

FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENT MOTIVATION IN ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES AT EASTERN INDONESIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract: *Motivation to learn English is essential for university students worldwide, as it impacts engagement and success in both general and specific academic contexts. However, prior research has seldom focused on motivation in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), especially in particular fields or majors, and is particularly limited in universities at Eastern Indonesia. This study aims to explore the factors of motivation among students in ESP programs and to identify which are most and least effective in supporting their learning. 150 students from universities at Eastern Indonesia participated in this study. Employing both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, students completed a quantitative questionnaire on their learning motivation, with data analyzed using SPSS 27. Additionally, qualitative data were collected through focus group interviews with 16 participants who had completed ESP courses, providing further insights into their opinions on ESP learning. The findings reveal that students are highly motivated by factors such as encouragement to communicate and collaborate with peers, clarity and ease of classroom instructions, and fairness and consistency in assessments. Moreover, the lecturer's role in creating a positive classroom atmosphere was noted as a significant motivational factor. However, a lack of alignment between classroom activities and students' specific fields often leads to disengagement. This study's implications include providing educators with practical approaches to enhance student motivation and connect language learning with career preparedness, while also contributing theoretically to understanding motivational factors in ESP and supporting future research on long-term impacts and innovative teaching models like digital and blended learning.*

Keywords: *eastern Indonesia; english for specific purposes; learning motivation; university student*

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INTRODUCTION

English plays an increasingly important role in Indonesia, particularly in the eastern regions where economic development and professional opportunities are tied to proficiency in the language. Universities nationwide have responded by shifting from teaching English for General Purposes (EGP) to English for Specific Purposes (ESP), recognizing that students need more specialized language skills for their future careers (Li & Wang, 2018). ESP focuses on equipping students with practical English relevant to their professional fields, such as medicine, business, or engineering, which are integral to meeting the growing demands of the globalized workforce (Wang, 2019). As a result, English education is evolving to align with industry-specific needs, emphasizing the importance of language proficiency within professional contexts.

Despite the growing focus on ESP, much of the research on English learning motivation in Indonesia has concentrated on EGP or students majoring in English. Little attention has been given to understanding how non-English majors, particularly those in specialized fields, are motivated to learn ESP (Ajjawi et al., 2020; Lapele, 2019). This lack of focus leaves a gap in how educators can effectively design teaching strategies to motivate students in programs where English is a tool for professional development rather than an academic focus. For non-English majors in fields like engineering or medicine, where English is essential for accessing technical knowledge, understanding what motivates them to learn can help improve both learning outcomes and their preparedness for global job markets.

Addressing this gap is crucial, especially in the context of eastern Indonesia, where educational resources and opportunities are often more limited compared to larger cities. Universities in these regions may face challenges such as fewer qualified English instructors, limited access to updated learning materials, and less exposure to global professional networks where English is the dominant language (Nurania et al., 2019). These factors contribute to students' difficulty developing the necessary language skills to meet the demands of their future careers. For students in fields such as engineering, medicine, and business, proficiency in English is not only a valuable asset but often a requirement for accessing specialized knowledge, academic resources, and professional opportunities on a global scale (Iswati et al., 2021). Given these challenges, the need for motivated learners in ESP programs becomes even more pressing (Minh, 2024). Students may not only struggle with acquiring the technical language needed for their field but also face barriers to staying engaged with the learning process. Motivation is a key driver in language acquisition, as it influences the effort students put into learning, their persistence in overcoming difficulties, and ultimately, their success in reaching the desired level of proficiency (Jafari Pazoki & Alemi, 2020; Rasman, 2018). In the absence of well-designed motivational strategies, many

students risk falling behind, particularly when the teaching approach does not communicate the relevance of English to their professional development. This could result in a lack of preparedness for the competitive job market, where English is increasingly seen as a critical skill.

