in a college-level classroom were eliminated including conceptual domains 'rule' and 'decoration'. Different from Dörnyei and Csizer's (1998) study, the current study did not focus on the teachers' actual performances, but it focused on the degree to which each micro-strategy was considered as motivating. Hence, the students were asked about the kind of teaching practices that they felt would motivate them to learn English in the ESP setting.

The questionnaire presented a list of 46 teaching practices that teachers might use in ESP class. The students were asked to indicate how significant the role of a specific practice was in motivating them to learn English. Each participant rated each strategy on a five-point scale rating. The rating rubric is presented in Table 1.

Table 1  
*Rating Rubric*

Point	Description
1	This practice does not affect my motivation.
2	This practice plays a minor role in motivating me.
3	This practice plays somewhat a role in motivating me.
4	This practice plays a considerable role in motivating me.
5	This practice plays a major role in motivating me.

The questionnaire was administered at the beginning of the academic year to prevent the bias in participants' responses based on their immediate experiences. They were asked to recall their previous English learning experience while responding to the questionnaire. They were also informed that the questionnaire was for the research purpose only and would not affect their grades. Participation was voluntary and their personal information was protected. The questionnaire was completed within 30 minutes.

### *Data Analysis*

The method used was descriptive statistics. Statistical analysis was carried out using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 21 (IBM corporation, New York) to find out the mean scores and standard deviations. Since the questionnaire was used to reveal the students' expectations of the teachers' strategies in the learning processes, the purpose of analyzing the data was to find out the students' expectancy on the teaching methods that could motivate them in learning English in ESP contexts. To achieve this, the teaching practices were rank-ordered in terms of the mean score from the highest to the lowest by finding the mean response of each teaching practice. The analysis revealed the teaching practices that the students found most motivational and least motivational. The data were also analyzed based on each

conceptual domain to establish a rank-ordered list of the most and least motivational conceptual domains.

## Results

According to the data analysis, the 46 strategies were rank-ordered based on the students' perceptions. Table 2 shows the rank of micro-strategies from the most to the least motivational teaching strategies in each macro-strategy or conceptual domain based on the mean score.

Table 2  
*Micro-strategies from the Highest to the Lowest Rank in Each Domain*

Domain	Strategies	M	SD
Teacher	- Showing a good example by being committed and motivated	4.68	.85
	- Preparing the lessons properly	4.57	.83
	- Behaving naturally and genuinely	4.32	.82
	- Being sensitive and accepting	3.68	.93
climate	- Creating a pleasant atmosphere	4.78	.86
	- Bringing humor, laughter, and smile	4.60	.90
	- Having games and fun activities	4.29	1.01
	- Having games-like competitions	3.78	1.06
Task	- Giving clear instructions	4.70	.85
	- Providing assistance about how to complete the task	4.52	.89
	- Stating the aim and the utility of each task	4.26	.82
Rapport	- Developing a good relationship	4.58	.80
Self-confidence	- Encouraging the students constantly	4.55	1.11
	- Making sure the students experience success regularly	4.54	1.03
	- Giving positive feedback and appraisal	4.42	.89
	- Selecting tasks that do not exceed the students' competence	3.93	1.20
	- Explaining that mistakes are a natural part of learning	2.63	1.25
interest	- Administering various activities	4.10	.98
	- Building students' interests instead of giving scores/grades as the main energizer of learning	4.10	1.12
	- Raising students' curiosity by providing unexpected elements	4.07	.97
	- Selecting interesting tasks	4.03	1.10
	- Choosing interesting topics and materials	3.94	.91
	- Offering a variety of materials	3.62	1.24
	- Creating a challenging task to involve the students	3.11	1.14
autonomy	- Encouraging creative and imaginative ideas	4.37	.87
	- Encouraging questions and other contributions from the students	4.13	.85
	- Sharing responsibility to organize the learning process with the students	3.80	.87
personal relevance	- Filling the task with personal content that is relevant to the students	3.58	1.07
goal	- Conducting a needs analysis about the students' goal and needs	4.17	.84
	- Setting up several specific learning goals	4.16	.70
	- Assisting students to design their individual study plans	4.04	1.06
	- Helping students to develop realistic expectations	4.02	.86
	- Increasing the group's goal-orientedness	4.00	1.08
culture	- Inviting native speakers	4.05	1.09
	- Finding pen friends	3.97	1.06

