Observing Teacher's Motivational Teaching Practices in an EFL Class during Covid 19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Covid 19 pandemic breakout is a sudden wake-up call for educators in terms of elevating the quality of EFL online learning activities. Several previous studies have proven that students' motivation is one of the important aspects in learning English. However, each educator has different teaching practices. There is no standard on how teachers design strategies to motivate their students. Therefore, it is essential to explore various kinds of teachers' techniques in motivating students. To reveal more motivational techniques in EFL settings, this study aims to observe teacher's motivational teaching practices in one of Senior High Schools in Yogyakarta. By using qualitative method in a form of an observational study, this research captured online learning activities in an English subject online classroom. The data was collected by using observational checklist and field notes. As additional data, interview was conducted as confirmatory data. An English teacher volunteered herself to be the participant who explained about motivational teaching practices. After collecting data through video recording, LMS activities and interview, the data was analysed by using thematic analysis technique based on motivational teaching practice's components. The results show that teachers mostly use positive retrospective self-evaluation by providing feedbacks and reward. In addition, teacher also generated initial motivation by maintaining and protecting students' motivation during learning. In sum, teacher has succeeded to create basic motivational condition. It implies that student-teacher interaction in online learning is not only limited to share materials and conduct assessment but also build positive and safe environment for students.

Keywords: covid 19 pandemic, motivational teaching practice, online learning, senior high school

INTRODUCTION

Building, maintaining and improving students' motivation are essential components of teachers' role in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Motivation influences students' achievement [1]. Therefore, teachers need to create enjoyable classroom environment to promote learning, such as utilizing movies, songs or games to encourage students' participation [2]. A good interaction among students and teachers leads to the increasing of students' motivation and academic success [3]. Unfortunately, covid 19 pandemic, started around 2020, causes a huge catastrophic in academic field. Offline classroom interaction has cancelled and shifted to online classroom. The phenomenon limits teachers' role in giving motivation to students due to lack of classroom interaction.

Several previous studies highlighted online learning challenges related to motivation and interaction. Sihombing & Fatra (2021) report that students have low motivation due to limited teachers' presence and overload assignments. As the impact, students experienced stress, boredom and laziness [4]. Although some teachers have tried to utilize contextual material, students still encounter difficulty in improving their motivation. Yustina et. al. (2020) find that teacher use specific material, related to students' daily life to enhance their learning based on social and cultural background. However, students can only increase their motivation in terms of knowledge. They still cannot maximize their motivation on the aspects of desire, appreciation and participation [5].

In EFL context, Lee & Lin (2019) states that each student has different needs in learning English, therefore, it is difficult for language teachers to motivate students in practical ways. To overcome the challenge, it is important for teachers to analyse students' background as basic information before selecting motivational strategies. Students' background includes institutional regulations, students, competencies, instructional design and classroom management [6]. During pandemic era, Azizah & Nugraha (2021) find that students' interest is one of important factors in determining students' attitude in learning. Students may have interests because they have intrinsic willingness to learn English [7]. On the contrary, not all teachers have ability to empower students' interest due to lack of classroom management competencies [8]. Therefore, it is important to investigate more about how teachers apply motivational strategies in their teaching practice in order to map future needs toward trainings or workshops to complete teachers' competences.

This study emphasizes the research on observing teacher's motivational strategies in online learning during covid 19 pandemic. The research is expected to bring new insight for educators in terms of various strategies in providing motivation for students in learning English as a foreign language.

METHOD

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This research aims to observe teacher's motivational strategies in an English class. The investigation was conducted in qualitative method in a form of observational study [9]. Observational study is appropriate for this study because it provides rich data from all classroom activities. The data were collected from video recording and LMS activities by using checklist. Although this research is a qualitative study, it is important to provide checklist as a guidance to elaborate final data. Video recordings contained recorded classroom activities. The recording covered complete classroom activities in an English classroom for one meeting. LMS provided classroom interaction by using Google Classroom platform. Meanwhile, interview with the teacher was conducted to confirm observational notes. Prior the interview session, participant signed an inform consent, presenting her willingness to participate in this study.

The setting of this study was an English class in one of Senior High Schools in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. There was one English teacher who participated in this study. She is a senior teacher who started her teaching career since 2004. She has tremendous contribution to English learning in the school because she does not only teach English but also establish an English Club to facilitate informal learning for students. As the result, the English club becomes one of the most famous extracurricular programs. Based on her achievement, she is a great candidate to participate in this research because she has succeeded to lead students' motivation in learning English. It is essential to explore more techniques on giving motivation to students.

The data were analyzed by using motivational teaching practices from [1]. Motivational teaching practices are divided into four aspects: 1) creating the basic motivational condition, 2) generating initial motivation, 3) maintaining and protecting motivation and 4) encouraging positive retrospective. The aspects are presented in the table below.

