Investigating EFL Teachers 'Motivational Strategies during COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract. Teachers have a pivotal role in maintaining and improving EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners 'motivation. Thus, it seems important for teachers to have motivational strategies to nurture learners 'motivation, especially during Covid-19 pandemic where students need to adapt with different teaching and learning situations. The present study aims to analyze motivational strategies that teachers conduct to maintain their students 'motivation during Covid-19 pandemic. The present study will provide more insights to educators on practical knowledge to improve students ' motivation. The present study applied a mixed method by distributing a set of questionnaires and interviewing ten respondents. The results show promoting learners ' self confidence, increasing learners 'goal orientedness, presenting tasks properly, recognizing students 'efforts, making the learning tasks stimulating, promoting group cohesiveness are some of the most salient motivational strategies. On the other hand, creating a pleasant classroom climate and familiarizing learners with L2-related values are some of the least salient motivational strategies. The present study indicates that motivational strategies taken by teachers would depend on the present teaching contexts such as the condition of the learning environment and students, especially during health crises such as Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, it seems important for educators to adapt their approach according to the learning environment and conditions. In addition, pre-service teachers need to be equipped with teaching practical knowledge such as using technology in the classroom and communicating with students so that they will not feel isolated during online teaching.

Keywords: motivational strategies, EFL teachers, pandemic, learners 'motivation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 pandemic affected all aspects of life, including language learning. In order to avoid the spread of Covid-19, real-life language classes were resorted to online ones. Sintema (2020) shows that the pandemic can affect toward students' achievements. In addition, Wang *et al* (2020) shows the early effects of pandemic such as anxiety and stress due to the lockdown and pandemic effects toward students' health. Their study suggests that EFL learners seem to be affected the most by the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, as students and teachers cannot meet in real life, it poses another problem toward students' motivation and interests on language learning. A study of Adara & Najmuddin (2020) indicates online learning as one of factors which causes the decrease in students' motivation because students feel isolated from their peers and teachers. The above points suggest that Covid-19 pandemic can affect students

negatively and it is the duty of teachers to conduct strategies to improve students' motivation. These points will be explained further in the next paragraphs.

Teachers can affect learners' motivation. Although Lightbown & Spada (1999) argued that teachers have no role in improving learners' intrinsic motivation, there are numerous studies on the relationship between students' motivation and teachers (Lamb, 2007; Mesbah & Khazaier, 2014; Poornima *et al*, 2016). In the regard, Ryan & Deci (2000) argue that students will be motivated to participate in the class if they feel noticed by their teachers. In this sense, teachers are regarded as the source of motivation as the functions as initiators, facilitators, mentors and supporters of students (Tanaka, 2005). Thus, it seems important for teachers to improve and maintain students' motivation during learning process (Loganathan & Khan, 2014). Besides that Harmer (1991) states that motivation and demotivation are affected by teachers. Based on those opinions, students' motivation depend on teachers.

Teachers can improve students' motivation through the implementation of motivational strategies. In this sense, motivational strategies can defined as actions taken by teachers to improve students' motivation (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). It is because motivational strategies have a positive relationship with students' motivation (Keblawi, 2020). In addition, several research have investigated the effects of motivational strategies on students' motivation (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Vibulphol, 2016). Thus, it seems imperative for teachers to create a positive classroom atmosphere to make students feel supported and suit their interests (Hasan *et al,* 2019). The study of Vibulphol (2016) also shows that motivational strategies which are not suited with students' interests will not make students feel motivated. In addition, Guilloteaux (2013) states a strategy' effectiveness will depend on several variables such as learning environment, culture and students' interest. It can be said that motivational strategies should be suited with students' interests to maintain students' motivation.

The last point suggests the importance of adjusting motivational strategies, especially during Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, a study which specifically analyses motivational strategies used by teachers to maintain students' motivation during Covid-19 pandemic, especially in Indonesian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching context, will provide more insights toward researchers as well as educators. Several researchers have investigated motivational strategies in Indonesian EFL teaching context. A study of Astuti (2016) used a qualitative method to analyze how a group of Indonesian EFL teachers implemented motivational strategies. Besides that, Mali's (2017) study analyses motivational strategies used by a group of teachers in EFL writing classrooms. Unfortunately, there is a lack of research toward motivational strategies in Indonesian EFL context, especially during Covid-19 pandemic. The present study aims to analyze motivational strategies used by a group of Indonesian EFL teachers during Covid-19 pandemic. Besides being a milestone for similar studies, the present study can be an insight for teaching EFL in Indonesian context.

