Exploring the Fluctuating Motivational Landscape of EFL Teachers and Motivating Factors

İbrahim Kaya [a] *, Hatice Ergül[b]

[a] *Hacettepe University Graduate School of Educational Sciences, Beytepe, Ankara, Türkiye*
[b] *Hacettepe University Faculty of Education, Beytepe, Ankara, Türkiye*

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the motivation of English as a foreign language (EFL) instructors at universities, with a particular focus on fluctuations in their motivation and the key factors influencing their in-class motivational levels. Adopting a case study design, the research collected comprehensive data on the dynamic nature of two participants' teaching motivation through motigraphs, reflective journals, and semi-structured interviews. The findings reveal that teacher motivation is inherently dynamic, characterized by constant ebbs and flows which can be positively influenced by a myriad of factors. These include (1) Student-Centered Factors (e.g., students' motivation, emotions, and sense of responsibility and accountability), (2) Teacher-Centered Factors (e.g., fulfilment derived from students' success and participation, a sense of responsibility and professional commitment, feelings of appreciation and respect from students, and opportunities for continuous professional development), and (3) Teaching-Centered Factors (e.g., fostering a positive classroom environment, contextualizing teaching with real-life connections and integrating technology-enhanced instruction). The study highlights the dynamic and reciprocal relationship between teacher and student motivation. By exploring the multifaceted nature of teacher motivation and identifying key motivating factors, this study may lend some credence to the growing body of research on teacher motivation and offer practical implications to enhance it.

Keywords: Teaching motivation; language teacher motivation; motivational fluctuations; in-class motivation

* Corresponding author: İbrahim Kaya. ORCID ID.: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5217-6935
  E-mail address: ikaya@adiyaman.edu.tr

1. Introduction

The construct of motivation profoundly influences our decisions, actions, behaviours, and nearly every aspect of our lives, making it a longstanding subject of research across various fields, such as marketing, psychology, and education. Due to its complex and dynamic nature, motivation has attracted significant attention from researchers over the past few decades (Al-Hoorie, 2017; Al-Hoorie & MacIntyre, 2020; Butz et al., 2014; Chemolli & Gagne, 2014; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Gardner, 1968; Kubanyiova, 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Ushioda, 2013; Walker & Symons, 1997). Despite its prevalence and being an internal state that we inherently feel, "it seems challenging to provide a broad, comprehensive definition to compromise different understandings of this multifaceted construct" (Gümüş, 2022, p.2). Therefore, the literature features a wide range of definitions and interpretations of motivation. Dörnyei and Ottó (1998), define motivation as "dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritized, operationalized, and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out" (p. 64). It can also be defined as an incentive that encourages individuals to achieve a goal, invest effort to attain benefits, or act on fresh ideas that provide impetus for action. Such internal or external stimulation encourages individuals to do tasks with a strong sense of determination (Harmer, 2001; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Vallerand & Thill, 1993).

Although there are diverse perspectives on motivation, the growing body of literature highlights three common components underlying an individual's motivation. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) motivation comprises choice, persistence, and effort while Locke and Latham (2004) emphasize that direction, duration, and intensity are shared constructs in all motivational perspectives. Similarly, motivation can be described as the reason behind initiating an action, the willingness to sustain it over time, and the degree of commitment invested in it (Ölmez Çağlar, 2019). According to Bernaus (2019), in the context of teaching, a highly motivated teacher can be described as someone who pursues excellence and continuous growth in his/her teaching practice and has a sense of fulfillment in his/her profession. Furthermore, Matei et al. (2007) identified two main motivational themes for teachers: social needs, including the need for approval, belonging, self-actualization, and social values, which consist of engagement in interaction, embracing challenges, focusing on student improvement, and respecting autonomy. In summing up these motivational factors, Nieto (2003) opined that "the principal reason why I continue to enter the classroom with energy and a sense of hope lies in how I view what I do. Teaching is not just my profession; it is my calling; it is my mission" (p. 128).

