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## The life of an English teacher: Motivation strategies and aid

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### Abstract

The nature of young learners differs from that of teenagers and adults, necessitating their teachers' use of specific tactics to stimulate their motivation to acquire English proficiency effectively. The *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community in Yogyakarta witnessed the manifestation of motivated behaviors in youngsters, including heightened attention and active engagement in learning. Hence, this research aims to delineate the motivational tactics English instructors employ in the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community when instructing young learners. The study employs a qualitative methodology, with case studies as its primary technique. Data collection involves the utilization of observation, interviews, and documentation. Research findings indicate that two tutors from the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community employ four characteristics of motivational methods in their English instruction, as proposed by Dörnyei. They establish fundamental motivational circumstances, provide initial drive, sustain and safeguard motivation, and promote positive reflective self-assessment. These tactics are utilized in learning to address, maintain, and enhance their motivation.

### Keywords

*Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community, English for young learners, motivation

### Article History

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## Introduction

English is not utilized in daily life in Indonesia so English is regarded as a foreign language. It is implemented in schools at a young age for pupils. According to [Ozfidan and Burlbaw \(2019\)](#), learners can be categorized into three age groups: children, teenagers, and adults. Young learners have distinct traits compared to teenagers and adults when acquiring English. Children's interests are limited, primarily focused on themselves, their immediate environment, their families, and their friends ([Chawla, 2020](#)). Although young learners exhibit exceptional language acquisition capabilities, they also encounter distinct obstacles. The hurdles may encompass factors such as limited attention spans, differing degrees of language exposure in the household, and the requirement for learning experiences that are both suitable for the child's age and captivating ([Long, 2017](#)). The teacher may require much effort to guide students in their studies effectively. Teachers should implement motivational tactics to engage child learners in the classroom. [You and Dörnyei \(2016\)](#) likened inspiration to fuel. An automobile cannot operate without fuel, just as young individuals cannot acquire knowledge without the driving force of motivation, which is the fuel for learning. Then, some youngsters need to be motivated.

Motivation is the underlying factor that compels individuals to participate in educational activities, persevere in obstacles, and get internal gratification from their academic endeavors ([Graciani Hidajat, 2020](#)). For young learners who are trying to understand and acquire the nuances of the English language, motivation is crucial for a successful learning experience. According to numerous motivation experts, students require a high level of English proficiency, according to numerous motivation experts. According to [Macklem \(2015\)](#), motivation is a non-cognitive component that affects students' accomplishment. Motivation is a precursor to cognitive, emotional, and behavioural involvement. Furthermore, [Schunk and DiBenedetto \(2020\)](#) asserted that motivation is a conceptual framework employed to elucidate commencement, orientation, intensity, continuity, and excellence of conduct, particularly behaviour aimed at achieving specific objectives. Motivation has an important influence on a young learner's language development, whether it stems from the enjoyment of interactive language games, the satisfaction of acquiring new vocabulary, or the understanding of language as a means of meaningful communication.

Highly motivated students demonstrate motivated behaviors by selecting tasks that challenge their abilities, taking the initiative when given the opportunity, and putting in significant effort and focus when completing learning tasks. They also tend to display positive emotions throughout the process, including enthusiasm, optimism, curiosity, and interest. In contrast, less driven or disengaged pupils exhibit passivity, lack effort, and readily surrender when confronted with problems ([Oliveira & Lathrop, 2022](#)). The student appears to be highly driven and actively engaged in learning, demonstrating a strong desire for success. In addition, [Adamu and Yusuf \(2015\)](#) argued that driven pupils exhibit more attentiveness, conscientiousness, and enthusiasm in the classroom. Motivational techniques are essential for cultivating a constructive and efficient learning environment for young English language learners. These tactics involve various methods, from adding interactive and play-based activities to acknowledging and commemorating accomplishments. By comprehending the

many motivations and interests of young learners, educators can customize their methods to establish an instructive and pleasurable language learning atmosphere, fostering an enduring passion for learning (Han & Yin, 2016). Moreover, it is necessary to know the motivation tactics and how to maintain and enhance them.