A closer look at student motivation in the ESP program reveals four key aspects that shape their engagement: learning strategies, classroom activities, assessment processes, and lecturer-student interactions. Learning strategies are central to fostering motivation, as students tend to be more engaged when instructional methods align with their learning styles and when they feel encouraged to communicate and collaborate (Hilliard et al., 2020). This alignment not only makes learning more accessible but also builds confidence as students prepare to use English in professional contexts (Hariri et al., 2021). Classroom activities also play a vital role, especially when tasks are relevant to students' fields of study and designed to encourage peer collaboration. Activities with clear instructions and meaningful goals help students feel supported and purposeful in their learning (Fülöp, 2021; Lapele, 2020). Meanwhile, the assessment process is a foundational motivational element, as students rely on transparent evaluation criteria and constructive feedback to gauge their progress and identify areas for improvement. Murillo and Hidalgo (2020) stated that fair and consistent assessments reinforce trust in the learning process, sustaining student commitment over time. Finally, lecturer-student interactions are crucial in shaping a motivating environment. A positive classroom atmosphere, fostered by an engaged and responsive lecturer, inspires active participation and makes students feel valued (Zhang & Lin, 2020). Personalized feedback and encouragement from the lecturer deepen this connection, enabling students to overcome challenges and stay focused on their goals (Gan et al., 2021). Together, these aspects create a comprehensive motivational framework, influencing the effectiveness of the ESP program in meeting students' learning and professional aspirations.

Based on the explanation above, the primary objective of this study is to explore the factors of motivation among students in ESP programs and to identify which factors are most and least effective in supporting their learning. This research offers practical recommendations for educators to enhance motivation and engagement in ESP classrooms by gaining insights into student perceptions toward different aspects of ESP program implementation. Focusing on students at eastern Indonesian universities also adds a valuable regional perspective, providing a clearer understanding of how motivation can be fostered in contexts where educational support systems may vary. Given these considerations, the research questions are:

1. What are the most motivating and least motivating factors in the ESP program implementation?

2. Which aspects most significantly influence student motivation for the ESP program implementation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of ESP has evolved over the years, becoming a critical area of interest in both language pedagogy and professional development. As research in this field has expanded, scholars have explored the intersection of motivation and effective ESP instruction, drawing on theories of language acquisition and learner engagement. This literature review is to synthesize current findings, highlight key theoretical frameworks, and critically assess methodological approaches used to study motivation within ESP programs.

English for Specific Purposes in University

The importance of ESP in university has been widely recognized, and numerous studies have examined its role in preparing students for the linguistic demands of their respective professional fields. Basturkmen (2022) emphasized that ESP programs cater to specific academic or occupational needs, making them more practical and targeted than English for General Purposes (EGP). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) laid the foundational understanding of ESP, highlighting the critical role of context-specific language skills in enhancing student engagement and motivation by linking learning directly to academic and professional goals. Recent studies, such as those by Iswati et al. (2021), reaffirm that the success of ESP programs depends on their ability to integrate linguistic and domain-specific knowledge, a requirement that poses challenges in regions with limited instructional resources.

ESP curricula have continued to evolve with the integration of learner-centered methods and communicative approaches that prioritize professional relevance (Panagiotidis et al., 2023). However, challenges persist in implementing ESP across diverse contexts, especially in developing regions. Ajjawi et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of needs analysis as a foundation for designing ESP curricula. Still, there remains a gap in studies addressing how regional constraints, such as limited access to qualified instructors, impact ESP implementation. Similarly, while recent research explores the integration of technology in ESP (Minh, 2024). Studies on how these tools enhance professional readiness in under-resourced settings are scarce.

This gap highlights the need for further investigation into how ESP programs can be tailored to address region-specific challenges, such as those faced at Eastern Indonesia. By bridging these gaps, ESP programs can better align with students' linguistic and professional demands in diverse academic and socio-economic contexts.

Implications of Motivation in ESP Programs

Motivation has emerged as a critical factor in determining the success of ESP programs, as it directly impacts students' engagement and learning outcomes. Alamri et al. (2020) motivational theories, particularly the L2 Motivational Self System, have been influential in shaping how motivation is viewed in language learning contexts. According to this framework, students' motivation is driven by their ideal self-image as competent English users in professional contexts. This aligns with findings in ESP research, where students who see a direct link between language skills and their future careers are more motivated to participate actively in the learning process (Csizér & Albert, 2024). Therefore, the application of motivational theories in ESP programs becomes essential for developing effective teaching strategies that resonate with learners' professional aspirations.

Motivation in ESP can be analyzed through multiple dimensions, such as learning strategies, classroom activities, assessments, and lecturer-student interactions. In terms of learning strategies, aligning instructional methods with students' learning styles has been shown to enhance their engagement. Encouraging collaboration and ensuring satisfaction with the program further motivates students to invest in their language studies (El-Sabagh, 2021; Filgona et al., 2020). Additionally, Simões (2020) research confirms that effective learning strategies improve language skills and prepare students for real-world communication challenges. Thus, the implementation of appropriate learning strategies is a fundamental component in fostering motivation within ESP programs.