The importance of motivation in education cannot be overstated, as it has a profound influence on the entire teaching and learning process. The growing interest in motivation

research underscores the significance of enhancing teacher motivation as a means of improving the standards and quality of education (Pennington, 1995; Sarıçoban & Mengü, 2008; İpek & Kanatlar, 2018). Unsurprisingly, motivation has been recognized as a key factor in the success of foreign and second language teaching and learning, emerging as a burgeoning area of research over the last decades (Boo et al., 2015; Dörnyei, 1994; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Ushioda, 2012). While the motivation of language teachers and learners is inextricably interconnected with each other and with all elements essential to the effective implementation of an EFL curriculum, the extensive body of research reveals a significant imbalance: language teacher motivation, along with other facets of EFL teacher psychology, has long been overlooked. In fact, research on motivation in the context of EFL teaching and learning has been disproportionately focused on learners, with little attention paid to teachers (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Hiver et al., 2018). As Mercer (2018) pointed out, EFL teacher motivation as a field of inquiry "cannot yet collectively be thought of as representing a developed, coherent body of work" (507). One possible explanation for this oft-cited research gap is the prevailing dominance of learner-centeredness in education research (Mercer & Kostoulas, 2018). However, more than 68 million teachers are expected to join the global education system by 2030. Thus, gaining deep insights into the intricate nature of teacher motivation has the potential to be a preamble to an effective teaching-learning process, consisting of approximately 150 million teachers and their students (Slemp et al., 2020; UNESCO, 2016). A lack of motivated teachers often leads to demotivated learners, diminishing their enthusiasm for learning a foreign language. Even minor fluctuations in one party's motivation can trigger significant consequences for the other as teacher and learner motivation are inherently interdependent (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Larsen-Freeman, 2012; Ölmez Çağlar, 2019). Moreover, Dörnyei (2010) identified the lack of motivation as one of the most prominent barriers to accomplishing key objectives in EFL teaching and learning. Therefore, exploring factors that increase teacher motivation and understanding the dynamic nature of their motivational fluctuations could offer valuable insights. Such research could pave the way for boosting both teacher and learner motivation.

To sum up, it is obvious that the issue of "language teacher motivation, particularly the factors that increase EFL teachers' motivation during their language teaching and the fluctuations in their motivations" is a topic which has not been sufficiently dealt with by researchers. Previous studies on student and teacher motivation (Gümüş, 2022; Hiver et al., 2018; Kimura, 2014; Muir & Gümüş, 2020; Sampson, 2016; Sak, 2024; Song & Kim, 2016) have also highlighted the need to investigate teacher motivation from a dynamic perspective. Consequently, further investigation is essential to gain deeper insights into the multifaceted nature of EFL teacher motivation. Addressing this research gap, the present study explores fluctuations in teacher motivation across micro

timescales and identifies factors that influence their motivation during the language teaching process.

2. Method

2.1. Research design

The research design adopted for the present study was a case study design which is defined as "a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (Creswell & Poth, 2016, p. 119). This methodology paves the way for a deeper understanding of the dynamics within the cases and aligns closely with the present study's primary objective: to investigate fluctuations in teacher motivation and the factors influencing it throughout the lesson. To refine the data collection process, a pilot study was conducted, as it "might give advance warning about where the main research project could fail, where research protocols may not be followed, or whether proposed methods or instruments are inappropriate or too complicated" (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002, p. 1). The pilot study was involved four participants over a two-week period during the fall term of the 2024-2025 academic year. Data were collected using motigraphs, reflective journals, and semi-structured interviews. Based on the pilot study results, the instruments were refined and adjusted to enhance their effectiveness and accuracy. To ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments and findings, and to address potential limitations, several measures were incorporated. These include data triangulation (Denzin, 2006), peer debriefing, and inter-coder agreement (Creswell, 2009). According to the outcomes of these processes, necessary revisions were made to the research questions and the data collection tools. The following research questions guided the study

1. Are there any fluctuations in EFL teachers' motivation during their language teaching processes?
   1.1. What are the patterns of EFL teachers' motivational fluctuations during their language teaching processes?
2. What factors contribute to EFL teachers' motivational fluctuations during their language teaching processes?