	-	Familiarizing the students with the cultural background of English	3.88	1.01
	-	Using authentic material	3.83	.93
group	-	Helping students to get to know one another	4.04	.90
	-	Organizing extracurricular out-of-class of activities	4.01	.93
	-	Participating as an ordinary member of the group as much as possible	3.86	.88
	-	Providing regular group work	3.45	.88
effort	-	Helping students to realize that it is mainly effort that is needed for success	4.40	.93
usefulness	-	Emphasizing the usefulness of the language	4.12	1.04
reward	-	Giving rewards other than grades	3.99	1.25
finished product	-	Allowing students to create products that they can display or perform	3.77	.95
comparison	-	Avoiding any comparison of students to one another	4.53	1.03

Table 3 shows the ranked order of conceptual domains from the highest to the lowest. It is shown that the conceptual domain *rapport* is the most motivational one and conceptual domain *personal relevance* is the least motivational one. Following conceptual domain *rapport* is *teacher*, *comparison*, *task*, and *climate*. Then, rounding out the five least motivational conceptual domains are *finished product*, *interest*, *culture*, and *group*.

Table 3  
*Conceptual Domains Rankings*

No	Domain	M	SD
1	rapport	4.58	.80
2	teacher	4.56	.92
3	comparison	4.53	1.03
4	task	4.49	.85
5	climate	4.49	.85
6	effort	4.40	.93
7	usefulness	4.12	1.04
8	goal	4.08	.91
9	self-confidence	4.08	1.04
10	autonomy	4.07	.87
11	reward	3.99	1.25
12	group	3.89	1.00
13	culture	3.84	.90
14	interest	3.80	.96
15	finished product	3.77	.95
16	personal relevance	3.58	1.07

Table 4 illustrates the five most motivational teaching practices. The rank is based on the five-highest mean scores in the micro-strategies in any domain. Table 5 shows the five least motivational teaching practices. The rank is concluded from the five-lowest mean scores in the micro-strategies in any domain.

Table 4  
*Five Most Motivational Teaching Practices*

No	Teaching practices	M	SD
1	Creating a pleasant atmosphere	4.78	.86
2	Giving clear instructions	4.70	.85
3	Showing a good example by being committed and motivated	4.68	.85
4	Bringing humor, laughter, and smile	4.60	.90
5	Developing a good relationship	4.58	.80

Table 5  
*Five Least Motivational Teaching Practices*

No	Teaching practices	M	SD
1	Explaining that mistakes are a natural part of learning	2.63	1.25
2	Creating a challenging task to involve the students	3.11	1.14
3	Providing regular group work	3.45	.88
4	Filling the task with personal content that is relevant to the students	3.58	1.07
5	Offering a variety of materials	3.62	1.24

## Discussion

### *Conceptual Domain Rankings*

Recognizing the conceptual domains or macro-strategies is significant since it shows the general framework of L2 motivation. One of the frameworks is the level of learning condition that is related to the various and certain situations of language learning (Dörnyei & Csizer, 1998). This framework proposes three sources of motivation; namely, course-specific, teacher-specific, and group-specific motivational components.

Looking at the results in Table 3, it can be seen that the top three most motivational macro-strategies are related to teacher-specific motivational components; *rappor*t, *teacher*, and *comparison*. In these domains, the teachers should build a good relationship with the students by providing some assistance such as modeling, demonstration, and feedback (rappor)t domain). Furthermore, the teacher also needs to consider their behavior, personality, teaching style, and direct socialization to the student (teacher domain). Teachers also should avoid comparing one student to another and build a positive authoritarian style (comparison domain). More importantly, teachers should show enthusiasm and commitment to the teaching and learning process (Dörnyei, 2001).

Therefore, it can be seen that in the ESP setting, the students tend to rely on developing a good relationship with the teachers and how the teachers assist them during the learning process. As ESP students mostly have limited English proficiency, they need more attention and assistance in developing their English skills. The teachers' role influences significantly as the students need a proper demonstration and assistance to solve the problems during the activities (Mauludin, 2018). For instance, in writing an essay, the teacher should demonstrate the steps of writing and give the examples of writing essay before instructing the students to write. During the writing activities,

the teacher should individually guide the students who have difficulties in the process of writing. Students' enthusiasm and motivation are highly influenced by proper guidance and assistance that the teachers provide. On the other hand, personal content is considered to be the least motivational component as the ESP students tend to be afraid of tasks and assignments. Since they are aware that learning English is challenging, they have the anxiety to perform the language. Thus, they consider more assignments or tasks will reduce their enthusiasm and motivation in participating in the learning process.

