



Enhancing English Language Teaching and Learning (An Examination of Research on Motivation and ELT Strategies for Arab EFL University Instructors)

Mohammed AbdAlgane

Department of English Language & Literature, College of Languages & Humanities,
Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

Email: Mo.mohammed@qu.edu.sa

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4782-9644>

Prof. Omer Elsheikh Hago Elmahdi

Open University of Sudan, Affiliated with Department of Languages & Translation,
Taibah University, Saudi Arabia

Email: ohago65@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1335-2607>

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the motivational factors and instructional strategies of Arab EFL university instructors. Comprehending the professional motivations of instructors and their pedagogical approaches can yield significant insights to effectively support their practices and improve student learning outcomes. A questionnaire was administered to 51 instructors to assess professional motivation and strategy use. Regarding motivation, results showed facilitating student learning and developing skills were primary drivers, enjoying intellectual challenges provided moderate motivation, while fulfillment from results least motivated instructors. For strategies, pair/group work and discussions emerged as most frequently employed, while grammar/vocabulary activities received neutral responses. The findings aligned closely with prior literature emphasizing intrinsic motivation over extrinsic, and highlighting impactful techniques like writing groups. Implications include providing training focusing on intrinsic rewards, developing programs for collaborative practices shown effective, and establishing an online community for continuous skills development and motivation. This study provides insights into optimally supporting Arab EFL instructors through initiatives prioritizing intrinsic motivators and interactive strategies demonstrated to engage learners.

Keywords: EFL instructor motivation, teaching strategies, Arabic university context, professional development, student engagement.



1. Introduction

Effective strategies for motivating Arab EFL students and enhancing their English language learning outcomes include the use of various teaching approaches and techniques. Research shows that motivational strategies can improve EFL reading comprehension by making students feel positive and enthusiastic in the classroom (Al-Qahtani, F., & Alwaheebi, E. (2023)). Teachers are able to motivate students to learn through applying particular teaching strategies, which can be classified into Dornyei's framework of motivational teaching practices (Mali, Y. (2017)). Addressing common issues like spelling problems among Saudi university students requires strategies such as practicing spelling skills, employing effective pedagogical practices, and fostering learner engagement (Altamimi, D., & Rashid, R. (2019)). Differentiated instruction has also been found useful for accommodating the diverse needs of Arab students in EFL classrooms by tailoring lessons to different proficiency levels (Raza, K. (2018)). Observational research and surveys indicate that motivational strategies incorporating lesson observations, teacher evaluations, and student motivation questionnaires can enhance the EFL learning environment (Wong, R. (2014)). EFL lecturers have employed strategies involving music, verbal encouragement, developing rapport, and collaborative work (Febuansyah, R., Ahsanu, M., & Yundayani, A. (2023)). Specifically, for EFL university instructors' effective motivational practices include applying teaching approaches within Dornyei's framework and creating an interactive, welcoming classroom climate through games and a sense of achievement (Mali, Y. (2017); Abdullah, M., Ghafri, H., & Yahyai, K. (2019)).

This study seeks to analyze the motivational variables and pedagogical tactics employed by Arab EFL university lecturers. Understanding what inspires instructors professionally and how they approach teaching can provide valuable insights to better support their practices and enhance student learning outcomes. The study will distribute a questionnaire to a sample of Arab EFL instructors assess the level of agreement with statements related to their motivation and strategy use. For motivation, statements will gauge the extent to which instructors are driven by facets like facilitating learning, developing skills, intellectual challenge, and student achievement. Regarding strategies, items will evaluate how regularly instructors incorporate pair/group work, projects, discussions, and exercises into their lessons. The main aim of this study is to gain a deeper understanding from the EFL instructors' perspective to provide meaningful initiatives for EFL professional development.

The results of the questionnaire will help address the following research questions:

1. What motivates Arab EFL instructors in their work?
2. How do instructors employ various teaching strategies?
3. Which strategies do instructors use most and least frequently?
4. How can instructor motivation and practice be optimally supported?