2.2. Setting and participants

The study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages at a state university hosting approximately 20,000 students. Regarding ethical considerations, permission was obtained from the Ethics Commission of Hacettepe University, and official authorization

from the state university where the study took place was granted. Two non-native EFL instructors, Paul and Robert (pseudonyms), participated in the study. The participants had varied teaching experiences and educational backgrounds. The convenience sampling method was used to select the participants. This method "involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained or those who happen to be available and accessible at the time" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011, p.155). Additionally, their background information was organized in tabular form for clarity.

Table 1. Basic data of the participants.

Feature	Paul	Robert
Age	35	33
Gender	Male	Male
Major	ELT	ELT
Degree	PhD.	MA
Year of Experience	14	12

2.3. Instruments

To gather in-depth insights into the research questions, three instruments were employed: motivation graphics (motigraph), reflective journals, and individual semi-structured interviews.

2.3.1. Motigraph

This tool is designed to gather comprehensive data on the the dynamic nature of participants' teaching motivation. It required participants to mark their motivation levels on a scale from 0 to 100 at five-minute intervals throughout their lessons. The reason for using five-minute intervals is based on the pilot study findings, which indicated that this timeframe was optimal for determining the factors that increased teacher motivation by a self-reported data collection tool without interrupting the flow of the lesson.

2.3.2. Reflective journals

Reflection, as defined by Black et al. (2000), is a "cycle of thought and action in which educators explore their values, attitudes, thoughts, and experiences, as well as underlying issues of practice." (p. 71). Reflective journals allow teachers to deeply analyse critical moments in their personal and professional environments, gain fresh insights to

broaden their perspectives, and encourage them to take actions compatible with real-life situations (Black et al., 2000). Within the scope of this study, reflective journals were used to help participants understand the dynamic nature of their in-class teaching motivation.

2.3.3. Interviews

Interviews are among the most useful data collection tools in qualitative research, as the interview "is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011, p. 409). Six semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant at two-week intervals. These interviews were designed to gain deeper insights into the data gathered from reflective journals. Questions for the interviews were derived from literature on EFL teacher psychology and motivation.

### 2.4.   Data collection and analysis

The data collection process was carried out over a total of six weeks. It included three stages: 1. Motigraph Completion: Participants completed the motigraphs during each lesson to document their motivational fluctuations and identify patterns within those fluctuations. 2. Reflective Journals: Participants wrote a reflective journal each week for a period of a month and a half. 3. Semi-Structured Interviews: Three semi-structured interview was conducted biweekly with each participant to explore motivational factors and support the data obtained from reflective journals.

The data analysis process also comprised three stages: 1. Interview Transcription: All interviews were transcribed. The transcripts were read by the researcher at least three times to familiarize the researcher with the whole data and to ensure accuracy in the data transcription. In addition, this process enabled the researcher to discover the recurring patterns and themes. Then, classified elements with similar codes were put in the related themes. 2. Analysis of Reflective Journals: Data gathered through reflective journals were analyzed in a similar manner, with codes categorized under related themes. 3. Thematic Analysis: Codes and themes from all data sources were examined collectively to address the research questions. The primary aim of the present study, to explore the factors that increase EFL teachers' motivational fluctuations during their language teaching processes, was thoroughly addressed through this comprehensive analysis.

3.   Results

The self-plotted motigraph data reveal that Paul's motivational level consistently began at a high level, at 0-10 minutes per lesson, throughout all weeks, except for the sixth week.