Classroom activities are another essential factor, as they directly affect students' ability to apply their language skills. Activities that are aligned with student's fields of study and promote peer collaboration have been widely supported by research as key motivators in ESP learning environments (Panagiotidis et al., 2023; Seven, 2020). Classroom tasks that involve real-life problem-solving provide students with the opportunity to practice language in authentic contexts, thereby enhancing their sense of relevance and applicability (Fülöp, 2021). The literature also highlights the importance of feedback and adaptability, as clear instructions and responsive teaching approaches ensure that classroom activities remain engaging and effective in maintaining student motivation.

The assessment process is another area where motivation plays a crucial role. Studies by Ajjawi et al. (2020) have shown that assessments aligned with course content and accompanied by clear guidelines provide students with a sense of direction and purpose in their studies. Constructive feedback is vital for helping students understand their progress and identifying areas for improvement, which reinforces their intrinsic motivation to continue learning (Gan et al., 2021; Simons et al., 2020). Fairness and consistency in

assessments have been emphasized in the literature as essential for maintaining student trust and commitment to the learning process (Murillo & Hidalgo, 2020).

Finally, lecturer-student interactions are pivotal in creating a motivating learning environment. Alamri et al. (2020) indicate that clear explanations and personalized feedback help students feel supported in their learning journey. Lecturers who actively encourage participation and foster a positive classroom atmosphere can significantly boost student motivation, as these interactions create a sense of collaboration and mutual respect (Amerstorfer & Freiin von Münster-Kistner, 2021; Zhang & Lin, 2020). Lecturer enthusiasm has also been noted as a key factor in sparking students' interest in the subject matter, which further drives their engagement and effort in the course.

The existing literature provides valuable insights into the design and implementation of ESP programs, particularly in developed regions with abundant resources. However, the unique challenges faced in regions like Eastern Indonesia, where limited access to qualified instructors and materials constrains educational outcomes, are underexplored. Additionally, while motivational theories are well-documented, there is insufficient research on how these theories can be operationalized to address region-specific barriers. This study aims to fill these gaps by investigating motivational factors in ESP programs within Eastern Indonesia, providing actionable insights for educators in similar contexts.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2021). The quantitative component involved a survey questionnaire designed to gather numerical data from students, analyzed using SPSS statistical software (Roni & Djajadikerta, 2021). In contrast, the qualitative component was conducted through focus group interviews to gain deeper insights into students' perspectives on their motivation in learning ESP. Integrating these methods captured both the measurable patterns provided by quantitative analysis and the nuanced, subjective data derived from the qualitative interviews.

Participants

The study employed a purposive sampling method, targeting students who had completed ESP courses in four universities at Eastern Indonesia (Lakens, 2022). Participants were selected to ensure diverse representation across fields of study. Table 1 shows the research participant demography.

Table 1.
Research participant demography

No.	Institution	Study Program	Total Students
1.	IAIN Ambon	Islamic Criminal Law	21
		Islamic Broadcasting Communication	10
2.	IAKN Ambon	Teology	25
		Cultural and Religious Tourism	27
3.	University of Darussalam Ambon	Agrotechnology	17
		Water Resources Management	24
4.	STKIP of Ita Wotu Nusa Bula	Elementary School Teacher Education	15
		Biology Education	11
	Total Respondents		150

The overall response rate was 100%, with all distributed questionnaires returned. This high response rate ensured that the quantitative data collected were reliable and representative of the student population, providing a strong basis for analysis.

Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire developed based on the ADDIE instructional model, which focuses on motivational teaching practices in ESP classrooms (Branch, 2009; Ofianto et al., 2022). The questionnaire consisted of 23 items that evaluated various teaching strategies implemented in ESP programs, with students asked to rate how much each practice motivated them to learn. A five-point Likert scale was employed, ranging from 1 (not motivating) to 5 (highly motivating). The reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha, which generated a score of 0.893, indicating excellent internal consistency (Forst, 2023). Additionally, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure for validity was calculated at 0.878, demonstrating that the instrument was appropriate for the statistical analyses conducted (Glen, 2020). These reliability and validity indicators ensured that the instrument provided dependable and meaningful data on students' motivational experiences.

