

Motivational Strategies in ESL Classroom: Malaysian ESL Teachers' Beliefs and Practices

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ABSTRACT

Motivational strategies are widely known as a practical method that is very much needed, especially in motivating students, to learn the second language. Therefore, this study is conducted to investigate further the ESL novice teachers' beliefs and practices on the motivational strategies used in the ESL classroom. The research was done among 40 ESL novice language teachers by distributing questionnaires that consist of closed-ended questions. The quantitative data was then analyzed using SPSS software to obtain descriptive statistics. This study's findings revealed the teachers' beliefs on the importance of the selected motivational strategies and how frequent they practice and implement the strategies in the ESL classroom. Therefore, it is hoped that this research would provide more insights for language teachers on the use of motivational techniques in the L2 classroom.

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Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing work of literature by providing critical insights on the application of motivational strategies within ESL classroom, especially among ESL novice teachers which serves as a guiding framework for the effective implementation of the said strategies. Additionally, it offers a significant contribution to the expanding body of knowledge by providing better foresights to the ESL teaching methodology in general.

1. Introduction

In the field of English language today, motivation is known as one of the critical factors that ensures the success of second language learning. According to [Lamb \(2017\)](#), motivation is regarded as a crucial element that facilitates learners to improve their second language learning. Therefore, extensive research has been done to study the concept of second language motivation and its influence on L2 learning. However, as much as L2 motivation is crucial, it is essential to identify language teachers' motivational strategies or techniques to enhance students' motivation. [Bahous, Bacha and Nabani \(2011\)](#) claim that the task of motivating students to learn the second language is complex and demanding for language teachers to accomplish; hence, motivational strategies are very much needed to assist them. According to [Dornyei \(2001\)](#), motivational strategies are fundamental in guiding teachers to maintain sufficient motivation throughout second language learning. Through this, it can be perceived that the motivational strategy plays a vital component in the success of L2 learning.

In this fast-changing world, it is widely acknowledged that numerous studies have been done in the field of second language motivation and its relation to L2 learners; however, [Ushioda \(2009\)](#) and [Alrabai \(2014\)](#) claim that fewer studies have been conducted with regard to the motivational strategies used by language teachers. Besides, [Cheng and Dornyei \(2007\)](#) states that most previous literature studies were conducted in the Western educational context. However, in the Malaysian context, a limited number of research have been done to explore the teachers' views and practices on the motivational strategies used in the language classroom. Therefore, with the aim to contribute to this field of study, this research is conducted to explore the novice teachers' beliefs and practices on the motivational strategies used in the ESL classroom.

1.1. Research Objectives

This study is conducted with the aim to investigate the novice language teachers' beliefs and practices on the motivational strategies used in the ESL classroom. Therefore, the following research questions are developed to guide this study.

- i. What are the teachers' beliefs on the importance of motivational strategies in the ESL classroom?
- ii. How frequent do the teachers practice the motivational strategies in the ESL classroom?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework

2.2.1. Motivational Strategies

This study is executed based on the lens of a theoretical framework constructed by [Dornyei \(2001\)](#), known as The Components of Motivational Teaching Practice Model in the L2 classroom. This framework model is retrieved from the latest edition book written by [Dornyei and Ushioda \(2011\)](#) entitled "Teaching and Researching Motivation," and it is based on [Dornyei's \(2001\)](#) original work entitled "Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom." However, it is essential to note that the recent edition has provided a much more precise explanation of this framework; therefore, it is selected to guide this study. According to [Omar et al. \(2020\)](#), the field of motivational strategies has undergone

multiple shifts due to its rapid development. Therefore, [Dornyei \(2001\)](#) has constructed this framework as one of the contributions to this field and, most importantly, to reflect on the motivational strategies practiced by language teachers in the ESL classroom.

As shown in the [Figure 1](#), [Dornyei \(2001\)](#) has pointed out four key components: creating necessary motivational conditions, generating students' motivation, maintaining and protecting motivation, and encouraging positive self-assessment.