Figure 1. Fluctuations at the levels of Paul's teaching motivation
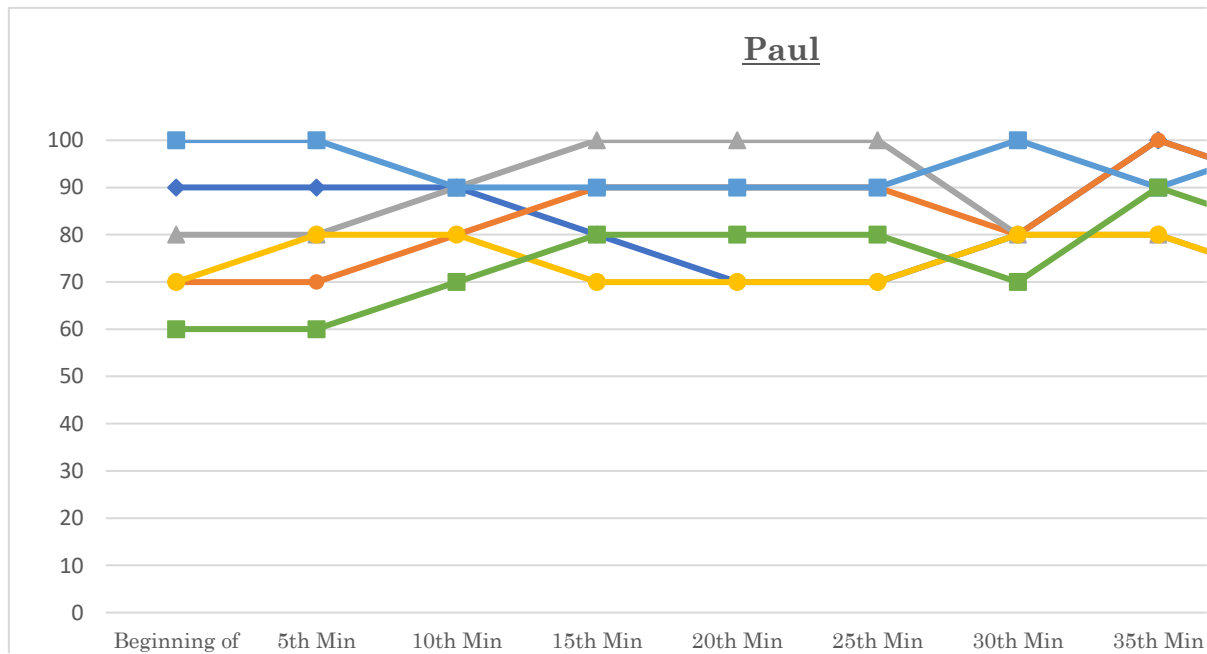
While a small decrease occurred between 10 and 25 minutes of the lessons in the first, fourth, and fifth weeks, at the same time periods of the lessons, an upward progress was observed in the motivation of the participant in the second, third, and sixth weeks. An increase became apparent at 25 and 35 minutes of the lessons in the first and fourth weeks, and there was a decrease in the third week. During the same period in the lessons of the second and sixth weeks, there was initially a decrease in the participant's motivation, followed by an increase. In the fifth week, the opposite pattern was observed, with an initial increase in motivation followed by a decrease. As for the 35-45 minutes of lessons, Paul's teaching motivation gradually declined at the last part of each lesson throughout all weeks, except for the fifth week. There was a slight increase in the fifth week, followed by a decline. In conclusion, the study's results suggest that the participant's teaching motivation remained high throughout the six-week courses despite minor fluctuations. In other words, it can be stated that Paul's motivation displayed a consistently high and relatively stable pattern over all the weeks.