In addition to the quantitative data obtained through the questionnaire, focus group interviews were conducted with 16 randomly selected students (Katz-Buonincontro, 2022). These interviews sought to gain deeper insights into students' perspectives on which teaching practices in the ESP classroom were the most and least motivating. The interviews were moderated by an experienced ESP lecturer who facilitated the discussion but did not lead the participants toward any particular responses. Students were encouraged to freely share their thoughts on what motivated them in their ESP learning experiences and to provide suggestions for improving ESP instruction.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a survey and focus group interviews. The survey, conducted at the start of the academic year, took 20 minutes to complete, ensuring student participation without bias. To complement the quantitative data, focus group interviews were conducted with 16 students to discuss motivating and demotivating factors in ESP instruction. These sessions allowed participants to express their perspectives freely in a relaxed environment, providing in-depth qualitative insights.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS version 27 (Roni & Djajadikerta, 2021). Key metrics, such as means and standard deviations, were calculated for each of the 23 items to identify which factors were the most and least motivating for students. The analysis was organized around four key indicators: learning strategies, classroom activities, assessment processes, and lecturer-student interactions. The results were presented in tables that highlighted both the average responses and the variation in motivation levels across different teaching practices.

Additionally, the qualitative data from the focus group interviews were analyzed thematically (Katz-Buonincontro, 2022). Major themes that emerged during the interviews were identified and used to support and elaborate on the quantitative findings from the questionnaire. This thematic analysis provided valuable contextual insights, offering a deeper understanding of the student's experiences and motivations in the ESP classroom. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative data, the study provided a comprehensive view of the motivational factors at play in ESP program implementation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This section opens with a general overview of the research findings, divided into two main parts: quantitative data from the questionnaire survey and qualitative data from focus group interviews. The quantitative analysis is centered on descriptive data from the questionnaire, presenting mean scores and standard deviations for each item evaluated by the students. The qualitative data from the focus group interviews provides additional insights into the students' perceptions of the ESP program.

The descriptive statistical analysis provides an overview of the student's responses regarding the implementation of the ESP Program. The data is organized into four categories: Learning Strategy, Classroom Activity, Assessment Process, and Lecturer-Student Interaction, each reflecting the students' perspectives of different aspects of the

program. The table below presents the mean and standard deviation for each item and offers a detailed picture of how students perceive various factors of the program.

Table 2.
Descriptive statistical analysis of ESP program implementation

<i>Aspects</i>	<i>Item Codes</i>	<i>Factors</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
Learning Strategy	LS_1	Alignment of learning strategies with students' learning style	3.79	1.078
	LS_2	Encouragement to communicate and collaborate among students	3.83	1.039
	LS_3	Satisfaction with the learning strategies in the ESP program	3.89	1.027
	LS_4	Effectiveness of learning strategies in improving English skills	3.85	1.028
	LS_5	Preparation for using English in work-related situations	3.79	1.057
Classroom Activity	CA_1	Alignment of classroom activities with field of study needs	3.88	1.036
	CA_2	Collaboration with peers through classroom activities	3.89	1.020
	CA_3	Practice in communicating in English through classroom activities	3.92	1.052
	CA_4	Problem-solving of English-related issues through classroom activities	3.77	1.083
	CA_5	Adaptation of classroom activities to student responses	3.89	1.027
	CA_6	Clarity and ease of following classroom activity instructions	3.92	1.007
Assessment Process	AP_1	Clarity of guidelines for assessments	3.95	0.988
	AP_2	Alignment of assignments with class content	4.05	1.015
	AP_3	Feedback received on assessments	3.87	1.021
	AP_4	Understanding of mastery and areas for improvement through assessments	3.97	1.013
	AP_5	Fairness and consistency in the assessment process	4.08	0.987
Lecturer-Student Interaction	LSI_1	Clarity of lecturer's material explanations	4.14	0.970
	LSI_2	Feedback from the lecturer to improve English skills	4.05	0.954
	LSI_3	Encouragement to participate and collaborate from the lecture	4.07	0.963
	LSI_4	Creation of a positive classroom atmosphere by the lecturer	4.18	1.010
	LSI_5	Lecturer's solicitation of feedback on learning material	4.05	0.947
	LSI_6	Motivation from the lecturer to engage in learning	4.15	0.972

Table 2 reveals that the highest-rated aspect was Lecturer-Student Interaction, particularly in creating a positive classroom atmosphere (mean = 4.18). It indicated that students found the lecturer's engagement to be a key factor in their learning motivation. In contrast, the lowest-rated factor was the Problem-solving of English-related issues (CA_4),

with a mean of 3.77. It suggested that students perceived a need for improvement in practical problem-solving activities in the classroom.

Table 3.

