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# Motivational strategies used by English teachers in Polish secondary schools and students' motivated behaviour during lessons

**Abstract.** Motivation is widely considered to be an aspect significantly affecting success in learning a foreign language. While motivation might be developed and maintained by different factors, it is crucial for learning to occur in an environment that is beneficial for the process. Teachers, being responsible for creating the classroom environment, can notably influence students' motivation through the use of various strategies, and therefore impact their success in learning the language. This study attempts to examine and analyse motivational strategies used by teachers during English lessons in secondary schools, as well as consider students' motivated behaviour in the classroom. In order to determine what strategies teachers use and how learners' engagement changes, multiple classroom observations were conducted with the use of an observational sheet adapted from Dörnyei and Guilloteaux (2008). The strategies used by the teachers are analysed in terms of their possible relationship with the variables of students' motivated behaviour. The presented results suggest that the majority of observed teachers frequently provide students with neutral feedback, while strategies such as promoting integrative values, including individual competition, or promoting instrumental values remain unpopular and not used. The total use of strategies declines from the beginning of the lesson to its final part. Some teachers generally use noticeably more motivational strategies than others. Students' motivated behaviour was assessed, and the results imply fairly diverse engagement among the observed groups. No correlation was found between teachers' motivational practices and students' motivated behaviour. Further research should include a bigger sample and study other factors that could have an impact on students' motivation.

**Keywords:** motivation, motivational strategies, secondary school, teacher motivational practice, student motivated behaviour

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## 1. Introduction

Learning a foreign language is a strenuous process. Therefore, it is crucial to not only arouse a learner's interest and willingness to learn, but most importantly to maintain it throughout the years (Dörnyei & Guilloteaux 2008). Motivated students show the ability to make constant progress in their learning as they feel the urge to work on their language skills. Studies have shown that motivation not only discourages students from the work avoidance approach, but also helps them to actively practise, participate, and seek opportunities to use the language (Engin 2009; Ramírez 2014; Takaloo & Ahmadi 2017). Language teachers prove to be crucial motivators in the process of learning, as it is their role to create the classroom environment (Anderson et al. 2004), set a personal example, and help students become independent and motivated learners of the language (Oxford & Shearin 1994). Motivating can be realised through teachers' mindful use of motivational strategies which are teachers' behaviours displayed to motivate students to willingly participate in the language lesson as well as study the subject on a long-term basis.

Students' motivated behaviour changes throughout the lessons, as their participation and engagement rise and decline alongside their interest in current classroom interactions. This motivated behaviour can be fairly easily observed as attention (Dörnyei & Guilloteaux 2008) or alertness (Ellis 2009), participation, and volunteering are visible indicators of students' willingness to engage in the lesson and learn.

The present study aims to examine motivational strategies used by teachers in Polish secondary schools and analyse their impact on students' motivated behaviour within the lessons.

## 2. Importance of motivation in language learning

Motivation proves to be directly connected to success in language learning. As Chen et al. (2005: 610) claim, it is a widely accepted fact among language teachers and methodologists that "language learners with higher levels of motivation will be higher achievers". Language teachers can frequently be heard to refer to students' success in learning in terms of motivation, as it is persistence in the tedious process of learning that determines success or failure (Dörnyei 2001). Multiple studies have been recently carried out that suggested the correlation between student motivation and their success in learning a foreign language.

Engin (2009) shows that effectively motivated learners are able to make progress and visibly improve their knowledge. Engin explains that regardless of the type of motivation, whether it is integrative or instrumental, those students generally tend to put actual effort into learning and completing tasks rather than turn to work avoidance and do the minimum they need to pass. Therefore, their honest approach to studying is undeniably helpful in the process of learning.

Additionally, learners' observable motivated behaviour that can be described in terms of classroom engagement (Dörnyei & Guilloteaux 2008) is usually a cause of effectiveness

in learning. Ramírez (2014) demonstrates students' high participation and alertness in activities designed specifically to serve as motivating tools. For instance, group work with a clear communicative purpose motivates students not only to participate in the lesson, but also to study the language that needs to be used beforehand. This means that motivated students are willing to both actively participate in language lessons, as well as use the language in class, and thus constantly practise their language skills. Moreover, Ramírez argues that motivation affects students' tendency to work individually, not only in terms of assigned homework, but also within independent activities that allow them to practise and master their productive language skills, especially speaking.