2.   Methodology

The present study applied a mixed method approach to obtain data. Thus, the present study used a set of questionnaire adapted from a study of Cheng & Dörnyei (2007). A pilot study was conducted to analyze the reliability of questionnaire with 10 participants. The reliability statistics of pilot study indicated that the questionnaire had relative internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0, 65$). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the questionnaires were distributed online via Google Form. Before filling the questionnaire, the respondents were invited to fill the consent forms. The questionnaire consists of

two sections. The first section of questionnaire consists of questions about the respondents' background information (sex, teaching period, teaching contexts).

The second section of questionnaire is an adaptation of Cheng & Dörnyei's (2007) questionnaire. Whereas Cheng & Dörnyei (2007) asked their participants to describe how important and how often a strategy is used in their classrooms, the present study only required the respondents to describe the degrees of importance by adopting a four-response Likert scale from 1 (very not important) to 4 (very important). Data collection lasted around a two weeks. After the questionnaire was distributed for two weeks, 53 copies of online questionnaire were collected. The raw data was analyzed using SPSS 25.

Besides questionnaire, the present study applied semi-structured interviews to ten respondents. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian language and English, depending on the respondent, and each lasted around 10 minutes. The interview questions are about strategies they used to maintain students' motivation, how they adapted their strategies during Covid-19 pandemic and their difficulties to maintain students' motivation during Covid-19 pandemic. All the interviews were transcribed and some were translated to English. The interviews' results were coded into several categories based on Gorden's (1992) direction.

3.   Results and discussions

3.1   Results

Following are the results of questionnaires of present study. The rank is based on the most salient variable according to the results of questionnaire.

Table 1. The questionnaire's result

Scales and constituent strategies	Mean	SD
1. Promote learners' self confidence	3.85	0,361
2. Increase Learners' Goal Orientedness	3.62	0,489
3. Present Tasks Properly	3.6	0,531
4. Recognize Students' Efforts	3.55	0,574
5. Make the Learning Tasks Stimulating	3.55	0,539
6. Promote Group Cohesiveness	3.55	0,539
7. Proper teacher's behaviour	3.45	0,607
8. Promote Learners' Autonomy	3.42	0,663
9. Familiarise learners with L2-related values	3.26	0,56
10. Create a pleasant classroom climate	3.23	0,64

The above table shows that promoting learners' self confidence is the most salient motivational strategy (M=3,85). The second most salient variable is increase learners' goal orientedness (M=3,62). The third most salient variable is presenting tasks properly

(M=3,6). Next, recognizing students' efforts, making the learning tasks stimulating, and promoting group cohesiveness obtained similar score (M=3,55). On the other hand, proper teacher's behavior (M=3,45), promoting learners' autonomy (M=3,42), familiarizing learners with L2-related values (M=3,26) and creating a pleasant classroom climate (M= 3,23) are the variables with lowest score.

3.2   Discussions

PROMOTING LEARNERS' SELF CONFIDENCE

The above table shows that promoting learners' self confidence is the most salient strategy taken by the respondents during Covid-19 pandemic. Respondent 1 thought energetic teachers as a key in motivating students. In addition, he thought praises can boost students' motivation and confidence. Respondent 1 even believed the weakest students can be motivated after getting praises from their teachers. It can be said that promoting learners' self confidence is regarded important by the respondents of present study.

Unlike the results of present study, a study of Alqahtani (2016) on motivational strategies and perceptions of English teachers in Saudi Arabia shows promoting learners' self confidence as one of least salient variable. However, numerous studies indicate promoting learners' self confidence as one of the most salient strategies (Al-Mahrooqi *et al*, 2012; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Loganathan & Zafar, 2014). Cheng & Dörnyei (2007) state that promoting learners' self confidence is well-regarded in the field of educational psychology as a strategy that has a significant impact on how big efforts will be given by students to finish their tasks. In this sense, confidence has an indirect link to learners' competence (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). Weaker students may gain their skills when they feel confident. Therefore, improving learners' confidence seems important to improve learners' motivation.

In regards to Covid-19 pandemic which became the background of present study, most respondents seem to regard improving students' confidence as imperative. In addition, a study of Hartshorn & McMurry (2020) on the effects of Covid-19 pandemic toward EFL learners and teachers in the USA indicates the increase in stress level among teachers and students. In addition, they reported that learning and teaching process became less important for teachers and students due to the existence of new stressors in their lives such as the fears of isolation, health crisis, and else. Alrabai (2010) argues that the presence of self-confidence can reduce students' anxiety, improve motivational attribution, and give motivational feedback. Considering Covid-19 pandemic, improving learners' self-confidence seems to be an appropriate strategy to boost learners' motivation during Covid-19 pandemic.