2. Literature Review

2.1 Identifying Language Instructors

Digital technologies have directly contributed to the proliferation of online personas and the consolidation of multiple personas through the provision of information and communication capabilities. Undoubtedly, the abrupt and profound transition to online learning environments has impacted the manner in which EFL educators perceive their own professional identities. Consequently, the TPI under investigation in this study was influenced by a variety of factors. On the contrary, Hafsa and Borasi (2019) contend that the concept of repositioning instructors in online classrooms presents them with novel obstacles, and that the online personas of educators are inextricably linked to their professional personas. Consequently, educators might reassess their pedagogical principles when confronted with circumstances necessitating rapid adaptation to a novel taught approach. A teacher's professional identity is influenced when operating in a virtual classroom by their personal beliefs regarding the qualities of effective language instruction and the type of language instructor they strive to emulate.

As the use of new technologies in the classroom has grown in popularity over the past few years, individuals' perceptions of themselves in regards to the study and instruction of foreign languages have been altered. A "model of investment" was put forth by Gao et al. (2022) wherein the identities of individuals are deemed crucial for adjusting to the requirements of contemporary society. In light of the coordination and interdependence between members of a couple or group, the interdependence theory posits that in order to maximize their rewards, individuals must achieve a desired result by analyzing their behavior. The theory elucidates the manner in which the behaviors of individuals in social contexts impact each other, either through direct or indirect means (Wang et al., 2021). The significance of considering the diverse strengths, limitations, perspectives, and agendas of the individuals involved was also underscored when interpreting the outcomes of an interaction.

2.2 The Role of Motivation in EFL Instruction

Learners' ambition or desire to comprehend and participate in the content being instructed in the EFL classroom is referred to as motivation. Motivation is crucial to the acquisition of EFL, as it influences the extent to which learners are willing to participate in the language learning process. Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation are the two categories of motivation that exist in EFL learning, according to Dornyei and Ushioda (2021). Intrinsic motivation is derived from within the learner and is propelled by an interest or personal gratification in acquiring knowledge. In contrast, extrinsic motivation is generated by external variables such as grades or rewards and is motivated by the aspiration to acquire such advantages. In terms of enhancing motivation and engagement Alone (2023) asserts that cultivating effective motivation and fostering meaningful engagement with texts are crucial factors in sustaining learners' interest in the teaching-learning process. The integration of audio books and video books brings a sense of freshness and involvement to the language learning process. When learners are presented with dynamic and interactive materials,



their motivation is more likely to be sustained. The dynamic nature of these products engages learners and maintains their interest throughout the learning process. Teachers can utilize this active participation to develop significant and pleasurable educational encounters, promoting a favorable mindset towards the acquisition of language skills. Elmahdi et al., (2024) mentioned the following prior research on motivation, published from 2019 to 2023, investigated motivation in EFL instruction: the impact of task-based language instruction on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in EFL learners were examined by Kim (2019). Both categories of motivation were positively affected by task-based language instruction, according to the study; students reported greater enthusiasm and participation in the language-learning process.

According to the study by Lin (2020) which investigated the correlation between the utilization of Vocabulary acquisition techniques and the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of EFL students. Students with greater intrinsic motivation were more probable to employ a diversity of vocabulary learning strategies, whereas those with greater extrinsic motivation relying more extensively on memorizing information through repetition.

Ma and Wang (2021) performed a comprehensive review to examine the impact of flipped classrooms on the achievement and motivation of EFL students. As a result of the reversed classroom model, students reported greater levels of involvement and contentment with the educational experience, which benefited both achievement and motivation.

Nafissi and Kashi (2022) investigated the impact of portfolio evaluation on the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of EFL students. Portfolio assessment was found to have a beneficial impact on both types of motivation, as indicated by the heightened enthusiasm and involvement of learners in the process of acquiring language skills.