Constant practice allows students to learn a foreign language effectively. This includes not only productive skills of speaking and writing, but also receptive skills: reading and listening. Takaloo and Ahmadi (2017) conducted a study that proved the impact motivation has on students' willingness to work on their receptive skills. Learners who participated in the study were motivated by their need and wish to understand original materials in their target language. They regularly actively sought interesting texts, attempted to read and understand them, and therefore effectively developed their comprehension.

Hardré and Sullivan (2009) explain that due to students' age, their motivation in their adolescent years is no longer affected by their parents as much as it used to be in primary school. A stronger influence is that of teachers and peers, who now play a critical role in teenage students' development and learning. Additionally, as Gnambs and Hanfstingl (2016) argue, students' motivation tends to decline as they reach adolescence, most probably as a consequence of a school environment that does not satisfy students' needs to learn interestingly and effectively. For this reason, it is crucial for teachers not only to be aware of their role in motivating, but also to actively participate in students' learning in accordance with their needs.

### **3. The role of the teacher in motivating learners**

One of the teachers' various roles is the role of motivator (Kaboody 2013). They are responsible for creating the classroom environment. While it tends to mostly depend on students' relationships in the group and their approach towards one another, it is still the teacher's responsibility to control and supervise the process of creating the classroom climate, thus providing students with a safe learning environment. Anderson et al. (2004) observe that the classroom climate seems to directly affect students' motivated behaviour in terms of participation in the lessons. Teachers' relationships with their students are an important element of teaching and upbringing that takes place in the classroom. As Wentzel (2009) argues, these positive relationships might significantly affect learners' motivation.

The personal behaviour of the teacher, which includes setting an example, as well as the manner of referring to students, can generally affect students' motivation. According

to Kikuchi (2009), teacher behaviour is the most influential factor that has the potential to both motivate and demotivate students to learn. Dörnyei (1994) proposes a list of thirty teacher practices that can effectively motivate students, consisting not only of language-level or learner-level strategies, but also of particular teacher-specific activities and behaviours. These include helpful clues for giving instructions or feedback, but also information on a teacher's desirable traits and long-term practice.

The practice mentioned above that requires teachers to apply long-term solutions in the classroom refers to helping students develop a sense of self-confidence and self-efficacy as they are crucial for their motivation to learn. Students tend not to feel safe and confident in the language lessons as they experience stress and anxiety connected to using a foreign language. For this reason, it is the teacher's responsibility to provide the learners with meaningful and achievable language tasks that can help them overcome these difficulties (Oxford & Shearin 1994).

As Moskovsky et al. (2013) argue, teachers' practices are directly related to students' behaviour. They present in their study that teachers' motivational strategies can strongly affect and enhance students' motivation since their learning and language anxiety decreases and their learning self-efficacy visibly increases under the influence of teachers' practices. Additionally, Cheung (2018) implies that motivational strategies used by teachers in the classroom positively affect students' confidence in learning and reinforce their positive attitude towards the course. Cheung shows that teachers' motivating behaviour helps students gain a positive attitude towards the subject, engages them in the course, as well as allows them to feel successful and confident in the learning process.

Shousha (2018) suggests that many students perceive their teachers as role models crucial for their learning. For this reason, their motivation to learn is often dependent on teachers' behaviour. Students' self-esteem might need to be increased by positive feedback. Moreover, a good relationship between the teacher and the students, as well as a positive atmosphere in the classroom, can strongly affect students' willingness to participate in the lessons.

#### **4. Teachers' motivational practices**

Due to the important role of the teacher in the whole process of building students' motivation, many researchers have studied motivational strategies and their influence on learners' motivated behaviour in the classroom. Keller (1987) proposed the ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction) motivation model, whose strategies include getting students' attention, showing them the relevance of the taught material, helping them gain the confidence they need to believe in a chance of success, and stimulating satisfaction with rewards. Maeng and Lee (2017) carried out classroom observations based on Keller's model that involved analysing the motivational strategies used by Korean teachers of English. The outcome of the research implies that the observed teachers

mostly used motivational strategies to get students' attention. The scholars suggest that motivational strategies are generally used more frequently by inexperienced teachers than by experienced ones. Additionally, the majority of the teachers used most of the techniques at the beginning of the lessons.