Figure 1: The Components of Dornyei's Framework of Motivational Teaching Practice in the L2 Classroom



Source: [Dornyei \(2001\)](#), as cited in [Dornyei and Ushioda \(2011\)](#)

In this model, each of the components represents the main motivational strategies (macro-strategies) and various sub motivational techniques (micro-strategies). This model's first dimension requires the teacher to build appropriate conditions in the classroom to ensure students' motivation ([Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011](#)). For instance, the teacher can create a healthy and positive rapport with students, establish a pleasant and supportive classroom environment, or foster cohesiveness among the learners. Next, the second component of this model emphasizes building initial motivation among students, which can be achieved by familiarizing them with the second language culture and values ([Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011](#)). By doing so, it will be able to encourage learners to learn the target language. This dimension also focuses on developing the learners' expectancy of success and facilitating them to have a clear and attainable goal when learning the second language.

On the other hand, the third component highlights the need to sustain and protect students' motivation (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011). This dimension involves making learning stimulating and engaging for learners, maintaining learners' self-esteem, elevating their confidence, encouraging cooperation among learners, and fostering learners' autonomy. Lastly, the fourth dimension focuses on the techniques or strategies in promoting students' positive self-evaluation (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011). In this component, the methods include assisting learners in developing motivational attributions among the students, giving positive motivational feedback based on their performance, or providing rewards to celebrate their success in a motivating manner.

Based on this explanation, it can be perceived that this framework is suitable for this study as the strategies and techniques provided are comprehensive and emphasizes on broad motivational strategies; hence, allowing it to be used as guidance on multiple occasions. Besides, this framework model proposed by Dornyei (2001) fits this study as this research mainly focuses on looking at the teachers' perceived importance on the motivational strategies that lie under the four key components mentioned above. Therefore, through this study, we will perceive how the teachers view these motivational strategies within their teaching context; hence, allowing us to see whether they are in response to this motivational teaching practice framework model constructed by Dornyei (2001).

2.2. L2 Motivation and Motivational Strategies

According to Gardner (1968), motivation is characterized as the degree to which a person works to learn the target language due to his/her own desire or based on the satisfaction experienced during the learning practice. In other words, motivation is perceived as the effort learners put into learning the language due to his/her own willingness to do so. Therefore, Cheng and Dornyei (2007) proposed that motivation is viewed as a moving power that facilitates both teachers and students during the second language's teaching and learning. In acquiring the L2, it is essential to note that a sufficient amount of motivation is needed to enhance learners' language proficiency. Without such motivation, one would not be able to attain the desired language despite being an advanced learner (Vibulphol, 2016). According to Kim (2009), as cited by Nguyen (2016), L2 learning motivation is viewed as the realization of L2 learners of the significance of the L2 activities or methods used in the classroom, and this is turned into motivation once the learners associate it with concrete objectives such as personal goals or physical involvement.

Thus, it can be deduced that L2 motivation is closely related to the activities and strategies that the teachers use in the classroom. This is because motivation comes hand in hand with second language teaching; hence, the use of an appropriate motivational strategy is required. For decades, motivational strategies have been regarded as an influential factor in second language motivation. According to Bankier and Wright (2012), motivational strategies become the pathway for motivation to be applied in the form of a process rather than becoming a single entity. The explanation for this is simply because motivational strategies are the ones that bridge the gap between the theoretical dimension and the practical one; hence, enabling the theories of motivation to be transformed into functional methods that can be used in the ESL classroom (Parsi, 2017).

In this field of study, motivational strategies have gone through a considerable number of developments, which then result in various definitions of motivational strategy. Initially, Dornyei (2001) interprets motivational strategies as techniques that are deliberately practiced "to promote goal-related behavior" and, most importantly, to obtain a

consistent and lasting significant impact in one's language teaching and learning. However, [Guilloteaux and Dornyei \(2008\)](#) have further defined motivational strategies as instructional methods used by a language teacher to evoke and stimulate students' motivation. In a more current study, [Dornyei and Ushioda \(2009\)](#) have referred to motivational strategies as instructional methods that the teachers actively apply in order "to elicit, enhance, and sustain student-motivated behavior." Based on all of these definitions, it can be identified [Dornyei and Ushioda's \(2009\)](#) definition of motivational strategies is perceived as the most comprehensive and suitable for the current context of study.

2.3. Teacher's Beliefs and Practices of Motivational Strategies in the L2 Classroom

Based on previous studies, motivational strategies have been used extensively by language teachers to enhance students' motivation in learning the second language. [Johnson \(2017\)](#) states that language teachers' use of motivational strategies is crucial as it has proven to increase students' desire in learning; however, the success of the implementation highly depends on the teachers' circumstances as to how they utilize the strategies. Therefore, there are various perceptions and beliefs regarding how motivational strategies are viewed and practiced by second language teachers.