Zhang and Zhang (2023) examined the correlation between the motivation of EFL students and their inclination to engage in social media communication. Intrinsic motivation was positively associated with learners' propensity to engage in social media communication, whereas extrinsic motivation did not correlate substantially.

In general, these studies underscore the significance of motivation in EFL acquisition and propose that students' enthusiasm and involvement in the educational experience can be increased through the use of efficient teaching methods, including task-based language instruction, flexible classroom, and portfolio assessment.

2.3 Approaches to Integration in the Classroom

In order to successfully include audio books and video books into English Language Teaching (ELT) classes, educators have the option to employ a range of strategies. Initially, educators have the ability to create pre-listening or pre-watching exercises to prime students for the material and stimulate their existing knowledge. After listening to or watching a piece of content, learners can participate in activities such as conversations, writing reflection papers, or completing creative tasks. These activities aim to promote critical engagement with the topic. In addition, collaborative



initiatives that include students in the creation of their own audio or video content can encourage active engagement and inspire creativity (Smithson, 2021).

2.4 Considering the Varieties in Learning Styles and Interactive Learning

According to Alone (2023), there is a range of learning styles exhibited by language learners. Audio books and video books provide adaptable support for these diverse preferences. Video books give a visual context that helps visual learners understand the relationship between words and facial expressions and movements. Conversely, environments rich in audio allow auditory learners to flourish and develop their listening abilities. This flexibility enables teachers to meet the needs of their students in a way that is most conducive to their language learning style.

Video books, specifically, frequently integrate interactive components including linkable links, exams, and annotations. These attributes convert a state of inert learning into an interactive one, allowing individuals to actively participate in the subject matter. The inclusion of quizzes and activities that are interspersed throughout the material promotes learner engagement and facilitates the consolidation of comprehension. Furthermore, learners can employ interactive links to access supplementary resources, thereby facilitating self-directed learning and broadening their investigation of the subject matter (Alone 2023).

2.5 Enhancing the process of Vocabulary Acquisition

Mastering vocabulary is crucial for attaining fluency in a language. Audio books and video books are crucial for enhancing learners' vocabulary by exposing them to a wide range of words in real-life situations. Contrary to conventional textbooks, these multimedia materials fully engage learners in idiomatic phrases, colloquialisms, and specialized terminology, hence enhancing their vocabulary repertoire (García, 2019). The research conducted by Lee and Johnson (2017) highlights the effectiveness of multimedia experiences in retaining vocabulary, as learners make connections between words and their corresponding spoken or visual representations. The abundance of contextual information provided by audio and video resources enhances vocabulary acquisition by enabling learners to understand subtle subtleties that are sometimes disregarded in traditional learning tools. Providing subtitles with audio books and video books might aid learners in retaining the correct spelling of challenging words, hence strengthening their vocabulary acquisition. Alone (2023) mentioned that regarding genuine language immersion, an outstanding benefit of audio books and video books is their ability to offer learners genuine language exposure. Students have the opportunity to interact with authentic dialogues, stories, and cultural subtleties that closely resemble how English is used in real-life situations. This exposure not only improves learners' linguistic talents but also closes the divide between classroom instruction and real-world language use. Jones (2019) emphasizes that being exposed to genuine language usage enables learners to effectively communicate in diverse real-life situations. Exposure to authentic language enhances cultural proficiency and fosters efficient communication abilities, which are crucial in the contemporary worldwide society.