As for the data gathered from reflective journals and semi-structured interviews, a number of factors that enhanced participants' motivation to teach throughout lessons were pinpointed. Paul ascribed increases in his teaching motivation level to the following main themes: *motivation and emotion of students, responsibility and professional dedication, fulfilment through students' success and participation, continuous learning and knowledge exchange, and recognition, praise and respect.*

Table 2. Factors contributing to Paul's teaching motivation

Themes	Codes	Frequency	Total Frequency
Motivation and Emotion of Students	• *Motivated and Diligent Students*	8	15
	• *Seeing Happy Students*	7	
Responsibility and Professional Dedication	• *Commitment to Quality Teaching*	6	12
	• *Sustaining Intrinsic Motivation*	4	
	• *Feeling Responsible towards Motivated Students*	2	
Fulfilment through Students' Success and Participation	• *Observing Students' Progress, Growth, and Success*	7	10
	• *High Level of Student Participation*	3	
Continuous Learning and Knowledge Exchange	• *Learning from Perspectives of Student*	3	5
	• *Exploring New Concepts Together*	2	
Recognition, Praise and Respect	• *Getting Positive Feedback from Students*	3	5
	• *Feeling Students' Respect and Valuation*	2	

Based on the findings, it is explored that the primary factor contributing to Paul's teaching motivation during lessons is *the motivation and emotion of students*. Paul stated that "the students' eagerness to learn, active participation in discussions and activities, and positive responses to my teaching methods all boosted my motivation." (ref. journal 3rd) In addition, "the motivation, enthusiasm and eagerness of students to learn" (ref. journal 5th) ignited his motivation to teach. As the second motivating element, *responsibility and professional dedication* play a crucial role in boosting the participant's motivation level since he stated that "teaching a subject I'm deeply passionate about makes me more enthusiastic about the content, which naturally drives my motivation." (inter. 3rd) Despite the challenges encountered during the lessons, he remained committed to continuously improving his teaching practices and fostering a supportive learning environment for all students. Paul expressed that "while fluctuations in motivation are inevitable, I am determined to approach each lesson with enthusiasm and adaptability, seeking opportunities for growth and enhancement." (ref. journal 1st) *Fulfilment through students' success and participation* may be regarded as the third construct that increases motivation. Paul stated that "seeing students thrive and grow under my guidance" is always gratifying, and "I am proud to have played a part in their

progress." (ref. journal 1st) Within the scope of this motivating theme, he also remarked that

> "As an educator, my motivation stems from a genuine passion for teaching and a desire to empower my students to reach their full potential. Witnessing their growth and development over a lesson, semester, or academic year is a constant source of inspiration and reinforces my dedication to teaching." (inter. 1st)

Continuous learning and knowledge exchange and *recognition, praise and respect* themes are other key factors that energized Paul and reinforced his commitment to teaching. Paul elucidated these two themes by expressing that "when I engage in insightful discussions, answer questions, and have shared learning moments with my students, it helps me stay motivated." (ref. journal 2nd), and "positive feedback from students, even from a minority, helped reinforce my sense of purpose as an educator." (inter. 2nd) All these themes clearly indicate that Paul keeps a tenacious grip on motivation to teach across all lessons.