In an earlier study conducted by [Dornyei and Cziser \(1998\)](#), they have conducted a large-scale study among Hungarian ESL language teachers to examine how they view the importance of selected motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. The results obtained by [Dornyei and Cziser \(1998\)](#) indicated that there are ten major motivational strategies that teachers should employ, and some of them include displaying a set of good examples of attitude in front of the students, creating a good relationship with them, and making the language lesson engaging. Also, another research by [Cheng and Dornyei \(2007\)](#) has also proven that most English teachers tend to perceive that it is imperative for teachers to display their care and respect towards the students as this would help them to portray an example of good conduct during the teaching and learning of the L2. This strategy allows the students to feel more appreciated by the teachers, and it has then further improved their motivation in learning ([Cheng & Dornyei, 2007](#)). Besides, [Ruesch, Bown and Dewey \(2012\)](#) have revealed that most language teachers claim that it is very much needed for teachers to acknowledge and recognize students' effort in learning as this is a vital strategy to increase the students' level of confidence. Meanwhile, a qualitative study by [Abdullah, Ghafri and Yahyai \(2019\)](#) has shown that the EFL teachers in Oman emphasized the need to create a conducive and supportive classroom environment as this is known as one of the key motivational strategies that could help students to feel more at ease and motivated to learn the L2. To add, another study further added that some teachers advocated the use of positive feedback among learners as another essential strategy in facilitating students to sustain their motivation in learning ([Alharbi, 2020](#)).

Furthermore, [Guilloteaux \(2013\)](#) has indicated that most Korean secondary school teachers in her study have posited strong views on the need for language teachers to encourage students to try harder in their learning and display proper teacher behavior by showing that they care for them. This is because such strategies are deemed essential in the ESL classroom to further enhance students' learning motivation. On the other hand, a study by [Lee and Lin \(2019\)](#) has stated that English teachers must incorporate authentic learning materials into teaching and learning. This is utilized as a motivational strategy that could help students familiarize themselves with the second language culture and values. By doing so, it has indirectly impacted the students' performance and improves

their L2 motivation (Lee, 2017). Besides, Wong (2014) has revealed that L2 teachers in the Chinese context viewed giving rewards and recognizing students' efforts and achievement as very useful and essential in ensuring students' motivation in learning. This is because students are more motivated and interested in learning when their accomplishment is well-recognized by the teachers.

However, as much as those strategies as mentioned earlier are regarded as crucial and very important by the language teachers, it is equally needed to identify how frequent those motivational strategies are implemented in the ESL classroom. A study by Safdari (2017) found that most Iranian EFL teachers have commonly practiced motivational techniques, which include presenting the learning tasks appropriately, establishing a supportive classroom setting, showing appropriate teacher behavior, and promoting learners' self-confidence. It was reported that these are among the motivational strategies that the teacher frequently used in the ESL classroom as they are perceived as very much needed to improve students' motivation further. Also, a study by Chen and Vibuphol (2019) has stated that most teachers perceived establishing a good relationship with students as one of the most frequently used strategies by the language teacher; however, they further claimed that such method was claimed by the teachers as ineffective in elevating students' motivation in learning the L2.

Besides, another study by Maeng and Lee (2015) has shown that some teachers in the Korean context are more inclined towards using motivational strategies that captivate students' attention and build their confidence in learning and the strategies include the use of enjoyable attention-getter activities to create engaging classroom climate as well as providing constructive and positive feedback based on the learners' performance. This is similar to an empirical study by Sugita and Takeuchi (2009), whereby the teachers posit that they commonly practice motivational strategies such as building a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere through engaging opening activities as well as emphasizing the use of students' self-assessment to provide more freedom in their learning. On the other hand, Marashi (2017) has also claimed that other frequently practiced motivational strategies involve encouraging learners' autonomy in class and creating a supportive classroom climate. In contrast, Guilloteaux (2013) has revealed that most teachers in her study did not frequently encourage learner self-assessment or learners' autonomy in the classroom as it was quite difficult for them to employ such motivational strategies in the L2 classroom.

Overall, it can be perceived that there are various beliefs and views regarding the teachers' perceived importance of motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. Similarly, not all strategies are well-practiced in class, as this may differ from one teacher to another depending on their educational context.