Dörnyei and Csizer (1998) developed ten basic strategies for motivating foreign language students. Dörnyei (2001) further proposed a set of over a hundred motivational strategies devised specifically for the language classroom. Based on Dörnyei and Csizer's (1998) general techniques, and with the use of Dörnyei's (2001) list of strategies, Sugita and Tekeuchi (2010) created questionnaires for teachers and students who participated in foreign language lessons in Japan. The conclusion of the study suggested that Japanese teachers usually focus on creating a friendly learning environment. However, due to formal requirements of the Japanese government regarding education, they are unable to frequently use a wide variety of strategies as they need to focus on meeting the ministry's conditions.

Although researchers define motivational strategies and list advisable techniques in quite various ways, they are all focused on understanding the learners and their needs. Motivational strategies generally determine teachers' behaviour and activities in the classroom, and their conscious use proves to be effective in motivating students.

## 5. Learners' motivated behaviour

Students' classroom engagement seems to be strongly affected by motivation. However, it is an aspect that might be difficult to observe as the indicators of motivated behaviour may be wrongly interpreted (Kong 2021). Nevertheless, learners' motivated behaviour can be generally categorised as active and passive responding. As Goodman (1990) explains, active responding includes learner's participation in the tasks, while passive responding refers to attentive behaviour during the lesson, such as listening to the teacher or other students, or watching peers do a task.

Dörnyei and Guilloteaux (2008) proposed a further distinction into three variables that indicate learners' motivation to learn during the lesson: attention, participation, and volunteering. Attention, being a passive academic response, includes students' looking and listening to the teacher, as well as generally following the pace of the lesson. Participation means active engagement in interactions and completing tasks, and volunteering is determined by students' willingness to voluntarily participate in teacher-centred activities.

## 6. Motivation Orientation of Language Teaching

Motivation Orientation of Language Teaching (MOLT) is a classroom observation instrument that includes teachers' motivational practices and students' motivated behaviour. It was developed by Dörnyei and Guilloteaux (2008) to study the occurrence of motivational strategies in different teachers' work in the classroom and their correlation with students' attention, participation, and volunteering. They considered four variables of teacher motivational

practice: teacher discourse, participation structure, encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation, and activity design. These categories of observable behaviours were derived from Dörnyei's (2001) framework of motivational strategies for language teaching.

The use of MOLT includes recording the occurrence and duration of each motivational strategy used by the teacher in every minute of the observed lesson, as well as assessing and marking students' motivated behaviour in terms of proportion in the group of attentive, participating, and volunteering students.

Building upon previous research and based on Dörnyei's (2001) theoretical framework of motivational strategies, the present study addresses the following research questions:

- (1) What motivational strategies are used by Polish teachers of English in secondary schools?
- (2) To what extent do Polish students of secondary schools display motivated behaviour during English lessons?
- (3) Is there a relationship between teachers' use of motivational strategies and students' motivated behaviour?

## 7. The study

### 7.1. Methodology

For the study I adapted Dörnyei and Guilloteaux's (2008) Motivation Orientation on Language Teaching research instrument. Dörnyei and Guilloteaux included twenty-five strategies used by teachers in the categories of teacher discourse, participation structure, encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation, and activity design. The observer marked the occurrence of each strategy that was used after every minute passing during the lessons. If more than one event happened during that minute, the researcher recorded the one that took noticeably more time. The observations also involved assessing student motivated behaviour based on three variables: attention, participation, and volunteering. Dörnyei and Guilloteaux marked them on a scale as "very low" if a few students displayed a certain behaviour, "low" if it referred to one-third to two-thirds of the group, and "high" if more than two-thirds of the group showed motivated behaviours.

I altered the observation sheet to mark the occurrence of each strategy within three equally long parts of the lessons. This allowed me to record every event of the use of motivational strategies regardless of the amount of time devoted to it. In the current study, each observation lasted forty-five minutes, and therefore the lessons were divided into three fifteen-minute-long segments. Observed strategies and their brief descriptions, as well as their occurrence, are presented in Table 2.