INCREASE LEARNERS 'GOAL ORIENTEDNESS

The second most salient variable is increasing learners' goal orientedness. In this sense, goal orientedness can be defined by Gardner (1985) as learning goals of target language that can be divided into instrumental and integrative goals. While instrumental goals refer to practical things such as getting jobs or passing exams (Soureshjani & Naseri, 2011; Hudson, 2000), integrativeness can be defined as students' wishes to integrate with target language' community (Gardner, 2012). Teachers have a significant role in reinforcing goal orientedness among their students such as motivating their students to learn the target language to visit abroad or pass the exams. Nevertheless, several studies show this variable as one of the least

important (Al-Mahrooqi *et al*, 2012; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Ibrahim Shousha, 2018). It can be caused by the lack of teachers' reinforcement toward goal orientedness among or difficulties to put goal orientedness in their teaching contexts (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). In addition, some teaching contexts only focus on passing exams (Al-Mahrooqi et al, 2012), making it difficult for teachers to be creative with goal orientedness. The above statement shows a lack of understanding toward macro goals in language learning beyond passing exams.

However, some studies show that teachers have a role in influencing students' motivation in language learning process (Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). One of ways to influence students is through improving learners' goal orientedness. Following is a response from Respondent 9 regarding this strategy, "I remind my students that they will always find English wherever and whenever. Whatever profession [you will have in the future], [you will always need the ability to communicate in] English…" His comment shows that learners' goal orientedness is not always about passing exams but also practical things like using English in daily lives. Similarly, Al-Mahrooqi *et al* (2012) state that teachers can have more learning goals besides passing exams. In addition, it seems important by teachers to expand their knowledge so that they can include learners' goal orientedness to their teaching contexts. Related to Covid-19 pandemic, it seems important for teachers to include learners' goal orientedness in their teaching strategies so that students will be more motivated to learn English beyond merely passing exams.

PRESENT TASKS PROPERLY

The third most salient variable is presenting tasks properly. In this sense, teachers can give proper directions to their students on how to do the tasks and the reasons of doing it. Respondent 5 said that one of her most important motivational strategies that she used is presenting tasks properly to students. Respondent 5 ensured that all of her students know the objectives of each task given. If they have not understood a task, Respondent 5 will give a chance for them to ask privately through social media application. Similarly, Respondent 3 will always tell term's learning objectives to her students. The results of present study indicate the respondents' views on the importance of presenting tasks properly to students.

Unlike the above variables, presenting tasks properly resided in the highest position in the study of Cheng & Dörnyei (2007) (Taiwan) and Dörnyei & Csizér (1998) (Hungary). Similar results were shown in the study of Al-Mahrooqi *et al* (2012) (Oman). Despite the differences in the locations and teaching contexts, those studies show the importance of presenting tasks properly among the participants of those studies. It seems impossible for teachers to expect the improvement of students' motivation if teachers cannot provide clear instructions (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). It is because tasks are important for students. By providing proper tasks to students, they will know how to solve their problems (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). In addition, it can be a good practice for students to be more flexible in the interaction with each other (Kubanyiova, 2006). Dörnyei (2001) even states that tasks given by teachers can motivate and support language learning process. The above points show the importance of tasks as a motivational strategy.

RECOGNIZING STUDENTS' EFFORTS

The next most salient strategy is recognizing students' efforts. In this sense, teachers can give praises or supports for efforts given by students to improve their participation in the classroom. In addition, Al-Mahrooqi *et al* (2012) state that recognizing students' efforts shows how much teachers care for their students' achievements and help building good relationships with their students. However, other studies toward motivational strategies in Hungary (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998) and India (Loganathan, Zafar & Khan, 2014), recognizing students' efforts reside in the lowest position. On the contrary, the results of studies in Taiwan (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007) and Oman (Al-Mahrooqi *et al*, 2012) show how this strategy resides the second and third highest position. The above studies suggest that a strategy can be perceived differently depending on location and learning contexts. Considering such difference, Cheng & Dörnyei (2007) state that not all strategies, especially ones related to culture such as learners' approach to learning and teaching method, can be used in every learning context because some strategies can be effective while others are less effective. For example, several studies show how students in Asia recognize efforts better than their Western counterparts (Grant & Dweck, 2001). Therefore, it is important to know the most suitable strategy for their classes.