The results are in line with several previous studies that mention the students' motivated learning behavior is mostly influenced by the teachers' motivational practice. Teachers' ability in measuring the students' main objective in learning a language is a significant factor in utilizing the classroom to provide students' diverse needs (Lee & Yi, 2017). By gauging the students' diverse goals, the teachers are able to maximize their role in catering motivational teaching practices. Teachers should understand individual abilities; thus, comparing one student to another is insignificant as it will increase the students' anxiety. Teachers' awareness in drawing students' attention is also an essential element to inspire the students' curiosity which is beneficial to increase their motivational state (Maeng & Lee, 2015). Moreover, teachers also should be able to change their language of instruction based on the students' current ability. Variation of language of instruction is considered to be an effective motivational strategy (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Keller, 2010; Mauludin, 2020). Language of instruction is strictly associated to the ability of students in understanding and absorbing knowledge. Hence, the more effective the language used, the easier the students mastering the learning goal. For instance, the teachers' code-switching between languages has a positive influence on preserving the students' motivation (Maeng & Lee, 2015).

Furthermore, one of the important skills that teachers should possess is the ability to provide modelling and samples to the students. Catering students with models and examples can assist them to learn to solve the problems faster. This factor is significantly influenced by students' intrinsic motivation. Teachers' feedback is also considered to be an inspiring and positive element in improving students' motivation (Daif-allah & Alsamani, 2014). Informative and encouraging feedback positively provided by teachers improves students' motivation and self-confidence. Most importantly, teachers' autonomy that supports pleasant atmosphere increases students' intrinsic motivation (Carreira et al., 2013). Teachers who design a classroom atmosphere in which students' viewpoints are understood, teachers' control is minimized, and various choices are offered contribute to students' pleasure in learning EFL.

However, it should be noticed that some conceptual domains consist of only one micro-strategy while others consist of more than one. Thus, it should be considered that some conceptual domains' rank was based on the average score of each micro-strategy. Looking at this case, it would be difficult to decide that certain conceptual domains are more motivating as there may be one or two micro-strategies that the students feel un motivating. To find out the most and least motivational teaching practices, it is important to look at the individual teaching practice within the domain. Therefore, five most and least motivational teaching practices were chosen based on the individual mean score. Table 4 showed five most motivational teaching practices and Table 5 revealed five least motivational teaching practices according to students' opinions.

#### *Five Most Motivational Teaching Practices*

It is shown in Table 4 that 'creating a pleasant atmosphere' ranked first as the most motivational teaching practice for the students. Pleasant atmosphere refers to the learning environment that the students perceive as comfortable or enjoyable. As learning language is considered to be one of the most challenging learning experiences that students encounter, the teachers have the responsibility to recognize the factors that may increase their anxiety and some elements that can hinder their learning motivation and achievement. By diagnosing those factors, the teachers are

able to create a secure learning atmosphere where the students are not exposed to a discouraging situation. The result is in line with Dörnyei and Csizér's study (1998) which placed the classroom atmosphere condition in the second place as the most motivational strategy in the learning process. The classroom atmosphere or learning environment has a significant role in maintaining students' positive motivation. The learning environment which demands high-stakes testing or delivers unsuitable level of courses may start the motivational problems (Falout et al., 2009). Furthermore, a pleasant climate in the classroom is also related to the teachers' personality, their ability to give positive feedback, and their effort in helping students while facing obstacles in the learning process (Carreira et al., 2013; Falout et al., 2009). In other words, classroom should be designed to stimulate the students' perceptions of positive autonomy provided by the teachers. Therefore, it is shown that, based on their perspective, students are more comfortable and motivated when being exposed to a comfortable, enjoyable, and pleasant learning environment.