Teaching strategy refers to the specific approaches and techniques that facilitate student learning (Bezanilla et al., 2019). Motivational strategies stimulate individual behavior towards achieving goals (Tseng & Gao, 2021). Therefore, teachers should employ strategies to motivate students to foster goal-oriented behavior and ensure their learning success. When instructing students with unique traits, their teacher must employ various motivational tactics to teach them effectively. Collins et al. (2017) stated that young learners can be categorized into three primary groups: four to six-year-olds, seven to nine-year-olds, and ten to twelve-year-olds. To effectively instruct these pupils, a teacher must ensure the young learners are prepared to acquire a new language. Shilova et al. (2020) have also emphasized the importance of English primary school teachers knowing how to encourage youngsters effectively. Children exhibit several qualities that contribute to their learning process. These include a lack of clear learning objectives, a preference for attainable and straightforward tasks, a tendency to be active and imitative, and a limited ability to understand complex concepts. To cultivate these attributes, a teacher, acting as both a director and facilitator, must employ various approaches and tactics to motivate young learners.

English education encompasses official and non-formal settings, extending beyond traditional institutions to community-based learning. There are numerous facilities available for anyone seeking to improve their English proficiency. Community-based educational programs have arisen to cater to the specific needs of young learners, acknowledging the significance of early language development. An example of such an endeavor is the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community. The youngsters at the renowned *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia Community* in Yogyakarta exhibited motivated behavior during the pre-observation, showing incredible attention and actively participating in English learning.

Additionally, they appeared enthusiastic about participating in a teacher-led activity. According to Cooper and Brownell (2020), students displayed motivated behaviors such as attentiveness, active participation in learning, and a willingness to volunteer to speak in front of the class. Thus, the researchers is eager to study at this institution, which is affiliated with the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia Community*, whose slogan is "*Sinergi Membangun Negeri*". The *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community is an active educational community committed to empowering young learners via inventive and all-encompassing education. The community was established to close educational disparities and foster a passion for learning. Over time, it has evolved into a central location for a wide range of educational events and projects. English language education is a significant undertaking demonstrating the community's dedication to preparing young individuals with the necessary skills for success in a globalized society.

This research sought to describe the motivational tactics employed by the English teachers of the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community in their instruction of young learners. The researchers established a connection between the motivational tactics employed in teaching English and the motivational strategies implemented in the classroom, drawing from the work of Dörnyei (2001). The researchers selected tutors as participants and conducted the research

at the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* Community to gain fresh insights into implementing motivational tactics.

## Methodology

The researchers employed a qualitative method to conduct the investigation. The qualitative method is employed to comprehend and interpret the human and social conduct experienced by individuals within a specific social context (Muzari et al., 2022). The researchers investigated the motivational techniques employed by the English instructors of the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community to teach young learners naturally. The researchers employed observation, interviews, and documentation to get the data. The research employed purposive sampling to pick the subjects. Two English teachers teach a children's lesson, and four students serve as informants.

The researchers were observed as a passive participant. The researchers visited the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community but did not participate in educational activities. The researchers recorded field notes and used an observation checklist to discern the methods employed by the tutors. The researchers devised an observation checklist to detect the tactics employed by the instructors, which was based on Dörnyei's motivational strategies (Dörnyei, 2001). The research utilized an unstructured interview format, with the guidelines serving as a broad outline. The researchers also examined several documents, including the learners' task papers, learning materials, the learners' attendance list, and written regulations displayed on the wall of the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community.

The data analysis used the methodology of Miles et al. (2014), which involved condensing the data, displaying it, and drawing conclusions. The researchers condensed data by selecting and summarizing the primary data, specifically emphasizing the significant data obtained from the field. The research objectives served as the guideline for data reduction. The data presentation involved organizing the outcomes of the data reduction process systematically and comprehensively. Ultimately, the researchers concluded the data reduction and display process.

## Results and Discussion

The researchers observed that the instructors employed identical motivational techniques when instructing children in English. The table below presents the research findings that address the research topic:

**Table 1.** *Motivational strategies used by English teachers to teach young learners*

### *Creating the basic motivational condition*

Techniques	The application of the strategy
Demonstrating and discussing the teacher's enthusiasm for the course material and its impact is crucial.	The tutors showed tremendous enthusiasm for instructing English.
Valuing the learners' education with utmost seriousness.	The instructors demonstrated their concern for the learners' growth and conveyed their readiness to

Cultivating an intimate connection with students.	assist with all academic matters, both mentally and physically. The tutors demonstrated their acceptance and concern for the learners by attentively listening to each of them and conveying their mental and physical accessibility.
Fostering a congenial and nurturing environment within the classroom	The tutors set a tolerance standard, fostered a culture of taking risks, acknowledged mistakes as an inherent aspect of learning, and then introduced and promoted comedy.
Fostering the advancement of group unity.	The tutors encouraged and facilitated interaction among the participants.