Learners' motivated behaviour was assessed after each part of the lessons on a three-point scale. Considering Ellis's (2009) critique of Dörnyei and Guilloteaux's (2008) model, the aspect of "attention" was changed to "alertness". As Ellis (2009) argues, attention is

students’ state of noticing when confronted with language input, while proposed alertness refers to the behaviour of passive academic responding or readiness to adequately react to incoming stimuli. For this reason, students’ behaviour in this study was evaluated in terms of their alertness, participation, and volunteering. For each variable, a group could get a maximum of three points in each part of the lesson, depending on the proportion of the group displaying motivated behaviour within the particular part. During the observation, I carefully took note of individual student behaviour and the whole group’s engagement, and marked the score at the end of each part of the lesson. Each variable can be described as “low” with a score of one point, “medium” if it was marked with two points, or “high” with three points. Table 1 presents a description of the scale for assessing student motivated behaviour adapted from Dörnyei and Guilloteaux (2008).

Table 1. Assessment scale of students’ motivated behaviour, based on Dörnyei and Guilloteaux (2008)

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Description</b>
Alertness	1	Few or no students are paying attention, looking at the teacher, or turning to listen to other students speak. Most students are not making appropriate reactions to classroom interaction, and they might be displaying disruptive behaviour.
	2	Approximately half of the group is paying attention, looking at the teacher, or turning to listen to other students speak. The group generally is not displaying disruptive behaviour.
	3	Most or all students are paying attention, looking at the teacher, or turning to listen to other students speak. Nobody displays disruptive behaviour.
Participation	1	Few or no students are actively taking part in classroom interaction or working on activities.
	2	Approximately half of the group is actively taking part in classroom interaction or working on activities.
	3	Most or all students are actively taking part in classroom interaction or working on activities.
Volunteering	1	Few or no students volunteer without the teacher’s active encouragement.
	2	Approximately half of the group volunteers without the teacher’s active encouragement.
	3	Most or all students volunteer without the teacher’s active encouragement.

Motivational strategies taken into account in the observations can be considered in three categories: teacher discourse, activity design, and encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation. Teacher discourse refers to all forms of teacher communication, including but not limited to particular ways of carrying on a conversation in the classroom such as social chat with the students or referring to aspects of language education that are important to the students while presenting material or giving instructions through, for instance, establishing relevance or promoting integrative values. The generally described activity design includes all techniques the teacher uses to motivate the students by adjusting the tasks and activities that learners are expected to complete. Personalization of taught material and the methods used, hence allowing students to express their feelings, opinions, and experiences in the classroom belong to this group of motivational strategies. Activities can also be designed in a way that provides students with an intellectual challenge, such as a problem to solve or obstacles to overcome. Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation is a category of strategies devised for feedback and praise. For instance, a process feedback session allows students to understand their mistakes and errors and learn from them. At the same time, effective praise is a strategy of offering students sincere and specific appreciation for their effort.

The three categories create a set of twenty-four motivational strategies that are observable during lessons. During the observations, I marked each occurrence to examine the frequency with which each teacher used the strategies throughout the lesson.

Due to the limited size of the sample, the correlation study was conducted with the use of Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (Spearman 1904).

## **7.2. Participants**

The observations took place in three different secondary schools. Ten teachers who participated in the study were all experienced secondary school teachers as each of them had been teaching English for at least five years. Five of the observed groups were first-year students, three consisted of second-year students, and two groups included third-year students. The size of the groups depended on the school: in two schools the groups were fairly small (two groups of eight students, two groups of ten students, and two groups of twelve students), and in one school they were bigger and consisted of thirteen, fourteen, sixteen, and eighteen students.



### 7.3. Results

The following table shows a detailed presentation of the frequency of used strategies.

Table 2. The use of motivational strategies

<b>Motivational strategy</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Occur</b>
Neutral feedback session	Checking the answers without the teacher expressing any irritation or criticism.	26
Scaffolding	Providing students with strategies and models useful for completing activities.	24
Elicitation of self or peer correction	Encouraging students to participate in their own and their peers' feedback.	21
Signposting	Explaining lesson objectives and giving summaries of made progress.	20
Social chat	Informal conversations, usually unrelated to the lesson.	16
Effective praise	Sincere and specific praise for a student's effort or achievement.	13
Promoting cooperation	Creating cooperation activities and encouraging students to work together on the tasks.	10
Personalization	Allowing the expression of students' meanings, feelings, opinions, and experiences.	9
Process feedback session	Focusing on what can be learned from the mistakes and the process of correcting them.	9
Something creative/interesting/fantasy	Including interesting elements, fantasy, or a chance to use students' creativity.	8
Team competition	Creating activities specific for group work and competition, e.g. quiz games, races, etc.	8
Establishing relevance	Showing how the taught material can be connected to students' everyday lives.	8
Arousing curiosity or attention	Raising students' expectations during the presentation of an activity by showing them something surprising or asking them to guess what they are going to do.	8
Referential questions	Asking questions to which the teacher does not know the answer, including questions about students' lives.	8
Class applause	Celebrating a student's or group's effort or success by applauding.	7
Display questions	Asking questions to which the teacher knows the answer to check students' understanding or knowledge.	6