Top five most motivating factors for students

<i>Item Code</i>	<i>Factors</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
LSI_4	Creation of a positive classroom atmosphere	4.18	1.010
AP_5	Fairness and consistency in the assessment process	4.08	0.987
LSI_6	Motivation from the lecturer to engage in learning	4.15	0.972
LSI_1	Clarity of lecturer's material explanations	4.14	0.970
AP_2	Alignment of assignments with class content	4.05	0.987

The results in Table 3 highlight the five most motivating factors for students within the ESP program. The highest-rated factor was the creation of a positive classroom atmosphere (LSI_4), with a mean score of 4.18, indicating that students highly value an engaging and supportive learning environment. Other key motivators include fairness and consistency in the assessment process (AP_5) and the lecturer's enthusiasm for the subject (LSI_7), both of which reinforce the importance of clear and enthusiastic instruction. These findings suggest that students are most motivated when they feel the classroom environment is positive, the assessments are fair, and the instructor is passionate about the material.

Table 4.

Top five least motivating factors for students

<i>Item Code</i>	<i>Factors</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
CA_4	Problem-solving of English-related issues	3.77	1.083
LS_1	Alignment of learning strategies with students' learning style	3.79	1.078
LS_5	Preparation for using English in work-related situations	3.79	1.057
CA_1	Alignment of classroom activities with field of study needs	3.88	1.036
AP_3	Feedback received on assessments	3.87	1.021

Table 4 presents the five least motivating factors, showing areas where the program may need improvement. The lowest-rated factor is problem-solving of English-related issues through classroom activities (CA_4), with a mean score of 3.77, suggesting that students may find this aspect of classroom activities less effective. Similarly, the alignment of learning strategies with students' learning styles (LS_1) and the preparation for using English in work-related situations (LS_5) received lower ratings, indicating that students may feel these areas are not fully addressing their needs. These results suggest that while

the program excels in creating a positive atmosphere, certain elements of practical application and individualized learning strategies may require attention.

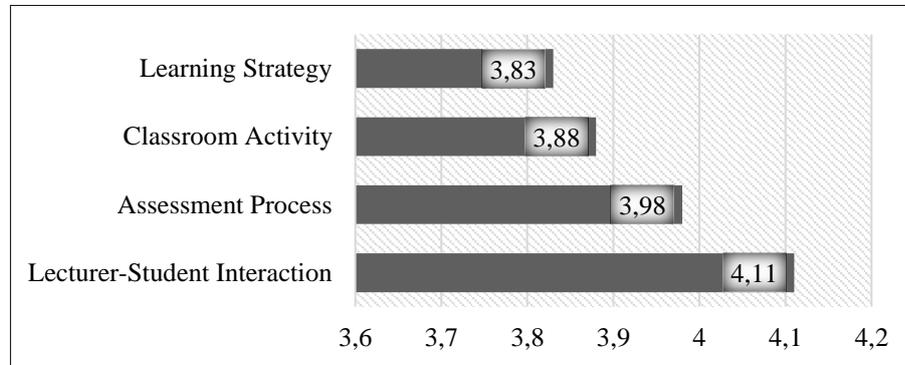


Figure 1. Most Motivating Aspects for Students

Figure 1 ranks the four key aspects of the ESP program, starting with the most motivating. Lecturer-Student Interaction is rated as the most motivating aspect, with consistently high scores across all factors, reflecting the critical role of instructors in shaping student motivation. The Assessment Process follows closely, emphasizing the importance of fair and transparent evaluations. Learning Strategy and Classroom Activity rank slightly lower, suggesting that while students find interaction and assessment crucial, there may be room for enhancing instructional strategies and classroom tasks to better meet student needs.