### *Generating initial motivation*

Techniques	The application of the strategy
Fostering the learners' innate curiosity in acquiring English language skills.	The tutors showcased elements of English education that the learners were inclined to find pleasurable.
Enhancing the learners' belief in their ability to succeed in specific activities and the overall learning process.	The tutors made sure that the learners obtained proper preparation and help. They also ensured that the learners know the precise requirements for achieving success in the work.
Ensuring the curriculum and instructional materials are tailored to the learners' needs and interests.	The tutors provided English resources that were specifically tailored for young learners.

### *Maintaining and protecting motivation*

Technique	The application of the strategy
Enhancing the engagement and pleasure of learning by introducing variety and excitement to classroom activities.	The instructors diversified the learning assignments and other facets of instruction.
Enhancing the appeal of the assignments to make learning more engaging and pleasurable for the learner.	The tutors enhanced the appeal of the tasks' content by tailoring it to the students' inherent interests.
Engaging learners by including them as active participants in tasks to enhance the enjoyment and stimulation of the learning process.	The tutors ensured that every pupil participated in every activity.
Fostering learners' self-assurance through consistent and positive reinforcement.	The tutors direct the learners' focus towards their aptitudes and capabilities, affirming their confidence in their dedication to acquiring knowledge and accomplishing the assigned tasks.
Enhancing learner motivation through the facilitation of collaboration among learners.	The tutors establish assignments in which groups of learners must collaborate to achieve a common objective.
Enhancing learner motivation through the active promotion of learner autonomy.	The tutors granted the learners genuine autonomy in determining various parts of the learning process.

***Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation***

Technique	The application of the strategy
Promoting constructive self-reflection on past experiences	The tutors urged the trainees to attribute their failures to a lack of exertion.
Delivering learners constructive information feedback.	The tutors provided constructive comments to the participants during the learning process.
Enhancing learner contentment.	The tutors oversee the learners' achievements and advancements and make a point to acknowledge and commemorate their successes.
Employing grades that foster motivation minimizes their negative impact on motivation.	The tutors implemented a fully transparent evaluation method that ensures marks accurately represent effort and improvement rather than solely objective levels of success.

Depending on the data, below is a description of the four motivational tactics employed by the English teachers of the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community to instruct young learners.

***Creating the basic motivational condition***

The indicated strategies demonstrate that the tutors successfully established positive contact and rapport between themselves and the students, as well as among the students themselves, thereby generating a conducive learning environment in the classroom. The initial strategy involves showcasing and analyzing the teacher's enthusiasm for the course's subject matter and its significance for them. When implementing it, the tutors demonstrated their zeal for instructing English. However, they neglected to discuss their personal experience and the impact of their excitement for English. This is because they believed that young learners may struggle to comprehend complex concepts and may not find them engaging. Regarding the fundamental attributes of children, it is important to address their limited ability to engage in discussions about abstract concepts or past and future events (Babakr et al., 2019). Therefore, this approach can be substituted with demonstrating the teacher's enthusiasm for the course material.

***Generating initial motivation***

After obtaining the baseline motivational situation, the instructors generated the students' initial motivation. The tutors began fostering the pupils' intrinsic curiosity in acquiring English language abilities. In adopting the method, the instructors exhibited components of English learning that the learners were likely to love. Borah (2021) noted that intrinsic motivation refers to directly satisfying demands based on interest in and enjoyment of an activity. Understanding the intricacies of intrinsic motivation uncovers a significant dimension of human behavior—one where individuals are motivated by the simple joy and contentment that the activity gives. Beyond academia, the concept of intrinsic drive extends to other life domains, influencing creativity, problem-solving, and overall well-being.

The subsequent approach involves bolstering the learners' confidence in their capacity to excel in particular tasks and the broader process of acquiring knowledge. The tutors ensured

that the learners had ample preparation and help and a clear understanding of the requirements for success in the assignment. According to Dörnyei (2001), individuals acquire knowledge most effectively when anticipating positive outcomes. It signifies that youngsters perform optimally when they believe in their ability to achieve success. Various strategies can enhance learners' belief in their ability to succeed, including ensuring they are adequately prepared, helping, and making the success criteria as explicit as possible. Instructors in English instruction employ the strategies. According to Heritage et al. (2020), the techniques used by tutors, such as thorough preparation, helpful guidance, and explicit criteria for success, have significant effects on learners who are acquiring the English language. When learners feel adequately prepared, receive support in their difficulties, and understand the standards for success, their confidence is strengthened. Consequently, this benefits their motivation, involvement, and overall English language learning experience.