<b>Motivational strategy</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Occur</b>
Intellectual challenge	Providing students with a problem to solve, an obstacle to overcome, a memory challenge, discovering something, etc.	5
Stating communicative purpose	Mentioning the activity's usefulness outside the classroom in terms of communication.	4
Promoting autonomy	Involving students in making decisions, e.g. regarding the timing of the activity, allowing them to use the Internet to research on their own, etc.	4
Tangible task product	Having the students work on the production of a tangible outcome, e.g. a poster.	4
Promoting instrumental values	Explaining how the language can be useful for students in the world, e.g. at work.	3
Individual competition	Providing students with an opportunity to individually compete with each other in games.	2
Promoting integrative values	Promoting students' contact with the culture of the foreign language and encouraging them to explore it.	1
Tangible reward	Rewarding students with candy, stickers, etc. for effort and success.	0

Five motivational strategies were used most frequently by the observed teachers. A neutral feedback session is the most popular practice among the participants. It is the process of checking answers with the group without the teacher's expression of criticism or irritation with students' mistakes. The second most frequently used technique was scaffolding. The teachers used it multiple times to provide students with appropriate strategies or models necessary for completing the activities. They also fairly often encouraged students to revise their own or their peers' work and correct mistakes. The fourth most popular motivational strategy was signposting. It included teachers explicitly stating the lessons' objectives, as well as presenting summaries of progress already made towards achieving the goals. Teachers generally seemed eager to use the technique of social chat, mostly to begin the lesson in a friendly manner. These were moments of brief informal conversations between the teachers and the students, quite often conducted in Polish and usually unrelated to the lesson.

Three strategies were used least frequently. Tasks including individual competition appeared twice. Additionally, only one teacher once mentioned the integrative values of the lesson and encouraged students to seek contact with native speakers of English. During all ten observed lessons, nobody offered students a tangible reward for the successful completion of an activity.

Dividing the lessons into three parts allowed me to observe changes in the frequency of used strategies throughout the lessons. During seven lessons, the number of strategies used by the teachers decreased as the lessons passed. Two teachers were able to maintain a constant number of used techniques throughout the whole lesson, and one teacher increased it in the final part of the lesson.

There were also some differences between the teachers. One of the teachers, who was the only one who had asked to see the observation sheet before the lesson, used a total of thirty-eight motivational strategies in forty-five minutes. A full list of the teachers and their use of motivational strategies are presented in the graph below.