MAKING STIMULATING TASKS

This strategy obtains similar score with the previous strategy. Few respondents state that how they employed various stimulating tasks to motivate students. Respondent 6 and 8 said that they use various techniques or strategies to improve motivation through tasks given to students. Both respondents also use tasks which can attract students' interests and improve students' motivation. Despite how the studies toward motivation show the importance of maintaining curiosity and interests of students (Brophy, 2004; Keller, 2008), making stimulating tasks does not reside in highest position in several studies toward motivational strategies. Cheng & Dörnyei (2007) state that for some reasons, teachers do not think making stimulating tasks can be a significant component to improve students' motivation. In regards of present study, the respondents seem to think applying stimulating tasks can be difficult due to the shift to online classes which is different from real-life classes. Most respondents of present study also suggest that they needed to suit their teaching approach during online classes, including the way they made tasks for their students. Nevertheless, it is still far-fetched to conclude whether Covid-19 pandemic which hinders teachers' creativity to create stimulating tasks or they already have low perception toward the effectiveness of stimulating tasks to students. A study which specifically investigates tasks given by teachers during Covid-19 pandemic and teachers' perceptions toward tasks can provide more information for this matter.

PROMOTE GROUP COHESIVENESS

This strategy is not significantly salient. However, a respondent said that this strategy is something she has already used before Covid-19 pandemic. Respondent 3 said that she always made rules before the lesson started. It is conducted to ensure the cohesiveness of class during classes. During the pandemic, the tradition is still observed. Nevertheless, the rules were adjusted to the condition of online classes. It shows that promoting group cohesiveness can still be conducted despite not meeting in real life.

Despite the positive effects of group cohesiveness toward students' actions and trusts (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007), Dörnyei & Murphy (2003) argued that group cohesiveness does not significantly motivate students unless it is related to protocols or rules that govern students' attitudes. Several studies on motivational strategies also show that promoting group cohesiveness is not significantly salient (Alqahtani, 2016;

Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). Alrabai (2010) on his study toward motivational strategies in Saudi Arabia states that English teachers in Saudi Arabia seem to not consider this strategy as applicable due to the huge number of students in each class. The statement may be one of reasons of why this strategy seems to be less popular. A study of Rukmini & Saputri (2017) on authentic materials to examine English productive skills suggests the huge number of students in each class makes it difficult for teachers to manage tasks for assessing students' achievements. This factor can also lead to the lack of popularity of this strategy among the respondents of present study.

PROPER TEACHER'S BEHAVIOR

Teachers have an influential role in influencing students' motivation. Such influence can be given through proper teachers' behavior. In this sense, teachers can influence their students through proper behavior such as giving praises or modeling proper attitudes. Respondent 3 built a personal relationship with each student. Instead of discussing the problem in the class' group chat, he would personally chat his students so they will not feel ashamed. This strategy seems successful to make students more open with their problems related to English lessons.

Proper teacher' behaviour seems to be one of the most important ones in previous studies (Alqahtani, 2016; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). It is because showing proper behavior is considered influential to motivate students (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). In addition, showing huge interests toward study subject can influence students' motivation (Stipek, 2002). Nevertheless, this strategy is not included as one of the most salient strategies in the present study. It can be caused by Covid-19 pandemic which makes it difficult for teachers to give proper behavior to students. The previous point needs to be investigated in further studies toward students' perceptions toward teachers' attitudes that can motivate them. In addition, Respondent 4 said he improved students' motivation through chatting application such as WhatsApp. Despite how far technology has improved, it cannot replace direct communication to motivate students in language learning. The above point can be one of reasons of why this strategy is not too popular among the respondents during Covid-19 pandemic.

PROMOTING LEARNERS' AUTONOMY

Learners' autonomy has a close relationship with motivation. A study of Zhou, Ma & Deci (2009) shows how important learners' autonomy is to motivate a group of students in China. Liu's (2012) study also suggests a relationship among anxiety, motivation and language aptitudes in Taiwan. It can be said that autonomy and motivation can influence each other. The results of Alqahtani's (2016) study indicates improving learners' autonomy as one of the most important strategies taken by a group of EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia. The above studies show the importance of learners' autonomy toward motivation.