Figure 2. Fluctuations at the levels of Robert's teaching motivation
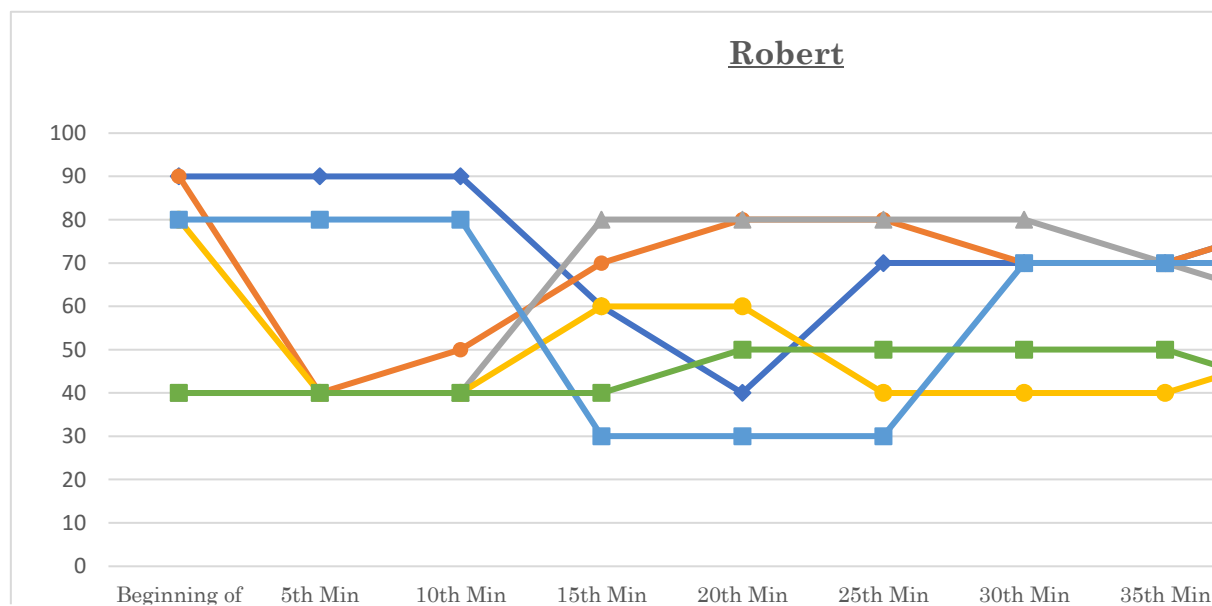
As shown in the second figure, Robert's motivational level started high during the first- and fifth-weeks lessons (0-10 minutes), whereas he began the lessons with low motivation in the third and sixth weeks. During the same period in the lessons of the second and sixth weeks, the participant initially started the lessons with a high teaching motivational level, followed by a decrease. An increasing trend was observed at 10 and 25 minutes during the lessons in the second, third and sixth weeks, while a decline was evident in the fourth and fifth weeks. As for the first week, there was initially a decrease in the participant's motivation, followed by an increase. At the 25-35 minutes in the first, fourth and sixth weeks, the participant's motivation level remained stable, with no ebbs

and downs. Furthermore, it was found that his motivation level remained high, despite a slight decrease in the 2nd and 3rd weeks. In the 5th week, the motivation level appeared to increase significantly. During the last part of the lessons (35-45 minutes), Robert's motivation to teach displayed an increased motivation level in the first, second and fourth weeks and a decreased motivation level in the third and sixth weeks. No fluctuation was observed in the fifth week, though. The analysis of the data points out that the highest motivation was at the beginning of the lessons, except for the sixth week; however, at the rest parts of the lessons, Robert's teaching motivation exhibited clear fluctuations in intensity.

   Based on the insights gathered from Robert's reflective journals and interviews, it seems that his motivation level to teach may be labile, and hence understanding the nature of his motivation and increasing factors of the patterns can be somewhat challenging. In general, the factors contributing to his motivation can be listed as *motivation and engagement of students, creating a positive classroom environment, contextualizing teaching through real-life connections,* and *technology-enhanced teaching.*

Table 3. Factors contributing to Robert's teaching motivation

Themes	Codes	Frequency	Total Frequency
Motivation and Engagement of Students	• *Motivated and Diligent Students*	9	17
	• *High Level of Student Participation*	8	
Creating a Positive Classroom Environment	• *Incorporating Fun and Humor in Class*	7	11
	• *Integrating Enjoyable Topics and Interactive Activities*	4	
Contextualizing Teaching Through Real-Life Connections	• *Incorporating Real-life Situations and Current Events into Lesson Content*	5	10
	• *Personalizing Learning Content*	5	
Technology-Enhanced Teaching	• *Integrating Web Tools into Teaching Process*	3	5
	• *Students' Use of Technology*	2	