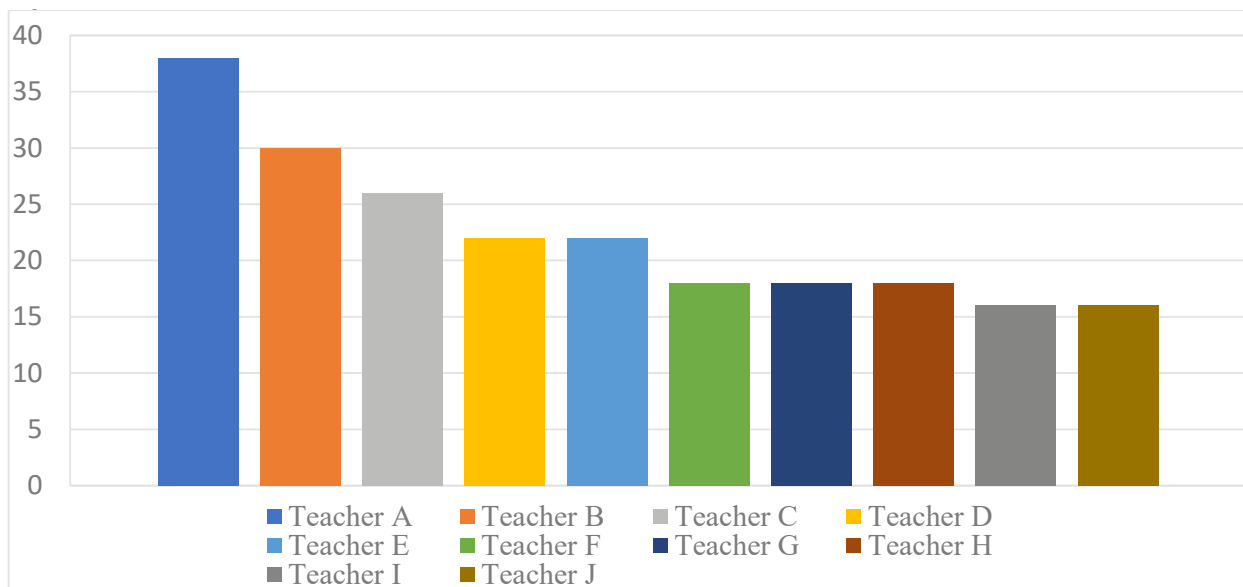


Figure 1. Differences between the teachers

Students' motivated behaviour was assessed in terms of three variables: alertness, participation, and volunteering in each part of the lesson depending on the proportion of engaged students in the group. Alertness and participation were the behavioural variables that were most frequently observed, while volunteering tended to remain rather low. A detailed assessment of students' motivated behaviour is presented in Table 3.

Alertness was the highest displayed behaviour in one group. In three groups, the variable was equally high with the aspect of participation, and in one group all three aspects were on the same level of medium-motivated behaviour. During five lessons, students seemed to be most alert during the first part of the lesson, losing some of their focus in the next parts. In those cases, most or all students in the groups paid attention to classroom interactions. In nine groups, students' alertness reached a high level at least once, and during one lesson it was maintained at a medium level throughout all three parts. Two groups were able to stay highly alert throughout the whole lesson.

Table 3. Students' motivated behaviour

Group	Alertness			Total alertness	Participation			Total participation	Volunteering			Total volunteering	Total
	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3		Part 1	Part 2	Part 3		Part 1	Part 2	Part 3		
Group A	3	3	3	9	3	3	3	9	2	2	2	6	24
Group B	3	3	2	8	3	3	3	9	2	3	2	7	24
Group C	2	3	3	8	2	3	3	8	1	2	2	5	21
Group D	3	2	1	6	2	2	2	6	2	2	2	6	18
Group E	3	2	3	8	3	2	3	8	2	1	2	5	21
Group F	3	2	1	6	3	3	2	8	2	2	2	6	20
Group G	3	2	2	7	3	3	2	8	1	2	1	4	19
Group H	2	3	2	7	2	3	3	8	1	3	2	6	21
Group I	2	2	2	6	3	2	3	8	2	1	2	5	19
Group J	3	3	3	9	3	2	3	8	2	1	3	6	23

In four groups, participation was the highest-scored variable during the whole lesson. Two groups were able to actively participate throughout the first thirty minutes of the lesson, partially decreasing the level of participation to medium in the last part. Three groups highly participated in both the first and last parts of the lesson with only a small decrease to the medium level in the second part. Three groups maintained the same level of participation during the whole lesson. These included two classes that kept the level high for all three parts, and one group that participated on the medium level. Two groups started the lessons with a score of two points for participation, but they started taking part in class more actively after the first fifteen minutes.

Volunteering was the least frequently displayed behaviour in nine observed groups. All scores for volunteering were fairly low compared to other categories of learners' motivated behaviour. Different groups managed to get three points in this aspect only three times. One point was given seven times in six groups as few or no students volunteered without teachers' additional encouragement. The most frequent score, which occurred twenty times in ten lessons, was two points. In four groups, some students started volunteering in the second part of the lesson. Three groups mostly stopped volunteering in the second part of the lesson. However, the level increased again in the final part. In three groups, students' willingness to volunteer stayed at the medium level throughout the whole lesson.

No correlation was found between the use of teachers' motivational strategies and generally considered motivated learner behaviour (Spearman's  $\rho=0.469$ ,  $p=0.172$ ), as well as between motivational strategies and students' alertness (Spearman's  $\rho=0.398$ ,  $p=0.255$ ), participation (Spearman's  $\rho=0.488$ ,  $p=0.152$ ), or volunteering (Spearman's  $\rho=0.287$ ,  $p=0.421$ ).