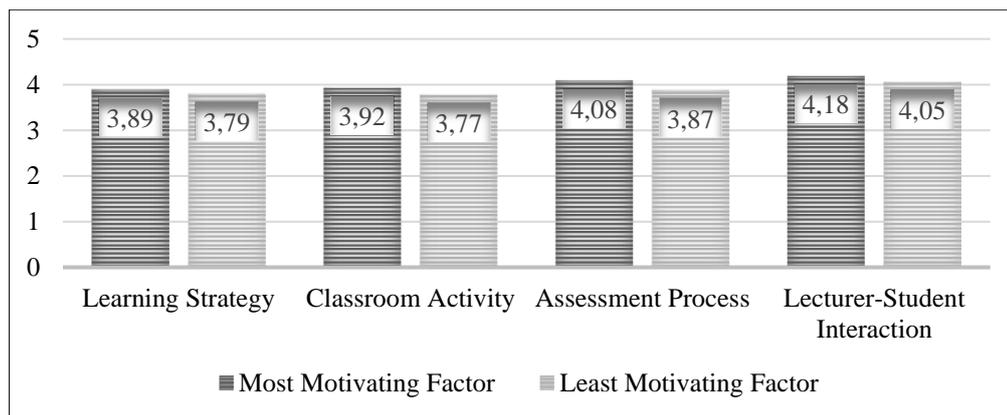


Figure 2. Most and Least Motivating Factors from Each Aspect

In Figure 2, the most and least motivating factor within each aspect of the ESP program. For Learning Strategy, the most motivating factor is satisfaction with the learning strategies (LS_3), while the least motivating is preparation for using English in work-related situations (LS_5). In Classroom Activity, the clarity of instructions (CA_6) is most

motivating, with problem-solving activities (CA_4) being the least. The Assessment Process shows fairness in assessments (AP_5) as the top motivator, with feedback on assessments (AP_3) rated lowest. Lastly, in Lecturer-Student Interaction, the creation of a positive classroom atmosphere (LSI_4) is the most motivating, while seeking feedback from students (LSI_5) is the least. These results highlight key strengths and areas for improvement across different aspects of the ESP program.

Moreover, the focus group interviews highlighted several key findings regarding the implementation of the ESP program, particularly in the areas of learning strategies and classroom activities. Students generally found the learning strategies to be motivating, especially in improving their general English skills and building confidence in professional communication. However, some participants indicated that the strategies could be more tailored to meet the specific needs of their respective fields. Classroom activities were widely seen as effective, particularly those that fostered collaboration and problem-solving. Nonetheless, a few students felt that certain activities lacked relevance to their future professional needs, indicating room for improvement in activity design.

In terms of assessment processes and lecturer-student interaction, students appreciated the clarity and fairness of the assessment criteria, though feedback was noted as sometimes lacking specific guidance for improvement. Lecturer-student interactions were regarded positively, with the majority of students feeling motivated by the lecturers' enthusiasm and encouragement. These findings underscore the importance of clear communication, engaging activities, and constructive feedback in fostering student motivation within the ESP program.

Discussion

The discussion explores how the results align with existing theories of motivation in ESP learning and highlights key insights derived from both the questionnaire survey and focus group interviews. By examining these findings, this section aims to provide implications for ESP teaching practices and offer recommendations for enhancing student motivation in similar educational contexts. These insights contribute to a broader understanding of how pedagogical adjustments can foster sustained motivation in ESP learners.

The questionnaire survey provided valuable insights into the factors influencing student motivation in ESP programs. Several key themes emerged from the findings, including learning strategies, classroom activities, assessment processes, and lecturer-student interactions. These factors align with and expand upon existing literature, providing a deeper understanding of how motivation functions within the ESP context. It

emphasizes the interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, suggesting that a balanced approach is crucial for optimal learning outcomes.

Regarding learning strategies, the findings suggest a significant discrepancy between the strategies employed in ESP programs and students' individual learning preferences. This observation is consistent with research by El-Sabagh (2021) who highlighted that the alignment of instructional methods with students' cognitive styles is essential for fostering motivation. Consequently, it underscores the need for curriculum designers to incorporate a more flexible and adaptive approach to accommodate diverse learning preferences.

Ezzaim et al. (2024) and Hariri et al. (2021) also underscored the importance of catering to students' preferred learning styles to enhance engagement. In this study, while students generally appreciated the learning strategies used in their programs, some felt these strategies did not sufficiently cater to their personal learning needs. This reinforces the argument that motivation can be significantly impacted when learning strategies are not tailored to the individual (Simões, 2020). The findings suggest that ESP programs could benefit from a more adaptive, personalized approach to instruction. By customizing learning strategies to better align with students' learning styles and professional goals, ESP programs could see improvements in both engagement and language acquisition outcomes. This insight adds to the body of knowledge regarding the importance of learner-centered pedagogies in ESP, calling for a more nuanced understanding of how to optimize the learning environment to suit diverse learner needs.