The second one is giving clear instructions. To solve the problems, students need cognitive support in the form of clear and proper examples. Furthermore, teachers also should provide clear demonstration and modeling in resolving the problem. The modeling lets students concentrate on the specific stages which will reduce their load of cognitive work in their memory. This study is related to the previous studies which mentioned that the teacher's way in delivering learning instructions also had a significant impact on how the students understand the given activity (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Fandiño, Munoz, & Velandia, 2019; Hosseini and Shokrpur, 2019). Creative technique pedagogy in presenting the task significantly influences students' motivated learning performance (Liao et al., 2018). It can be utilized as a device to improve the students' interest in the activity and raise the probability of successful task fulfillment (Dörnyei & Otto, 1998). Task presentation also helps the students to set realistic learning objectives and provide effective strategies to reach those.

As students consider their teachers as their model, teachers should show a good example by being committed and motivated during classroom activities. Based on the data, this motivational teaching strategy was ranked third overall. In the learning environment, teachers' enthusiasm and commitment highly influence the students' motivation (Dörnyei, 2001). From the students' viewpoint, it can be seen that the teachers' devotion in presenting the task or activities shows how motivated they are in assisting the students to reach the learning goals. Similar studies have mentioned the positive impacts of the teachers' role in the classroom. A personal role model is considered to be the most influential and persuasive device in motivating the students (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). High-quality teaching assistance and specific instruction improve the students' enthusiasm in the learning process (Fandiño, Munoz, & Velandia, 2019; Hosseini & Shokrpur, 2019). If the teachers show interest in the subject matter, the students will feel encouraged to follow their instructions. Furthermore, the amount of effort the teachers employ in assisting the students affects the students' perceptions of positive learning outcomes.

The fourth motivating strategy is bringing humor, laughter, and smile. As previously mentioned, a pleasant climate in the classroom brings positive motivation to the students. This finding supports the first motivating strategy which shows that the students prefer enjoyable and comfortable teaching practices during the learning process. A caring and pleasant classroom climate is formed when the teachers bring humor and support the students to modify their classroom ambiance according to their taste (Dörnyei, 2001). Moreover, students' intrinsic motivation is highly influenced by their enjoyment (Carreira, 2011). Providing enjoyable feelings for the students is the key aspect in arising the students' attention and curiosity. This factor creates an attractive image of the learning process. Additionally, employing fun-related activities that provide an opportunity to relax the students' mind while solving the problem lowers the anxiety level (Bernaus et al., 2009).

Rounding out the top five of most motivational teaching practices based on the students' perspective is developing a good relationship. The result is quite similar to a previous study which placed this strategy in the fourth place (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). The teachers should build a good relationship with the students, so the students can be exposed to the norm of tolerance (Dörnyei, 2001). Furthermore, a good relationship can encourage the students to accept mistakes as a normal part of learning and thus maintain their positive perceptions of language learning. More importantly, in developing a good relationship, the teachers can share their language learning experiences, praise students' achievement, and assist the students to set realistic and achievable goals that are effective in decreasing the students' anxiety level (Liu & Huang, 2011).

Therefore, it can be seen that in an ESP setting, the atmosphere of the learning environment and the quality of teachers has a significant role in improving the students' positive motivation. The students learn ESP because it is required by the school or university. Thus, most of them possess a low interest in learning English. They learn English as an obligation, not because they are keen on it. Since they have low intrinsic motivation, they rely more on extrinsically motivating factors. The enjoyable class and compassionate teachers are the factors that can maintain their positive motivation to achieve their learning targets.

#### *Five Least Motivational Teaching Practices*

Besides most motivational teaching practices, the data also show some teaching practices that students perceive did not motivate them as seen in Table 5. The teachers should recognize these practices to effectively find ways to assist them in reaching the learning target. Diagnosing teaching practices that are motivating and not motivating determine the students' enthusiasm in receiving the instructions or assistance during the teaching process. Below are among the five least motivational teaching practices based on students' perceptions in a particular order from the least motivating.

The last place is 'explaining that mistakes are a natural part of learning'. It is quite surprising that this strategy was considered the least motivational for students as the initial goal of this strategy is to assure them that mistakes are acceptable and 'it is fine' to make mistakes. However, it seems that they did not think that way. In the Indonesian learning setting, the students are mostly exposed to teacher-centered learning and score-goal oriented to pass the course or level. This culture shapes their mindset that in order to obtain good results, they must not make any mistakes. The process of trial and error was not familiar for them; thus, to make sure they can achieve success, they must avoid any mistakes. In a learning setting, recognizing the factor that can protect the students from loss of self-confidence is essential (Carreira et al., 2013). As teachers have a great influence on external circumstances in motivating the students, the contextual situation in certain classrooms should be regulated. The students' demotivating experiences related to making mistakes can be one of the elements that construct their thought that 'making mistakes is not acceptable'. As students' motivating factors are varied, understanding many kinds of learning motivation before regulating a specific approach is significant (Lee & Yi, 2017). In this setting, students' are expected to pass a certain grade to continue to a higher level. Thus, the factor of goal-orientedness has a significant role. Dörnyei (2001) mentioned that learners' goal-orientedness includes individual goals, institutional constraints, and success criteria. If the students are well aware of those criteria, it is expected that they need support to achieve those goals. Thus, teachers should be able to promote motivation by avoiding practices that demotivate them (Falout et al., 2009). In short, this teaching practice did not meet the students' expectations to assist them in achieving their learning goals.