Furthermore, it is essential to ensure that the curriculum and instructional materials are customized to suit the specific needs and interests of the learners. One of the concepts of English language teaching (ELT) (Du Plessis, 2020) is that teachers should acknowledge and honor the unique characteristics of learners, ensuring that the activities and materials used are suitable for everyone. The teacher's regard for each learner's unique characteristics and needs has significant consequences for successful teaching. Through customizing activities and resources to suit the specific requirements of everyone, educators establish a learning setting that is all-encompassing, captivating, and adaptable. This strategy improves student's the academic achievement and promotes their social and emotional well-being, cultivating a friendly and supportive classroom environment. During the researchers's observations, the tutors instructed the learners using uncomplicated materials, including basic conversations, brief texts, and easy children's stories such as "Beauty and the Beast," "Cinderella," and "The Little Mermaid."

Additionally, they utilized straightforward language such as "farmer," "teacher," and "fisherman." According to Piaget (2005), children still in an intellectual stage up to around eleven should be cautious when dealing with rules, explanations, and other aspects of language. For instance, avoid using terminology like "present progressive" or "relative clause" while explaining grammar.

### ***Maintaining and protecting motivation***

The primary concept of this method is to augment the involvement and enjoyment of learning by incorporating diversity and enthusiasm into classroom activities. To enhance the experience of learning English, it is important to make it engaging and enjoyable. These goals can be achieved by introducing variety in classroom activities, making tasks more appealing, involving students actively in the tasks, presenting and conducting tasks in a motivating manner, ensuring that learners experience regular success, boosting their confidence, reducing language anxiety, allowing learners to maintain a positive social image, and increasing their motivation by promoting cooperation and learner autonomy. Introducing a diverse range of engaging activities in the classroom has significant consequences for enhancing student motivation. Motivated students are more inclined to assume responsibility for their learning, persevere in difficulties, and perceive education as a source of enjoyment rather than a purely

academic duty. Consequently, this leads to favorable academic results and a lasting passion for acquiring knowledge (Cheung & Ng, 2021).

The teachers employed diverse activities and resources that catered to different learning styles. The previously described strategies aimed to support children in maintaining their English learning engagement, while simultaneously addressing their psychological requirements. Consequently, all educators or mentors must address the psychological requirements of their students. Rahiem (2021) emphasized the significance of addressing students' psychological needs to foster motivation and engagement in academic learning among teachers and educators. The connection between students' psychological needs and academic participation is mutually beneficial. Meeting students' psychological needs enhances their motivation, concentration, and active participation in the learning process. Conversely, unfilled psychological demands can result in disengagement, reduced motivation, and obstructing the learning process. Therefore, it is crucial to prioritize the mental well-being of students as a fundamental component of successful teaching and education (Cilar et al., 2020).

### ***Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation***

The teachers prompted the learners to attribute their failures to an exertion deficiency. When faced with a situation of failure, teachers must highlight the lack of effort as a significant factor contributing to underachievement. By doing so, they effectively convey to students that they have the potential to improve in the future (Dörnyei, 2001). Educators should offer learners constructive feedback regarding their performance, whether successful or unsuccessful. The optimal approach to providing feedback should aim to maintain and enhance children's enjoyment. Based on the research findings, it was observed that the tutors instructed the learners to make improvements and commended them for their efforts.

Furthermore, Dörnyei (2001) asserted that feedback can serve a rewarding purpose by providing commendation, enhancing student contentment and elevating learning enthusiasm. Academic performance is another factor that might maintain and enhance children's contentment. The tutors employed grades to motivate while minimizing their potential to demotivate students. The assessment method was rendered fully visible, ensuring that grades accurately reflect effort and improvement rather than solely objective levels of success. Therefore, a teacher must incorporate the continuous progress of learners into the evaluation process rather than solely relying on the outcomes of one or two tests.

### **Conclusion**

The researchers explore the motivational tactics employed by the English teachers of the *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community in their instruction of young learners, drawing connections to the motivational strategies outlined by Dörnyei (2001). The research revealed that *Aksi Inspirasi Indonesia* community tutors implemented four motivational tactics. The individuals established the fundamental factors that promote motivation, generate initial drive, sustain and safeguard motivation, and subsequently foster favorable introspective assessment. Furthermore, when it comes to young learners, the initial strategy of "demonstrating and talking about the teacher's enthusiasm for the course material, and how it affects him/her personally" could be simplified to "demonstrating the teacher's enthusiasm for the course

material." The reason is that the love of English and its effect on teachers is an abstract idea that cannot be conveyed to young students in a way they can grasp. The researchers recommends that all teachers, tutors, or educators employ incentive tactics while teaching English to young learners. It is advisable to implement motivational tactics during the learning process to stimulate, maintain, and strengthen young learners' motivation.

### Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest.

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