Regarding classroom activities, the survey results echoed the importance of contextually relevant tasks. The findings align with Seven (2020), who emphasized that classroom activities should be closely tied to students' academic and professional fields. The students in this study appreciated collaborative tasks but expressed a desire for activities that more closely mirrored real-world professional scenarios. This disconnect between classroom tasks and professional expectations is consistent with the arguments of Panagiotidis et al. (2023) and Simões (2020), who noted that activities that do not seem immediately applicable to professional contexts may reduce motivation. In line with Fülöp's (2021) assertion that task-based learning must be relevant to students' fields of study to maintain interest, the study suggests that integrating more field-specific tasks into ESP curricula would be crucial. By ensuring that classroom activities closely resemble the tasks students are likely to encounter in their careers, ESP programs can help bridge the gap between language learning and professional application, thus enhancing motivation and fostering better learning outcomes.

The assessment process was another critical motivational factor identified in the survey. Students expressed appreciation for clear, fair assessments, which aligns with the findings of Murillo & Hidalgo (2020) and (Alam & Mohanty (2023), who discussed how transparent assessment can encourage student engagement. As Simons et al. (2020) pointed out, clear guidelines and consistent feedback are essential for maintaining intrinsic motivation, as they provide students with a sense of purpose and direction. In this study, students indicated that they valued receiving constructive feedback, which allowed them to track their progress and identify areas for improvement. This finding reinforces the importance of assessments as both a tool for measuring learning and a source of motivation through targeted feedback, as discussed by Ajjawi et al. (2020) and Gan et al. (2021). The study's results confirm that assessments aligned with course content and professional goals can help maintain high levels of motivation and engagement, offering actionable insights for ESP instructors to optimize their assessment practices.

Finally, lecturer-student interaction emerged as one of the most significant motivational factors in the survey. This aligns with the research of (Ong & Quek (2023) who highlighted the critical role of lecturer engagement in fostering student motivation in language learning contexts. The survey findings revealed that students highly valued positive interactions with their lecturers, particularly when lecturers created an encouraging atmosphere and provided support. These results resonate with Dörnyei's (2019) L2 Motivational Self System posits that students' motivation is strongly influenced by their relationships with instructors and the learning environment. Students in this study reported that a supportive, interactive classroom environment significantly boosted their motivation to engage with the material. This is particularly pertinent in regions like Eastern Indonesia, where access to resources may be limited, and the role of the lecturer becomes even more pivotal in motivating students and enhancing their learning experience. This finding emphasizes the need for ESP instructors to prioritize creating a supportive, engaging classroom dynamic, which can have a profound impact on students' motivation and overall success.

In essence, the survey results contribute to the broader understanding of motivation in ESP by confirming the importance of learner-centered strategies, relevant classroom activities, transparent assessments, and positive lecturer-student interactions. These findings not only align with existing research but also provide actionable insights for enhancing ESP programs, particularly in resource-constrained regions like Eastern Indonesia. By handling these key factors, ESP programs can better cater to the professional and linguistic needs of students, fostering greater engagement and more effective language learning outcomes.

Likewise, the focus group interviews provided valuable qualitative insights that complemented the quantitative data from the questionnaire survey, offering a deeper understanding of the motivational factors in ESP programs. These interviews allowed students to express their experiences and concerns in more detail, revealing not only the factors that motivate them but also areas that could be improved. The students' reflections on their learning environment, particularly regarding teaching practices, provided context to the quantitative data, giving a more nuanced understanding of how different instructional methods influence their motivation.

A key motivating factor identified in the interviews was the collaborative and interactive nature of classroom activities. Several students emphasized the importance of peer interaction in boosting their confidence and encouraging participation in ESP classes. As Student A noted, "working with my classmates in group discussions helped me feel more comfortable speaking English. I'm less afraid of making mistakes when we practice together." Similarly, Student B mentioned, "the group projects push us to use English with others, which really helps in improving our skills." This sense of collaboration was echoed by Student C, who stated, "I feel like I learn more when we share ideas with others." These responses illustrate how interactive learning environments create a supportive, low-pressure setting that encourages both language acquisition and student motivation. This finding aligns with sociocultural theory, as discussed by Tzurriel (2021) and (Dalilan et al., 2021), which emphasizes that social interaction plays a fundamental role in cognitive development. Collaborative tasks allow students to learn from each other's strengths and weaknesses, promoting a deeper understanding of language use (Seven, 2020). In ESP contexts, this approach not only enhances students' language skills but also builds their confidence in using English in real-world professional settings. By reducing the fear of making mistakes, such activities enable students to experiment with language use more freely, which is critical for progress in second language acquisition (Hilliard et al., 2020).