#### **7.4. Discussion**

As the results indicate, a neutral feedback session is the most popular motivational strategy among the observed teachers. The reason for this tendency might be the fact that it is the quickest and most efficient way of informing students about their errors and progress. Polish secondary school teachers require a lot of exercises for practising grammar and vocabulary in English lessons. They are supposed to help students prepare for final exams that include a major testing part with questions with only one possible answer. Therefore, teachers probably find it necessary to do many various exercises whose form is typical for the exams to give students the opportunity to get used to this form of testing. Neutral feedback does not require any additional preparation from the teacher, nor does it force him or her to check all the exercises after the lesson. Moreover, what is crucial for neutral feedback to take place is the lack of teacher criticism or negative emotions connected to students' making errors. It is simply a piece of clear information about whether an activity has been done correctly or not.

Intensive exam preparation might also be an explanation for the high frequency of scaffolding. Secondary school education is the time when students learn useful strategies for doing typical grammar and vocabulary tasks, completing reading and listening comprehension tests, and writing a correct exam essay that would meet the exam's strict criteria. Teachers use the strategy of scaffolding to help students understand the way the exam is created, the standards they need to meet, and the typical techniques that are useful in this particular type of test. The observed teachers occasionally mentioned the exam and drew students' attention to the types of activities done during the lessons.

Even though neutral feedback is quick and easy, elicitation of self or peer correction is a quite popular strategy in secondary schools. This might be due to the fact that teachers seem to be aware of self-correction being useful in students' development as independent learners. This technique allows them to seek alternative solutions and look at their own work critically. Peer correction has the potential to fulfil the same function as long as it is not overused towards the same student or small group of students as it might result in a loss of self-confidence in the group.

Signposting is crucial in education since it can help students understand all that needs to be done as well as track their progress in learning and pursuing a goal. Not only can it help build students' autonomy and confidence as learners, but it also works as additional motivation. As one of the most frequently used strategies, signposting occurred in all parts of the lessons. This included introductions with summaries and revisions of previously taught material in the first few minutes, tracking the progress made throughout the observed lessons, as well as repetitions and revising at the end of the lessons. This practice allowed students to stay focused on the tasks and see the effectiveness of their work.

Almost all of the observed teachers used the strategy of social chat at least one time during the lesson. Only one teacher decided to reject it in the observed class. Social chat does not require preparation and, most importantly, it is simply a natural form of interaction between the teacher and the students. This motivational strategy might give students the feeling that their teachers honestly want to get to know them and are genuinely interested in their lives and stories. Moreover, teachers can use this knowledge to appropriately adjust the lesson plans to the personal needs of the students.

Promoting instrumental values among the students was not a popular strategy, even though it might seem that potential social or financial success stemming from future language fluency could be a fairly motivating factor in the age group of secondary school teenagers. The reason for little or no use of this strategy may be the teachers' and students' willingness to mainly focus on school-oriented goals, such as tests, grades and exam preparations, rather than the long-term perspective on the usefulness of a foreign language.

Individual competition was not often used, most probably due to organisational factors. Small language classrooms in Polish secondary schools are not fit for individual competition as they do not have a lot of space to stand up or move around, especially in

the bigger groups. It is much easier to organise group activities and individual seated work that can be done without leaving the desks very often.

Promoting integrative values does not seem to be a popular motivational strategy. Even though the programme of English courses in Poland includes lessons regarding the culture and people of English-speaking countries, they most probably get neglected due to lack of time and the need to prepare for exams as much as possible. Promoting integrative values is presumably not a priority.

A secondary school is a place where the students are teenagers who do not get motivated by tangible rewards, such as candy or stickers. If a teacher proposed such a reward in the classroom, students would probably not take it seriously. It is possible to make the tangible reward age-appropriate and try to motivate teenagers with the promise of pizza or modern gadgets, but the obstacle here is the financial aspect, as the rewards would have to be bought from the teacher's personal budget.

The tendency observed in the practices of seven teachers to reduce the use of motivational strategies in the process of the lessons might be caused by their willingness to draw students' attention at the beginning of the lesson. After that, they use visibly fewer strategies, which might be caused by lack of time or the need to actively maintain students' motivation during the rest of the lesson. The same trend appeared in Maeng and Lee's (2017) study.

The differences in the use of motivational strategies between the teachers might be explained by the fact that they are simply different individuals with their own professional approaches to teaching. However, the case of the teacher who might have purposefully used thirty-eight motivational strategies in one lesson having seen the observation sheet beforehand brings out the possibility that teachers' awareness of their role in motivating and the importance of motivational strategies could affect their motivational practices.