3. Research Methods

The present study employed a quantitative research approach through questionnaires with the aim to understand the participants' perceptions of the importance of the motivational strategies in ESL classrooms along with how frequently they applied the said strategies in their respective teaching contexts. The method used for data collection is via a self-reported questionnaire. To ensure the validity and reliability of this study, the questionnaire is adapted from a piloted study by Cheng and Dornyei (2007), and the article by Dornyei and Csizer (2012) is used for further reference. Besides, the research instrument has been used in a few established studies; therefore, it has undergone

considerable development, further strengthening the validity of the questionnaire. The participants are selected using convenience sampling, as suggested in the article by [Dornyei and Csizer \(2012\)](#). Therefore, the participants are recruited based on a few criteria: educational teaching background, years of teaching experience, teaching qualification, availability of time, easy accessibility to the questionnaire and willingness to participate in the research. Additionally, the questionnaire was distributed among the respondents by emailing them the Google Form link to ensure easy access to the questionnaire.

Before administering the questionnaire, the participants have been informed about the purpose and aims of this research. In addition, the questionnaire instruction emphasized that all information gathered from the survey will be kept anonymous and confidential. This is also done to ensure that the participants will not hesitate if they might not utilize the motivational strategies that they rate as important in the first section of the questionnaire. As mentioned previously, the purpose of this research is to investigate the teachers' beliefs on the importance of certain motivational strategies listed in the questionnaire and how frequently they practice them in class. Therefore, the questionnaire was adapted and modified based on [Cheng and Dornyei \(2007\)](#) to cover the proposed research questions and fit in the study's current context. The questionnaire comprises three sections, namely, sections A, B, and C., and the questions include Likert-type questions and closed-ended questions. The first section of the questionnaire is allocated to collect the selected participants' demographic information, such as gender, educational background, teaching qualifications, and teaching experience. For the remaining two sections, both contain the same set of motivational strategies; however, the only difference between the two sections is the rating scales used to identify the participants' responses.

In section B, the focus is to investigate the teachers' perceived importance on the listed motivational strategies; therefore, this section used the rating scales that comprise of five response options to describe the degree of importance of the motivational strategy (not important – extremely important). Meanwhile, in section C, this part emphasizes how frequent the teachers practice the motivational strategy in the ESL classroom; hence, the rating scales consist of five response options to describe the degree of frequency (never – always). The quantitative data is also analyzed using SPSS software, where the data is calculated to draw out the percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The quantitative data collected are then transferred and tabulated in a table form for further analysis in the next section.

The selected participants for this study are 40 Malaysian ESL novice teachers (female and male). The number of participants is determined based on the practical constraints and methodological considerations. In the context of this study, the focus is on exploring the specific beliefs and practices among novice ESL teachers and not ESL teachers in general; therefore, such sample size is believed to be sufficient to observe a meaningful trend and allow for a valid interpretation. Additionally, a similar size of participants was also used in previous study ([Omar et al., 2020](#)) within English language field and has managed to yield reliable results. In this study, ESL novice teachers are referred to as those with three years of teaching experience and those below; hence, the said number of participants are believed to be sufficient based on convenience sampling to produce dependable results. Besides, the participants range from those teaching in primary and secondary public schools, private or international schools, and colleges. Based on [Table 1](#), these participants have been reported that they come from different educational institutions

with the same English language teaching qualification, an undergraduate degree. Most of the participants in this study taught in public secondary schools (75%), whereas the remaining participants taught in public primary school, private schools, and college. Besides, more than half of the participants have teaching experience within one to two years (60%), while the others have teaching experience ranging from six months to one year and two years to three years. Lastly, more than half of the participants reported that they taught in the city region (72.5%) and the remaining participants taught in town and village.

Table 1: Participants' Information

Character	Categories	Frequency
Gender	Female	29
	Male	11
Current Employer	Public Secondary School	30
	Public Primary School	1
	Private / International School	8
	College	1
Teachers' Qualification	Bachelor's Degree	35
	Teaching Institutions	5
Teaching Experience	6 months – 1 year	13
	1 year – 2 years	24
	3 years	3

4. Results

4.1. Teachers' Beliefs on The Importance of Motivational Strategies

In this section, the participants were asked to portray their perceived importance on the motivational strategies used in the ESL classroom. The results are obtained using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire in which number one (1) represents "not important" and number (5) indicates "extremely important." Based on the results, we have selected twelve beliefs on the importance of motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. The data is presented in [Table 2](#), and the most relevant findings will be further discussed.