In addition to collaborative activities, students also highlighted the importance of the lecturer's enthusiasm and the feedback provided throughout the course. Student D expressed, "when the lecturer shows passion for the subject, it makes me want to engage more in the class." This sentiment was echoed by Student E, who added, "the feedback we receive is very helpful. It shows me exactly where I need to improve, and that keeps me motivated." These comments highlight the significant role of the lecturer in maintaining student engagement and motivation. As suggested by Alamri et al. (2020) and Dörnyei (2019), the role of the teacher is crucial in sustaining motivation in language learning contexts. When students feel supported by their instructor and receive specific, constructive feedback, they are more likely to remain motivated throughout the course.

Amerstorfer & Freiin von Münster-Kistner (2021) also stress the importance of positive lecturer involvement, arguing that feedback provides students with clear directions for improvement and reinforces their commitment to learning.

However, the interviews also revealed areas where students felt less motivated, particularly when they perceived certain tasks as irrelevant to their future professional needs. Student F commented, “some of the assignments don’t really relate to what I need for my job later, which makes it hard to stay motivated.” Similarly, Student G noted, “we do a lot of general English practice, but I wish there was more focus on the technical language that I’ll use in my field.” These responses suggest that while students appreciate the overall value of learning English, their motivation wanes when they cannot see a clear connection between classroom tasks and their future careers. This observation supports Ajjawi et al. (2020) and Hidayati et al. (2023), who argue that ESP is most effective when it addresses the specific needs of students, tailoring content to the language demands of their professional fields. When students perceive the tasks as relevant to their careers, they are more likely to invest in learning, seeing the language as a tool to achieve their professional goals (Lapele, 2019). Dörnyei’s (2019) L2 Motivational Self System further reinforces this idea, suggesting that students’ motivation is strongly influenced by their professional identity and how they envision themselves using the language in their future careers. If the classroom tasks do not reflect the language they will use in their fields, students may feel disconnected from the learning process, leading to reduced motivation.

This concern highlights the need for ESP programs to better align tasks with the specific language demands of students’ future professions. By incorporating more field-specific content into the curriculum, ESP programs can ensure that students see the relevance of their learning, which is likely to increase motivation and engagement. When tasks are tailored to students’ professional aspirations, students are more likely to recognize the value of their studies and be motivated to participate actively. This perspective is supported by the work of Ajjawi et al. (2020) and Shykhnenko & Nozhovnik (2020), who stress the importance of ensuring that ESP courses reflect the practical, real-world language skills needed in specific career contexts.

Overall, the findings from both the questionnaire survey and the focus group interviews highlight several critical factors that influence student motivation in ESP programs. Positive interactions with lecturers, collaborative classroom activities, and clear feedback processes emerged as significant motivators. These factors align with existing theories on language learning motivation, which emphasize the importance of creating a supportive and engaging learning environment. However, the students’ feedback also points to the need for improvements in aligning classroom tasks with the professional needs

of students. To enhance motivation and learning outcomes, ESP programs should incorporate more field-specific tasks, ensuring that content is directly relevant to students' careers. By doing so, ESP programs can better equip students with the language skills necessary for their professional futures, fostering a more motivating and effective learning experience.

CONCLUSION

Student motivation in learning ESP emerged as a critical factor impacting engagement and academic success, particularly among students at Eastern Indonesian universities. Focusing on motivational influences within ESP programs, the study used a mixed-method approach, gathering insights from both quantitative surveys and qualitative focus group interviews. Findings revealed that factors such as encouragement to communicate and collaborate among students, clarity and ease of following classroom activity instructions, and fairness and consistency in the assessment process significantly enhance motivation. Additionally, the lecturer noted creating a positive classroom atmosphere as essential. In contrast, a lack of alignment of classroom activities with field of study needs often leads to disengagement.

This study contributes to the broader understanding of motivation in ESP by emphasizing the need for integrating instructional strategies that align with students' professional aspirations. The findings also underscore the importance of a balanced approach that combines clear assessments, collaborative activities, and supportive lecturer-student interactions to sustain motivation. These insights reinforce the role of tailored ESP curricula in bridging the gap between language learning and career preparedness.

Future research could explore the long-term impacts of these motivational strategies on students' professional outcomes, such as employability and workplace communication skills. Additionally, comparative studies across different academic disciplines could provide a deeper understanding of how ESP programs might address the unique motivational needs of diverse student populations. Expanding the scope of analysis to include technological advancements in ESP instruction, such as digital and blended learning models, may also offer valuable perspectives for enhancing student engagement and outcomes.

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