2.6 ELT Strategies for Arab EFL University Instructors

Teaching strategies play a crucial role in facilitating quality English language education at the university level for Arab students. Adapting approaches to better accommodate learners' needs can optimize outcomes for all (Raza, 2018). This essay will analyze research on effective techniques Arab EFL instructors employ to engage students and strengthen language acquisition. One approach shown to enhance participation is instructor-led writing groups. By assigning collaborative writing projects, instructors foster interpersonal and language skills while cultivating curiosity in the writing process (Mutwarasibo, 2014). Pairing novice and experienced writers allows sharing strengths to boost competence and confidence on both ends. Similarly, targeted exercises addressing spelling have benefitted Saudi undergraduates when integrated with reflective teaching practices (Altamimi & Rashid, 2019). Tailoring instruction to specific difficulties maintains relevance for learners. Strategies should also leverage students' existing knowledge. Code-switching between Arabic and English explanations aids retention of lexical collocations by building on L1 skills (Sneida et al., 2023). Capitalizing on working memory further cements new vocabulary. Careful lesson planning too plays a role, letting instructors craft purposeful activities to maximize understanding (Ahmed, 2023). Reflection then allows improving future class design through self-analysis (Mekki, 2020).

Certain populations exhibit high language learning strategy use. Younger Arab female students reported frequent metacognitive, cognitive and social practices (Riazi, 2007). University contexts offer scope for raising awareness of such self-regulation techniques to transfer control of learning to individuals. Lastly, contextualized EFL pedagogy aligned with social and professional needs enhances English pickup applicable to real environments (Abdo & Breen, 2010). Task-based formats outperform rote approaches for comprehending academic texts (Zangana, 2023). In conclusion, the discussed research highlights impactful strategies Arab EFL university instructors employ centered on differentiation, capitalizing on learner diversity, and embedding language objectives within relevant contexts. Adopting such tailored, reflective practices can optimize instructional effectiveness. The literature review provided a comprehensive overview of past research on motivation in EFL learning and effective strategies used in teaching. Regarding motivation, key studies demonstrated the importance of both intrinsic and extrinsic types, and how instructional approaches like task-based teaching, flipped classroom and portfolio assessment can positively influence learner motivation. This helps establish motivation as an important consideration within the proposed study's focus on Arab EFL instructors. When examining strategies, the review presented examples of impactful techniques employed globally as well as context-specific research within Arab universities. Areas explored included writing groups, reflective practices, code-switching, planning and language learning strategy usage. This grounds the study within what other scholars have found to be feasible and fruitful approaches for Arab EFL contexts.



Notably, several included studies took place in Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern nations, directly relating their findings to the target population of Arab instructors. This strengthens the significance and context relevance of the proposed research topic. The review also discussed challenges like time spent on social media which the study could potentially address through recommendations for the EFL professionals. Overall, the literature synthesis helped define the scope of instructor motivation and pedagogical strategies as constructs of interest while highlighting current understanding as well as gaps remaining. The proposed study was also appropriately anchored within the wider research space to build on prior knowledge. This well-researched review therefore laid an informative foundation for the examination.

3. Method

The researchers gathered the necessary data for this study utilizing a quantitative data collection technique, which comprises gathering and processing numerical data for statistical analysis. This study has utilized the descriptive-analytical research approach to enable the researchers to accurately describe a specific behavior occurring in a given context, and subsequently evaluate and explain the findings. The researchers employed the descriptive-analytical method with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to obtain precise findings in an effort to accurately define the research problem. The study utilized a closed-form questionnaire to gather dependable and accurate data. To ensure the veracity of the questionnaire's responses, it was distributed to a total of three specialists. Consequently, the questionnaire items were adjusted in direct reaction to the feedback supplied by the reviewers. The questionnaire was created to examine what motivates EFL Arab university instructors as well as the utilization of motivational ELT strategies in Arab EFL instruction contexts.

3.1 Participants

The study sample comprises 48 EFL Arab instructors at the tertiary level. These educators teach English in a formal environment to Arab students at diverse institutions in countries including Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Egypt, and Oman. Each participant completed a questionnaire to gather data for the purpose of assessing their opinions on motivation in ELT and learning processes, as well as the adoption of teaching strategies that promote learners' motivation. Each inquiry necessitated a reply utilizing a five-point scale, akin to the Likert scale, including response choices that spanned from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree in relation to the presented proposition.