Students' comparatively low willingness to volunteer might be a result of their anxiety in the language classroom. Horwitz et al. (1986) explain that many learners strongly believe that they are not supposed to say anything in a foreign language until they are certain of their knowledge and correctness of their words. Additionally, Awan et al. (2010) point out that it is frequently related to the stress of speaking in front of the teacher and the group, and making a mistake. Papi and Abdollahzadeh's (2012) study addressing the issue of students' motivated behaviour suggested the low volunteering tendency in comparison to other variables as well.

The small research sample is supposedly the main reason for no correlation that could be established between the use of motivational strategies and student motivated behaviour. It might also be related to students' age. As secondary school students, they are supposedly not easily affected by adults, including the teachers, and their attempts at encouraging them to learn. Additionally, students' motivated behaviour and their responses to teachers' motivational strategies might have been affected by the presence

of the observer. Teachers wanted to know what the objectives of the study and the observations were, and they were informed about them. For this reason, they might have used motivational strategies more frequently or in a different way than usual, which could have been surprising to students who, not being used to such a situation, may not have known how to react to them.

Dörnyei and Guilloteaux's (2008) results suggest that the most popular strategies are neutral feedback, establishing relevance, and including an element of fantasy or creativity. They also showed teachers' unwillingness to promote integrative and instrumental values and use effective praise. Interestingly, the current study shows that even though neutral feedback also seems to be the most frequently used motivational strategy, establishing relevance and using fantasy and creativity might be comparatively less popular. Similarly, promoting instrumental and integrative values was not frequently observed during this research. However, effective praise was used by the teachers multiple times, and is the sixth most often used motivational strategy. In contradiction to the results of this study, Dörnyei and Guilloteaux's (2008) research implies a strong correlation between teachers' motivational practice and students' motivated behaviour. As they argue, teachers' strategies are directly related to students' classroom behaviour.

As Dörnyei and Guilloteaux (2008) explain, there are many factors affecting students' motivation and motivated behaviour in the classroom, including their physical and psychological differences, or social influence. For this reason, the clear variety of different tendencies in all the observed groups suggests that a larger group of participants should take part in a study for any correlation between teachers' motivational practices and students' motivated behaviour to be observable.

## 8. Conclusion

Motivation is a crucial aspect that can significantly affect the process of learning a foreign language. The role of the teacher in the classroom and in motivating has been proven in different contexts, and many scholars have proposed various techniques for arousing and maintaining students' motivation in the language classroom. Even though motivational strategies are usually known to the teachers, practical and organisational aspects of the lesson do not always allow them to use them properly and effectively.

The current study presented the most and the least frequently used motivational strategies and the differences that occurred between ten secondary school teachers' motivational practices. The most popular techniques were neutral feedback, which is a quick and effective strategy to use in the classroom to give students precisely the information they need to correct their errors, as well as elicitation of self or peer correction, which can help students develop as independent learners. Additionally, many teachers used scaffolding, which is useful in exam preparation as it teaches the use of different strategies necessary for fulfilling the tasks. Signposting, almost as frequently used, allows



students to track their progress. Social chat was also a fairly popular strategy and helps build relationships with students. The least frequently used strategies were promoting integrative and instrumental values, and using individual competition, most probably due to the organisational reality of the language courses.

Students are generally not eager to volunteer during lessons without teachers' additional persuasion. This could be related to language classroom anxiety, as well as simply to the presence of the observer. The observed groups seemed generally willing to participate and stay alert during the lessons. Nevertheless, the limitations of the study caused by the relatively small number of conducted observations did not allow me to notice relevant tendencies in terms of alertness and participation.

No correlation was found between the use of teacher motivational strategies and student motivated behaviour. This might be due to the small sample, as well as related to the age of the students, or to the unusual situation of being observed during the lesson, from the perspective of both the teachers and the students.

The present study has implications for future research regarding factors affecting secondary school students' motivation to learn English as a foreign language. This study shows a lack of correlation between teachers' motivational strategies and student motivated behaviour. However, it would be worth conducting a study with a bigger sample that could allow a more detailed correlation analysis.

Multiple studies that have been conducted regarding motivational strategies could be used by teacher education and professional development programmes. Studies such as this one suggest that many teachers might not know how or why they could use motivational strategies to help their students improve and master the language. The fact that many teachers do not use these techniques is proof that there is space for a lot of growth in this field.

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