Table 1. Motivational Teaching Practices

Construct	Component	Subcomponent
Motivational Teaching Practices	Creating the basic motivational condition	Teacher behaviour
	Generating initial motivation	Value
		Selecting relevant materials
	Maintaining and Protecting motivation	Classroom atmosphere
	Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation focus on teacher motivational feedbacks.	Providing motivational feedback
		Offering rewards and grades in a motivating manner

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To ensure the credibility of the construct, the instruments and theories were validated by expert judgments [9] and the trustworthiness of the data refers to the triangulations of observation checklist, interview and asynchronous activities in Google Classroom. The findings are presented in a form of thematic analysis technique [10]. It includes identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns grounded on data. The analysis process started by identifying checklists from video recordings and Google Classroom activities, followed by elaborating observational notes from both resources. All data were coded based on subcomponents in motivational teaching practices [1]. After categorizing the data based on themes, selected codes were elaborated with interview results to confirm results. Final data presents the description of each aspect in motivational teaching practices and teacher's explanation toward her motivational teaching strategies.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After conducting the analysis data, the overall results show that teacher practiced all motivational teaching practices (Table 2), consist of creating basic motivational condition, generating initial motivation, maintaining and protecting motivation, and encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation focus on teacher motivational feedbacks [1]. However, each data presents slightly different results. Based on the video of synchronous classroom activities, teacher provided generating initial motivation, maintaining and protecting motivation, and encouraging positive self-evaluation. Meanwhile, Google classroom activities focused on encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation. Moreover, interview confirmed that teacher most favourable practices were creating basic motivational condition, maintaining and protecting motivation, and encouraging positive retrospective self- evaluation.

Table 2:
Motivational Teaching Practices

Construct	Component	Frequency
Motivational Teaching Practices	Creating the basic motivational condition	8
	Generating initial motivation	9
	Maintaining and Protecting motivation	9
	Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation focus on teacher motivational feedbacks.	10

Teacher created basic motivational condition by building positive environment in the classroom. She greeted all students, explained the learning objectives, and addressed some students who accomplished good academic

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achievements on their projects. In addition, she also provided visual media to enhance her explanation toward abstract concept, for example displaying the formula of passive sentence and providing some examples of the sentences. Moreover, she also reminded the student to check their spelling by using dictionary or links, posted in Google Classroom. During the interview, the teachers confirmed that "I opened my class by giving some simple questions for the students. Simple questions usually involved their mood in learning to ensure their participation". She added "in my concept of learning, it is important that the students know the benefit of what they learn".

The teacher has noticeable awareness toward her belief that a teacher is a role model for students. Teacher should play important role as motivator and facilitator for students' learning. Moreover, it is also important to build students' awareness of motivating each other. Role models among peers are one of good strategies in generating initial motivation. Teacher states that "We give examples for our students until they have awareness that the knowledge is understandable and applicable". When she selected some students as role model, she believed that her students completed each other in healthy competition. She claims that "they complete each other without realizing that it is not about win or lose, but it is about qualified or not qualified".

Teacher maintained and protected students' motivation by explaining materials in detail. She divided the materials into two parts: core concepts and examples. In delivering core concepts, they visualize her contents to create interesting material presentations. Meanwhile, she showed examples one by one to present a variety of sentences contexts. She also helped students to practice some tasks, providing feedbacks on the correct and incorrect answers, and grade students' work based on agreed rewards. She suggested that "we need to communicate with the students, especially students who are still struggling with English. We encourage their participation".

The last aspect of her motivational practices is encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation through feedbacks. She provided consultation session via WhatsApp and show some techniques to finish the task correctly. She helped students to reflect their tasks by discussion each question in detail. She explained the reason of correct and incorrect answers, thus, the students can obtain better achievement in the next assignment. Teacher convinced that "giving a good response to the students is a good model for them. However, teacher needs to recognize students' capability since some students may have introvert personality. We still need to encourage their participation as co-instructor in the classroom".

The findings indicate that teacher considers students' readiness before delivering materials. She built positive relationship with her students, thus, the students had interest in learning English. Brainstorming and games are two warming up activities before discussing the lessons. Moreover, teacher emphasized positive point of view toward English learning and presented role models as students' guidance. Teacher had great awareness that students'

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motivation is unstable during online learning, thus, she kept involving students in learning and created interesting assignments. Student-teacher engagement in learning is essential to address learning participation and provide feedbacks.

The results in this study differ from several previous studies. Azhari & Fajri (2021) found that junior and senior high schools' teachers in Aceh provide simple task for homework. It was expected that students still could maintain their motivation by completing fewer complex assignments. The teachers also established intensive communication with parents in order to share similar perspective on assisting students at home [11]. Klapproth et. al., (2020) found that teachers in Germany experienced stress during lockdowns. They had several learning obstacles such as low motivation of students, low internet connectivity, low motivation of parents and lack of facilities access. Fortunately, most of them survived by focusing their effort on planning and help seeking [12].

CONCLUSION

The conclusion section contains a summary of the research findings, which correlate with the research objectives written in the introduction. Then state the main points of the discussion. A conclusion generally concludes with a statement about how the research work contributes to the field of study as a whole (shows how progress from the latest knowledge). A common mistake in this section is to repeat the results of an experiment, abstract, or be presented with a very list. The concluding section must provide clear scientific truths. In addition, the conclusions can also provide suggestions for future experiments.

Based on classroom observation, practicing motivational strategies during covid 19 pandemic is essential to maintain interaction between teacher and students. Teacher plays important role in building students' motivation. In this research, the findings show that the teacher demonstrate great capability in establishing students' motivation. She scaffolds her motivational strategies in the classroom by noticing students' academic achievements, promoting learning role models, delivering clear instruction and providing routine feedbacks. Meanwhile, she supports students informal learning by creating English club, thus, students can practice their English outside the classroom. In conclusion, maintaining learning motivation is ongoing effort. Every teacher is unique; therefore, it is essential to explore more strategies to empower students' ability in maximizing their learning.

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