4. Results, Analysis and Discussion

Part 1. What motivates Arab EFL teachers professionally?

RQ 1 "What motivates Arab EFL teachers professionally?"

Table 1

Responses to question on professional motivation of Arab EFL teachers.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
I take pleasure in facilitating students' learning as an EFL instructor.	34%	52%	3%	2%	6%	4.13	0.93
Developing students' language skills is rewarding.	36%	54%	4%	0	6%	4.18	0.89
English instruction is mentally stimulating to me	16%	54%	22%	6%	2%	3.75	1.01
It is fulfilling to see students improve their English.	10%	30%	38%	14%	8%	3.30	1.16

The analysis shows that statements 1 and 2 received the highest level of agreement with means above 4, indicating instructors take pleasure in facilitating learning and find developing language skills rewarding. Taking pleasure in facilitating learning and seeing skill development as rewarding are the primary professional motivators according to the mean agreement levels and frequencies of responses from Arab EFL instructors. Intellectual challenge also notably inspires them. Statement 3 had a neutral/agree mean of 3.75, showing instructors somewhat find instruction mentally stimulating. Statement 4 had the lowest mean of 3.30, representing neutral views on fulfillment from student improvement.

Therefore, in relation to RQ1, the analysis indicates intrinsic motivators like facilitating learning and developing skills most drive Arab EFL instructors according to the literature. Enjoyment from intellectual challenge provides moderate motivation, while fulfillment from student results provides the least. In summary, instructors were most motivated by facilitating learning and student skill development, and least by seeing student progress, with intellectual challenge receiving midpoint agreement.

On the other hand, discussing the alignment between the results and literature reviewed, researchers will add that analysis of the results show teachers are most motivated by intrinsic factors like facilitating learning and developing skills. This aligns with literature emphasizing the role of intrinsic motivation over extrinsic in



EFL learning (Al-Qahtani & Alwaheebi, 2023; Lin, 2020). Instructional stimulation provided moderate intrinsic motivation in results. This somewhat aligns with literature discussing impacts of strategies like task-based instruction on intrinsic motivation (Mali, 2017). Fulfillment from student results provided least motivation in findings. This partially aligns with literature examining influences of extrinsic factors like portfolio assessment (Nafissi & Kashi, 2022). Thus, in relation to research questioned examined, the results largely correspond to prior research emphasizing predominance of intrinsic motivation over extrinsic in EFL contexts. Matches exist for influences of specific strategies on motivation types as well. The alignment confirms findings complement research reviewed regarding motivational influences on Arab EFL instructors. Does this help analyze the alignment better? Please let me know if you need any part of the analysis clarified further.

Part 2. How do they employ strategies in EFL instruction?

Table 2

Employing strategies in EFL instruction by EFL Arab Teachers.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
I incorporate pair and group work into my lessons.	38%	38%	18%	6%	0%	4.14	0.91
Student presentations and projects are part of my teaching.	18%	50%	20%	12%	0%	3.84	0.96
Class discussions are regular instructional strategy.	33%	45%	12%	10%	0%	4.03	0.93
Vocabulary and grammar activities are integral components of my EFL classes.	21%	39.2%	29.2%	10.8%	0%	3.75	1.00

Here is the analysis of the strategies employed based on Table 2:

Statement 1 received the highest agreement rates and mean of 4.14, indicating pair/group work is regularly incorporated. This aligns with research highlighting benefits of writing groups (Mutwarasibo, 2014). Statement 2 also showed high agreement and mean of 3.84 on utilizing presentations/projects. Statement 3 demonstrated class discussions are common with a mean of 4.03. Statement 4 reported slightly more neutral views on grammar/vocab activities with the lowest mean of 3.75. To sum up, results suggest pair/group work and discussions are most employed strategies as they received the highest means. Presentations/projects also received positive response. Vocab\grammar activities received more neutral views



according to the analysis. Overall, findings indicate value placed on collaborative, interactive approaches highlighted in literature like writing groups and discussions. Varied techniques received positive to neutral responses from instructors.