Nevertheless, the results of present study show that promoting learners' autonomy is not one of the most salient strategies used by the respondents. Similar results were obtained by a study of Cheng & Dörnyei (2007) who concluded that most teachers in Taiwan seemed reluctant to abandon their authoritarian position and let students to lead their learning process. Furthermore, Warden & Lin (2000) state that countries with history of obeying authoritative figures seem to perceive teachers as the only source of knowledge instead of facilitators. Despite being one of the main goals of learning, the supporters of autonomy theory sometime realized that education process gives little room to be an independent learner (Benson, 2007). However, it seems impossible to say that this strategy is not popular in Indonesia because its teachers

have similar characteristics to Taiwanese teachers. Such conclusion needs to be investigated in further studies about the comparison of Taiwanese and Indonesian teachers. It seems impossible to conclude that students perceive teachers as the only source of knowledge in the class. It is because the presence of online platforms allows teachers to present multiple learning resources such as websites, video or else which help them to be both facilitators and guides for students to understand online resources. Thus, it takes another study on how teachers employ students' autonomy to improve their motivation before taking similar conclusion made by Cheng & Dörnyei (2007).

FAMILIARISE LEARNERS WITH L2-RELATED VALUES

Familiarizing learners with L-2 related values is similar to what Gardner (1985) postulated. He stated that attitudes toward native speakers and their culture is important because it can influence students' motivation and interest in foreign language learning. Furthermore, for last decades, improving understanding toward the culture of target language is a ket for several language programs all over the globe (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). In his study, Alqahtani (2016), indicated that teachers feel it important to improve integrativeness to introduce target language. Similarly, Dörnyei & Csizér (1998) suggest that teachers can make learning more 'real' by integrating the culture of target language to classroom, using authentic materials, and promoting contact with native speakers. Nevertheless, the results of present study show that familiarizing learners with L-2 related values is not one of the most salient strategies. Respondent 1 stated that this strategy is less popular because he focused on teaching grammar and saw no relationship between teaching culture and grammar. In addition, Respondent 1 feels he has no sufficient knowledge toward L-2 culture. Other studies toward motivational strategies also show similar results (Alrabai, 2010; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). Related to this point, Al-Mahrooqi *et al* (2012) stated that this strategy is not related with academic goals so that they are less interested to teach L-2 related values to their students. It can be said that despite the benefits mentioned by researchers, some teachers seem to perceive this strategy less applicable in the classrooms.

CREATE A PLEASANT CLASSROOM CLIMATE

Although creating a pleasant classroom climate is important for teachers, this strategy is less applicable in some teaching conditions. Learning foreign languages can be a stressful experience for learners (Dörnyei, 2005). In this regard, students' anxiety can be caused by negative classroom climate that can hinder students' motivation and achievement (Young, 1999). In addition, a pleasant classroom climate can reduce students' affective filter (Al-Mahrooqi *et al*, 2012). Then, it is important for teachers to relieve the stress of students by creating a pleasant classroom climate. Due to its effects, this strategy obtained the second most salient position in the studies of Dörnyei & Csizér (1998) and the fourth most salient position in the study of Cheng & Dörnyei (2007). On the other hand, this strategy resides the lowest position in the study of Al-Mahrooqi *et al* (2012). Similar results are indicated in the present study. The next paragraph will describe it further.

In regards of present study, the results can be caused by online teaching condition which is different from real-life classroom. In real-life classroom, teachers can ensure the presence of conducive classroom (class surrounding is quiet and rooms are designed to motivate students) but teachers may not be able to control such things during online teaching. Respondent 3 stated that one of the difficulties of conducting online teaching is ensuring conducive learning environment for students such as ensuring low noise level in students' houses and making sure students paying attention during online learning. In addition, Respondent 9 commented that it was difficult for him to apply motivational strategies because he cannot ensure if students can attend

meetings regularly. He said some students found it difficult to obtain reliable internet connection or appropriate gadgets for online learning, making it difficult for sure to attend the class on time. A study of Adara & Najmuddin (2020) states that online learning is one of factors which reduces learners' motivation or demotivation. The results of their study show that lack of internet connection and the feeling of loss communication with teachers and peers become factors which lead to their participants' demotivation in EFL learning. In addition, Efriana (2020) comments that online learning limits teachers from controlling their classrooms because lack of discussion performed by students, despite the application that the particular classrooms use. It can be said that creating a pleasant classroom climate seems difficult to be conducted during online teaching.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CLASSROOM PRACTICE