   The findings reveal that the key factor enhancing Robert's motivation to teach was, first and foremost, the *motivation and engagement of students*. He stated that "seeing my students actively participating and showing interest in the material boosted my enthusiasm and passion for teaching."(ref. journal 1st) Besides, he added that students' "enthusiastic engagement and active participation were a testament to the success of my efforts."(inter. 1st) It is evident that witnessing students' high level of active participation and enthusiasm fuelled Robert's motivation to teach and enabled him to feel energized and engaged during the lessons. As the second motivating theme, he ascribes his

motivation to *contextualizing teaching through real-life connections*. He expressed that "I try to turn it from classroom English to opportunities for interaction that students can encounter on the street and in real life, in a way that is useful to them. This also increases my motivation." (inter. 3rd) Robert's statements underscore the critical role of bridging course content with real-life situations, events and experiences. It is evident that contextualizing teaching through real-life connections may foster not only the motivation of students but also the motivation of teachers. *Technology-enhanced teaching* may be regarded as the third main theme which increased the participant's motivation. It can be inferred that the integration of web-based tools, platforms, and resources into teaching can enrich dynamic teaching motivation since Robert stated that "there is a site called Youglish or there is an application which is called Voscreen. I can use these at the point of practice, at the warm-up or in the introduction part. This boosted my motivation." (ref. journal 6th) *Creating a positive classroom environment* theme is another significant factor that stimulated Robert's motivation and commitment to the teaching process. Robert explained these themes by remarking that "cultivating a positive and enjoyable classroom environment is crucial in fostering motivation for the students and me as their teacher." (ref. journal 2nd), and he further stated that "when l see my students' readiness for class and their diligence and enthusiasm to carry out activities, and when we have an enjoyable and positive classroom atmosphere, l feel like as if I'm flying in the sky. … This elevated my motivation." (inter. 3rd) Overall, findings revealed that Robert's motivation level exhibited notable fluctuations, and he ascribed upward trends to various factors.

4. Discussion

The findings from both participants indicate that the students play a crucial role in shaping teacher motivation. It seems that students are one of the primary sources of "many of the successes and good feelings that teachers have" and they are "the raw material for the achievement successes and acts of recognition which teachers perceived as sources of great satisfaction" (Sergiovanni, 1967, p.78). This aligns with previous research highlighting the positive impact of diligent and engaged students on enhancing teacher motivation (Hettiarachchi, 2013; Kızıltepe, 2008; Kimura, 2014; Lee & Yuan, 2014; Miller et al., 2008; Sak, 2022; Song & Kim, 2016). It is evident that students' enthusiastic engagement and active participation are a testament to the success of teachers' efforts.

Paul's case highlights the pivotal role of intrinsic motivation and personal satisfaction in maintaining a high level of motivation throughout a lesson. As Dörnyei (2001) defines, the teaching profession is characterized by "a body of highly qualified professionals with an intrinsically motivated and ideologically coloured commitment to pursue what they see as a by and large fulfilling job" (p.174). Within the scope of this case, it is highlighted

that teachers' motivation can be affected positively by myriad elements, including fulfilment derived from students' progress, the sense of responsibility and professional commitment, continuous learning opportunities, and students' appraisal and respect. Consistent with Kızıltepe's (2008) study, personal satisfaction and intrinsic motivation emerge as the strongest factors for enhancing teacher. In accordance with the present results, previous studies (Richardson & Watt, 2006; Sinclair, 2008; Lee & Yuan, 2014) further demonstrate that facilitating students' progress and enabling them to flourish as a successful learner in their foreign language education can pave the way for a substantial and notable rise in teacher motivation. Moreover, it is likely that this positive increase may foster their sense of self-efficacy and their motivation to teach as language teachers. It seems that motivation to teach and self-efficacy share a dynamic reciprocal relationship which emphasizes the significance of intrinsic factors in shaping teachers' motivation (Bandura, 2001; Hoang, 2018; Hoca & Tavil, 2024; Siwatu, 2007). In line with this fact, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) opined that "teaching as a vocational goal has always been associated with the internal desire to educate people, to impart knowledge and values, and to advance a community or a whole nation" (p.176). The study's findings highlighted a strong link between motivation to teach and intrinsic factors. It can also be asserted that a teacher who holds responsibility is more likely to be motivated and prepared to perform effectively.