As presented in [Table 2](#), it can be observed that all of the participants ($m=4.93$) of this survey believed that "establishing a supportive and pleasant classroom environment" as the most important in developing primary motivational conditions for the students. All participants with a mean score of 4.90 also perceived "showing that teachers care and respect the students" as the next most important motivational strategy in an attempt to portray good teacher behavior. Besides, 97.5% ($m=4.88$) of the participants viewed "portraying your enthusiasm for teaching English" as another important teachers' motivational strategy that emphasizes showing good teacher behavior as it is essential in motivating language learners. Also, the participants believed that recognizing students' effort and success is significant in motivating the students. This belief is evident based on the survey, as all participants with a mean score of 4.85 and 4.75, respectively, perceived that "monitoring students' achievement and celebrating their success" and "showing that teachers recognized their efforts and accomplishments" as another essential strategies in further enhancing language learners' motivation.

Table 2: ESL Novice Teachers' Beliefs on The Importance of Motivational Strategies

Questions	Not Important or Slightly Important (%)	Moderately Important (%)	Very Important or Extremely Important (%)	Mean	SD
1. Build a welcoming and pleasant classroom environment where learners are free of shame and mockery.	-	-	100	4.93	.267
2. Display to students that you value, care for, and respect them.	-	-	100	4.90	.304
3. Show your passion in teaching English by being committed and motivating yourself.	-	2.5	97.5	4.88	.404
4. Show students that you appreciate their effort and achievement.	-	-	100	4.85	.362
5. Notice students' progress and contributions, and provide them with positive feedback.	-	-	100	4.80	.405
6. Monitor students' accomplishments, and make time to celebrate any success or victory.	-	-	100	4.75	.439
7. Adopt the role of a 'facilitator' (i.e., Your role would be to help and lead your students to think and learn in their own way, instead of solely giving knowledge to them).	2.5	-	97.5	4.70	.608
8. Create activities/tasks that are within students' capacity to allow them to experience regular success.	2.5	5	92.5	4.58	.712
9. Encourage students to express personal experiences and thoughts as part of the learning activities.	-	7.5	92.5	4.52	.640
10. Provide good reasons to students on why a particular task is meaningful or important.	2.5	12.5	85	4.45	.815
11. Bring various authentic products (e.g., magazines, lyrics, online articles) to class as supplementary materials.	-	15	85	4.35	.736
12. Remind students regularly on the benefits of learning English to their future. (e.g., getting a better job or pursuing further studies abroad).	5	17.5	77.5	4.25	.927

*Value based on 5 point Likert scale: 1= not important 2= slightly important 3=moderately important 4= very important 5=extremely important

Furthermore, analysis shows that 97.5 % (m=4.70) of the participants perceived "adopting the role of a facilitator" as the next important motivational strategy in motivating students to become more responsible in their learning. Besides, the majority of the participants (92.5%), with a mean score of 4.58 and 4.52 respectively, also believed that "creating learning tasks within the learners' ability" and "encouraging students to share their personal thoughts" as other two important strategies to be employed by ESL teachers in motivating the language learners. On the other hand, the analysis above indicated that more than half of the participants with a mean score of 4.45 viewed "providing reasons why certain learning activity is meaningful" as very important to be used by ESL teachers in cultivating students' initial motivation.

Lastly, most participants also portrayed strong beliefs on the importance of familiarizing students with second language values to motivate the learners further. This belief is apparent as most participants with a mean score of 4.35 have perceived that "bringing authentic L2 related materials" is an important strategy to familiarize students with the culture and values of the L2. More than half of the participants, with a mean score of 4.25, also viewed that "reminding the students of the advantages of learning English" as another crucial motivational strategy that focuses on getting the students to familiarize themselves with the second language values. From the above findings, it is clear that most participants believed that creating basic motivational conditions, portraying appropriate teacher behavior, noticing students' effort, and getting the students accustomed with the L2 values as some of the most important strategies that teacher should employ to ensure students' motivation in the ESL classroom.

4.2. Teachers' Practices on The Motivational Strategies in the ESL Classroom

To answer the second research question, participants were required to indicate how frequent the ESL novice teachers practice the motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. Therefore, the results presented in Table 3 below are obtained from a five-point Likert scale questionnaire in which number one (1) refers to "never," and number five (5) represents "always." Based on the respondents' answers, these are the motivational strategies implemented by the novice language teacher in the ESL classroom.