The second practice that is considered not motivating is creating challenging tasks. As the students prefer an enjoyable and comfortable classroom atmosphere, it is understandable that 'challenging task' is reflected to be not enjoyable. Students who enjoy the given tasks or assignments are considered to have higher motivation in learning a foreign language (Carreira, 2011). Challenging task leads to anxiety, especially for the lower-level learners. When facing disagreeable pedagogies or materials or cognitively undemanding instructional practices, students are at risk of becoming demotivated (Carreira, 2011; Falout et al., 2009). Thus, challenging tasks are perceived to be factors that hinder their enjoyment in learning the target language.

'Providing regular group work' is also considered to be unmotivating. It should be noticed that demotivating peers have a negative influence (Tanaka, 2017). In other words, peer influences in the learning process are crucial factors for students' learning acquisition. In group work, the students are forced to work together to solve the problems. If the members have an agreeable personality, they can finish the task effectively as they support each other. However, peer disagreement in a group may lead to less enjoyment and it results in the demotivation state. The class group that the members get along positively affects their motivation; on the other hand, a class group of indifferent learners influences negatively the motivated learner (Chang, 2010). In this case, the teachers should construct the right climate of the classroom to improve the student's positive motivation. Teachers should be careful in forming the group as the students tend to be in a group that has a similar interest in learning and be supporting each other. Therefore, the students' perceptions show that regular group work is considered not motivating as it grows their anxiety of meeting unresponsive peers that can hinder their learning progress.

The next least motivating teaching practice is 'filling the task with personal content that is relevant to the students'. The strategy is significant as students usually feel demotivated if they learn something that has no relevance to their life (Dörnyei, 2001). However, it is also important to consider that the students' goal in learning language is varied. The outcomes of learning depend on the existence of learning input and the students' subjective enthusiasm to discover the chance to assist their long-term language learning (Zheng, 2012). Since ESP students are not in an English major, they do not have the initial motivation to learn English as their major achievement of studies. Non-English majors were less likely to participate in enjoyment-seeking activity than English majors (Falout et al., 2009). Although an ESP class is designed to assist students' specific skills that can be easily adapted, it seems that the students have no knowledge to correlate what they learned in schools with the real world. This can be caused by their previous experiences learning English in junior and senior high school which focus on mastering grammatical structures and specific vocabularies to pass the test. Thus, they are not familiar with the application of certain language skills in real practice and have perceptions that personal content in tasks or assignment will not help them to achieve the learning goals. To prevent this, the teachers should provide classrooms that are cognitively challenging and make them realize the importance of learning English for their future (Carreira, 2011).

The last strategy is offering a variety of materials. The students are most susceptible to demotivation if they have low proficiency (Falout et al., 2009). Since they are not English majors, they have limited time to learn the materials. Thus, a variety of materials can be considered to be a burden to them as they should focus on specific materials in a short amount of time. In some cases, the teachers try to employ motivating strategies that can improve the students' skills; however, the students' perceptions are highly related to their attitude and motivation. The teachers may apply the motivational practice but the students do not recognize it because of the teachers' personality or because of students' lack of motivation (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008). In this case, the students perceive that a variety of materials might become their burden and can hinder their enjoyment in learning language. Therefore, it is important to assess the students'

favorable attitude toward innovative materials as inappropriate materials may become a demotivating factor (Bernaus et al., 2009; Falout et al., 2009).

As seen from the discussions, the five least motivating strategies are related to assignments or tasks. As mentioned before in the domain part, ESP students are reluctant to perform in the class as they do not speak the language fluently. Since they learn English as an obligation, they tend to rely on their teachers' characteristics to maintain their motivation. Caring teachers and an enjoyable atmosphere can keep their positive motivation. However, tasks or assignments increase their anxiety that reduces their enthusiasm and positive motivation in participating in class activities.