The results of present study show that motivational strategies used by teachers may vary depending on their location and teaching contexts. In addition, having background knowledge in ICT seems important for teachers during Covid-19 pandemic. Some strategies such as increasing learners' goal orientedness and presenting tasks properly, which receive less endorsement in another studies (e.g. Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998), seem to be favored better in the present study. Numerous factors can lead to these differences. Cheng & Dörnyei (2007) argued that the use of motivational strategies are culture-specific and depend on their relevance and impact. In addition, language teachers' motivational practice is related to the increased levels of students' motivated learning behaviors and motivational state (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). It can be said that teachers will use certain strategies by measuring their students' reaction toward those strategies. If the students react positively, teachers will use that particular strategy in another session. Therefore, it seems important for teachers to analyze their students' culture and use certain motivational strategies by measuring their students' reactions toward the strategies. Besides that, it seems imperative for teachers to have digital competence. A study of König *et al* (2020) shows how instrumental digital teacher competence and teacher education opportunities to learn digital competence are in adapting to online teaching during Covid-19 pandemic. Their study shows the importance of ICT competence in the field of teacher education. The weight of evidence suggests various factors may influence strategies taken by teachers to improve students' motivation and having background knowledge in ICT will help teachers to perform better during Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition, while the findings of Cheng & Dörnyei (2007) show proper teachers' behavior as the most salient strategy, the findings of present study do not indicate similar results. However, it does not mean that setting proper behavior may be less successful to be applied in Indonesian EFL teaching context. It has been suggested that making teachers as role models is vital in motivating students (Al-Mahrooqi *et al,* 2012; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). As suggested by Al-Mahrooqi *et al* (2012), teachers can be role models for their students by showing them that they care about students' learning and progress, demonstrating enthusiasm for teaching and cultivating rapport with students. Nevertheless, the application of this strategy may be hindered by online teaching and learning situation. One of respondents of present study commented the difficulties of maintaining meaningful communication with students through online platforms such as WhatsApp or Google Classroom. A study of Alawamleh *et al* (2020) on the effects of online learning toward communication between instructors and students during Covid-19 pandemic shows how students prefer real-life classrooms than online classrooms because online teaching is perceived as demotivating and decreasing their communication with peers and teachers. Thus, they proposed the instructors to conduct more communication with their students through

more informal channels such as messages online chat groups, audio calls, or private video calls. In addition, instructors should encourage students to participate and study more by giving more incentives such as giving extra grades. It can be said that despite online teaching situation, teachers can still influence their students through private messages or extra incentives for their actions.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to analyze motivational strategies taken by a group of EFL teachers in Indonesia. Developing students' motivation is a role taken by teachers so that their students will not lose their interests during arduous language learning process, especially during Covid-19 pandemic where students and teachers need to take online teaching and learning to avoid the spread of virus. In order to obtain the results, the present study applied a mixed-method approach by distributing a set of questionnaires adapted from Cheng & Dörnyei (2007) to 53 (fifty three) EFL teachers in Indonesia and interviewing 10 (ten) respondents. The results of present study show promoting learners' self confidence, increasing learners' goal orientedness, presenting tasks properly, recognizing students' efforts, making the learning tasks stimulating, promoting group cohesiveness as some of the most salient motivational strategies. On the other hand, creating a pleasant classroom climate and familiarizing learners with L2-related values are some of the least salient motivational strategies. The findings of present study suggest that motivational strategies taken by teachers would depend on the present teaching contexts such as the condition of learning environment and students. These differences provide insights to educators and researchers, especially for Indonesian EFL teaching context during Covid-19 pandemic. It seems important for educators to adapt their approach according to learning environment and conditions. Besides that, pre-service teachers need to be equipped with teaching practical knowledge such as using technology in the classroom and communicating with students during online teaching so that they will not feel isolated from their teachers.

Despite the efforts to minimize it, the present study is not without some limitations. Firstly, it was conducted in relatively limited time span with limited number of respondents. A longer period of data collection may gather more respondents and show results that represent the population better. In addition, the present study will benefit from more diverse research instruments such as classroom observation. However, due to the pandemic situation, the latter option seems less applicable. Next, it can benefit more from teachers' journals that record teachers' perceptions of certain motivational strategies. Further studies should incorporate those research instruments to produce more comprehensive and insightful results toward motivational strategies.

Nevertheless, the present study is not without merits. It provides an insight toward motivational strategies taken by a group of EFL teachers during Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, it can be a milestone for similar studies in the near future. A further study should investigate the differences in motivational strategies taken by experienced and less experienced teachers during Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, a further study should incorporate students' perceptions of teachers' motivational strategies during Covid-19 pandemic so that it will give better views toward the effects of motivational strategies toward students' motivation level.

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