Table 3 shows the responses given by the participants on how frequently they practice the motivational strategies. Based on Table 3, the findings indicated that showing to the students that teachers care and respect for them is the most frequently used motivational strategy by all participants (m=4.75) in the ESL classroom. Next, another frequently used strategy by the majority of the participants is building a good rapport or relationship with the learners, with a mean score of 4.70 and a frequency of 95%. This is then followed by providing clear instructions and establishing an engaging and supportive classroom setting as some of the commonly practiced motivational strategies in the ESL classroom, and both having a mean score of 4.68 and 4.60, respectively, with a frequency of 97.5%.

Table 3: ESL Novice Teachers' Practices of The Motivational Strategies

Questions	Never or Rarely (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often or Always (%)	Mean	SD
1. Display to students that you value, care for, and respect them.	-	-	100	4.75	.439

2. Build a good relationship with your students.	-	5	95	4.70	.564
3. Give clear instructions about how to carry out a task by modeling every step that students will need to do.	-	2.5	97.5	4.68	.526
4. Build a welcoming and pleasant classroom environment where learners are free of shame and mockery.	-	2.5	97.5	4.60	.545
5. Notice students' progress and contributions, and provide them with positive feedback.	-	-	100	4.53	.506
6. Encourage student participation by assigning activities that require active involvement from each participant (e.g., group presentation or peer teaching).	-	7.5	92.5	4.48	.640
7. Encourage learners to try harder by making it clear that you believe that they can do the tasks.	2.5	2.5	95	4.40	.672
8. Adopt the role of a 'facilitator' (i.e., Your role would be to help and lead your students to think and learn in their own way, instead of solely giving knowledge to them).	5	10	85	4.35	.864
9. Use short and interesting opening activities to start each class (e.g., fun games).	2.5	17.5	80	4.23	.832
10. Highlight the usefulness of English and encourage your students to use their English outside the classroom (e.g., internet chat room or English speaking pen-friends).	5	20	75	4.10	.900
11. Give students opportunities to assess themselves (e.g., give themselves marks according to their overall performance).	12.5	15	85	4.00	1.240
12. Encourage students to select specific, realistic, and short-term learning goals for themselves (e.g., learning five words every day).	15	30	72.5	3.75	1.104

*Value based on 5 point Likert scale: 1= never 2= rarely 3=sometimes 4= often 5=often

Also, findings showed that participants frequently employed strategies that help to boost students' self-confidence. This is evident as all participants (m=4.53) reported that

recognizing students' progress and giving motivating feedback as some of the most frequently used motivational strategies that could promote the students' confidence in learning the L2. Also, most of the respondents, 92.5% ($m=4.48$), have regarded that encouraging active participation among students as the next motivational strategy frequently used by language teachers in their teaching. Besides, the findings also showed that 95% of the participant with a mean score of 4.40 reported that they frequently provide support for the learners to believe in themselves as this will improve their self-confidence. On the other hand, 85% ($m=4.35$) of the participants revealed that they take up the role as a facilitator during the lesson as another motivational strategy that they frequently employed in the classroom; however, another six participants reported that they "rarely" or "sometimes" used this strategy in their teaching lesson. Interestingly, more than half of the participants, 80% ($m=4.23$), indicated that they commonly used engaging and brief classroom activity during the set induction, while some of the participants claim that they sometimes (17.5%) used the motivational strategy in the classroom.

To add, more than half of the participants, 75% ($m=4.10$), reported that emphasizing the benefits of learning English as another motivational strategy practiced by the language teachers in the ESL classroom; meanwhile, another 25% of the participants indicated that they did not regularly use or have never used it before in their teaching. Next, 85% of the participants, with a mean score of 4.00, reported that they frequently provide students with chances for self-evaluation. Lastly, 72.5% of the respondents with the lowest mean score of 3.75, reported that another strategy that they use is encouraging students to set their own learning goals; however, the remaining 30% of them did not provide the encouragement regularly; meanwhile, another 15% have never employed such strategy in their teaching. The above findings suggest that most participants frequently use techniques to help them portray exemplary behavior to the students, present tasks accordingly through clear instructions, and promote learners' self-confidence and autonomy in their learning.