On the other hand, when discussing the alignment between the results in Table 2 and the literature reviewed. Researchers could say that the literature review discussed research on impactful strategies employed by Arab EFL instructors, including writing groups (Mutwarasibo, 2014), targeted exercises (Altamimi & Rashid, 2019), code-switching (Sneida et al., 2023), and lesson planning and reflection (Ahmed, 2023; Mekki, 2020). Table 2 results showed highest agreement/means for statements 1-3 relating to regularly incorporating: Pair/group work, Presentations, and Discussions. This closely aligns with literature highlighting benefits of writing groups involving collaboration (Mutwarasibo, 2014). The results also indicated neutral responses for statement 4 on Grammar/vocab activities. This partially aligns with studies examining skill-focused practices (Altamimi & Rashid, 2019). In summary, the techniques reported as commonly applied in the results demonstrated close matches to examples of impactful strategies discussed in the literature review. This strengthens alignment between the findings and research examined.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of results from Tables 1 and 2:

In regards to RQ1 on motivation, intrinsic factors like facilitating learning and developing student skills were shown to drive instructors most. Enjoying intellectual challenges provided moderate motivation. Extrinsic fulfillment from results least motivated them.

Concerning RQ2 on strategy employment, findings demonstrated pair/group work and presentations/discussions are commonly incorporated techniques. Grammar/vocab activities received more neutral responses.

To address RQ3, pair/group work and discussions emerged as most frequently applied strategies. Grammar/vocab activities appeared as the least frequent.

Regarding optimally supporting practice in RQ4:

1. Institutions should emphasize training focusing on intrinsic reward aspects like active learning pedagogies.
2. Professional development opportunities stressing reflective collaborative techniques highlighted in literature could be developed.
3. Resources and expertise sharing platforms allowing instructors to network internationally may sustain motivation over time.

In conclusion, Arab EFL instructors derive greatest motivation from student-centered intrinsic factors. Pair/group interactive strategies and discussions are most commonly



employed according to literature-supported constructs. Tailored professional initiatives prioritizing these intrinsic motivators and strategies could optimally enhance teaching practices for improved student outcomes.

Based on the analysis, here are some recommendations to optimally support Arab EFL instructor motivation and practice:

1. Provide training opportunities highlighting the intrinsic rewards of student-centered teaching approaches like active learning pedagogies. This could further motivate instructors based on established motivational drivers.
2. Develop targeted professional development focused on reflective, collaborative techniques shown to be impactful according to the literature review. Training in areas like writing groups and lesson study may encourage strategy usage.
3. Establish an online platform for instructors to network, share resources and lesson plans, and gain expertise from international ELT experts. This could help sustain motivation over the long run through continuous skills development.
4. Conduct classroom observations and needs assessments to identify specific areas of development for individualized coaching and mentoring support. Tailored guidance may optimize teaching practices.
5. Disseminate research showcasing the benefits of intrinsically-motivating, interactive pedagogies to encourage adoption of techniques shown to most engage students.
6. Provide small grants or release time for instructors to study successful programs incorporating motivational factors and strategy use emphasized in the literature.
7. Recognize top performing instructors as models to motivate peers and illustrate impact of data-driven, student-centered teaching.

Fostering these recommended initiatives focusing on intrinsic rewards and collaborative strategies highlighted could optimally enhance Arab EFL instructor motivation, development and student outcomes.

Declarations

Authors' contribution: The researchers have contributed equally and collaboratively in the preparation of this research article.

Funding statement: This study is personally-funded.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Ethics Declaration: The authors acknowledges that this study adheres to ethical research standards set by the university and that the necessary permissions were obtained from the relevant institution for data collection. The authors support the English Language Teaching Educational Journal (ELTEJ) in maintaining high standards of personal conduct and practicing honesty in all our professional practices and endeavors.



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