Robert's case highlights the importance of contextualizing teaching through real-life connections. By incorporating current events, daily life and personal experiences into the lessons, teachers can enhance their motivation and engagement. Linking the world beyond with the classroom content fosters meaningful learning and teaching experiences. The 21st-century education system imposes greater requirements on teachers in multiple aspects than before (Jin, 2024). To build up social and emotional teaching and learning, they must employ effective teaching strategies to personalize teaching and learning content, promote technology-enhanced teaching, create an enjoyable classroom environment, and foster students' responsibility in the education process. Furthermore, this process necessitates integrating critical thinking, problem-solving, meaningful interaction, and web tools into their instruction (Gan & Leung, 2020; Xu, 2023). This enables teachers to stay current with educational trends continuously and maintain their motivation level over an extended period. Moreover, creating enjoyable classroom environments has a positive impact on teacher and student motivation alike. Research (Barabadi et al., 2018; Slemp et al., 2020; Zeng, 2021) indicates that enjoyment, as a positive emotion, encourages active participation and engagement in the teaching and learning processes. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) emphasized the dynamic reciprocal relationship between teacher motivation and student motivation by expressing that "if a teacher is motivated to teach, there is a good chance that his or her students will be motivated to learn" (p.173). Teachers and students seem to be considered as mutual antecedents affecting each other's motivation. In addition, "…by incorporating technology

into language instruction, educators can create dynamic environments that maximize learners' positive emotions and foster their engagement in the learning process. … This can contribute to a positive emotional experience, foster engagement" (Dai & Wang, 2024, p.12). Such motivated students can spark motivation to teach by evoking teachers' positive emotions. As a result, teachers are more likely to be active in the teaching process with a higher motivational level since a well-established teacher-student relationship may foster a high-quality teaching process and educational attainments.

5.   Conclusions

This study sheds light on the complex and dynamic nature of EFL teachers' motivation. The findings demonstrated that teacher motivation is not a stable construct but a dynamic system significantly influenced by an intricate web of factors. Central among these are student-related elements, such as active engagement, high motivation, and academic progress, which significantly enhance teacher motivation. The study underscores the importance of fostering continuous learning, promoting contextualized knowledge exchange, maintaining professional commitment, and student recognition in bolstering teachers' in-class motivation. This study emphasizes the significance of creating an enjoyable classroom environment and adopting technology-enhanced teaching approaches that trigger the active participation of both teachers and students. The study also highlights critical areas for stakeholders to consider, including prioritizing teachers' motivation, well-being, and emotional states during instruction. Addressing these issues can lead to improved teaching quality and overall educational standards.

5.1.   Limitations and Recommendations

While the present study has provided valuable contributions to the field of teacher motivation and enriched the current literature on the complex and dynamic nature of EFL teacher motivation, it has some limitations. The research was conducted with two participants at a single state university using a case study approach; limiting the generalizability of the findings. Longitudinal studies with larger and more diverse participant samples across different educational contexts are necessary to better capture the complex and dynamic nature of teacher motivation. In addition, participants reported challenges in marking the motigraphs every five minutes during certain activities. Future studies might address this potential challenge by designing motigraphs with varying time intervals to better align with the flow of classroom activities. Moreover, the study highlighted the dynamic and complex reciprocal relationship between teacher motivation and student motivation, and it is evident that motivated and engaged students appear to be a central source of many of the successes and positive emotions of teachers. While this study clarifies the importance of motivated and engaged students in teacher motivation, further research may investigate this issue in greater depth as a

critical means to enhance teacher motivation by employing various data collection methods such as conversation analysis, focus groups, and observation. The following can also be useful implications to enhance teacher motivation: fostering a supportive work environment, facilitating reflective practices, improving working conditions, empowering teacher voices, and building a culture of respect and praise. Addressing these areas seems likely to create a more motivating environment for all teachers and raise the overall quality and standards of education.

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