4.3. Discussion of Findings

Based on this study's findings, it can be deduced that most teachers believed that creating a pleasant and welcoming classroom atmosphere as the most important motivational strategy in the ESL classroom. This may be due to the fact that establishing a supportive classroom environment is the key to ensure that students feel comfortable, safe, and motivated to learn a second language. This finding has further validated [Dornyei's \(2001\)](#) theoretical framework known as The Components of Motivational Teaching Practice Model in the L2 classroom. [Dornyei \(2001\)](#) states that the first dimension in the model is to build appropriate motivational conditions in which it can be achieved by establishing a pleasant and welcoming classroom climate. Therefore, this finding is in response to [Dornyei's \(2001\)](#) framework, as most teachers perceived this as the most important motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. This finding is also in line with a recent study by [Abdullah, Ghafri and Yahyai \(2012\)](#) who claim that most teachers emphasize creating a classroom setting that is engaging and supportive for the students. Besides, majority of the novice teachers also regarded that showing that teachers care and respect for the students as the next most crucial motivational strategy in an attempt to display an exemplary teacher behaviour. This is in accord with the study by [Guilloteaux \(2013\)](#) who posited that teachers strongly viewed displaying an exemplary teacher behaviour as one of the important motivational strategies that should be employed by language teachers. Next, another significant finding of this study also showed that teachers perceived

monitoring and acknowledging students' achievement and effort as well as celebrating their success as another imperative strategies to motivate L2 learners. Similarly, this result reflects the findings by [Ruesch, Bown and Dewey \(2012\)](#) and [Wong \(2014\)](#) as they claim that recognizing students' accomplishment and offering rewards as some of the important strategies that could ensure students' motivation.

On the other hand, the data analysis also indicated how frequent do the teachers use the motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. By referring to the findings, it was found that the most frequently used strategy by the novice teachers is displaying appropriate teacher behaviour in front of the students. This has further supports the study by [Safdari \(2017\)](#) who claim that most EFL teachers in his study posited that they frequently display good teacher behaviour by showing care and respect for the students. In addition, the findings also indicated that most teachers also practiced creating a good relationship with the students as the next most commonly used motivational strategy in ESL classroom. According to [Chen and Vibulphol \(2019\)](#), establishing a good relationship with student is one of the most used strategies by the language teachers. Therefore, this has further proven that building a good relationship with the students as one of the commonly practiced strategies in motivating the language learners. Next, the result obtained has shown that most teachers have reported that providing positive feedback and encouraging learners to strive better in their learning as some of the motivational strategies that are frequently used in promoting self-confidence among learners. These findings reflect the study by [Maeng and Lee \(2015\)](#) who state that most Korean EFL teachers are more inclined towards using confidence building strategies in their teaching practice. Lastly, it was reported that more than half of the participants provide chances for students to self-evaluate, and perceived this as another motivational practice in an attempt to encourage learner's autonomy among the students. However, this is in contrast with [Guilloteaux \(2013\)](#) who stated that majority of the teachers in her study did not encourage self-assessment as it is a hassle for them to practice such motivational strategy in the language classroom.

5. Conclusion

Overall, it can be observed that this study has informed on the teachers' perceived importance of the motivational strategies and how they frequently practice the strategy in the ESL classroom. The findings have shown that most teachers believed creating a harmonious and supportive classroom environment, displaying good teacher behavior, and recognizing students' achievement as some of the most important key motivational strategies in the ESL classroom. On the other hand, the novice teachers also have regarded a few motivational strategies that they frequently practiced in the ESL classroom, including displaying appropriate teacher behavior, establishing good relationships with students, promoting self-confidence and self-evaluation. It is important to note that most of them practiced the motivational strategies they perceived as essential to motivate students' learning. Therefore, it is hoped that this study can be used as guidance for language teachers in identifying the motivational strategies that are crucial in developing students' motivation in the L2. Also, this study is hoped to inform the language teachers on the strategies that should be practiced in the ESL classroom. Lastly, the researcher hopes that this study can fill in the gap by identifying the beliefs and practices from the ESL novice teachers' perspectives. Perhaps, future studies might want to consider doing a mixed-method approach in conducting this study to explore more-in depth perceptions of the teachers regarding the motivational strategies used in the ESL classroom.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

The approval for conducting the research was obtained from the Ministry of Education. In addition, the participants provided their informed consent, and they were clearly informed that their participation was completely voluntary, with the option to withdraw from the study without facing any negative repercussions. All the identities of the participants were kept confidential to protect their privacy.

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Conflict of Interest

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

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