## Conclusion

This study only included Indonesian undergraduate students as the participants; hence, the results may not be generalized into other ESP contexts. However, the findings show that students' perceptions play an important part in determining the effective motivational strategy in ESP classrooms. There are several aspects that should be highlighted.

First of all, in terms of conceptual domain, the most motivational strategy is rapport and the least motivational one is personal relevance. Rapport is the domain that is related to developing a good relationship which means that, in ESP settings, the students feel more motivated if the teachers can have a friendly relationship with the students. Conversely, personal relevance is related to tasks or assignments which can increase the students' anxiety. Thus, the ESP students perceived this domain as the least motivating one.

Secondly, the findings show that five most motivational teaching practices depict the students' enjoyment in learning English than many activities or materials which are considered to be unmotivating. Since ESP students are not English majors, they have no personal interest in learning English as their future career. Therefore, their perceptions of motivating strategies are influenced by the classroom atmosphere and environment. Learning a foreign language is a highly challenging experience and the students possess high anxiety in the process of acquisition. Therefore, teachers should be able to provide enjoyable classrooms by providing creative activities to make an interesting learning environment (Carreira, 2011; Liao et al., 2018). Teachers' personality and commitment also play a pivotal role in supporting the students' difficulties during problem-solving. Good classroom ambiance in which the teachers kindly guide the students during the fulfillment of the tasks is an effective factor in motivating them. The result of the conceptual domain and the micro-strategies revealed that ESP students are more motivated by an enjoyable learning environment than the activity of fulfilling assignments or tasks. Thus, the teachers should prepare the appropriate approach during the learning process.

It should be pointed out that teachers should recognize the students' different types of learning motivation in ESP classes before applying specific motivational teaching practices. Teachers can apply any teaching practice which is comfortable and considered to have significant value to the students; however, the students must have the same perceptions for the teaching practice in order to be effective (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008). It is possible that the students do not react positively to the teaching practice simply because they have no interest in learning English. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that some teaching practices are agreed to be motivating according to the teachers and students; conversely, some teaching practices are considered motivating by teachers but not by the students. Thus, students' perceptions of teaching practices affect their motivation, but teachers' perceptions do not. This accentuates that, in ESP setting, before employing certain teaching practices, the teachers should assess the students' perception.

Finally, it should be underlined that the least motivational teaching practices above are not reflected as demotivating strategies; however, in ESP settings, they are considered not having high influence in motivating them. As previously mentioned, students' L2 outcomes are not only merely based on the accessibility of certain strategies, but also based on the students' subjective willingness to utilize those strategies (Zheng, 2012). The five least motivational strategies in this study are all related to task fulfillment and teaching activities. This reveals that as ESP students learn English as a compulsory subject, they do not have a specific interest to learn it. Thus, the teachers should understand that some of them have a very low ability or low enthusiasm during the teaching process. Those factors cause their anxiety to increase as ESP students also realize that English is not their major and they have no high competence in acquiring it. Thus, the teachers should support them to present and view themselves as competent non-native English users. Teachers should underscore that the L2 knowledge is valuable to their future career.

At this point, it should be stressed that no teaching practices have absolute and universal value because in the application it is dynamically changing. The implementation is also very diverse considering learning contexts, students' and teachers' individual personality, and learning environment. The finding underscores that, in the ESP setting, the students are keener on teaching practices that focus on classroom enjoyment and comfort. The results also indicate that the teachers should increase their awareness on the significance of assessing individual motivations and classroom characteristics before employing specific strategies or teaching practices. This study also reveals that students' perceptions play an important role as some teaching practices will work only if they also perceive it as motivating ones.

Several limitations to the current study and suggestions for future studies need to be pointed out. Firstly, the result of the data interpretation is limited since it only includes a questionnaire. Further research using more data should be applied since the students' motivation is influenced by many factors. Secondly, this study was conducted in an ESP class in an Indonesian University with Indonesian students; thus, the findings may vary according to the cultural settings. It is essential to replicate this research in different settings. Finally, the study was conducted in a homogenous learning environment; thus, further research in a heterogenous learning environment would provide better insight into the students' perception on the motivational teaching practices.

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