

The Use of Motivational Strategies by Tunisian EFL Teachers: A Classroom-Oriented View

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For over 60 years, research on language learning motivation has been abundant and has offered numerous insights for L2 teachers as well as L2 learners (Al-Hoorie & MacIntyre, 2020). Keller (2010) defined motivation as follows: “Motivation refers broadly to what people desire, what they choose to do, and what they commit to do” (p. 3). In this vein, Csizér (2020) criticised L2 motivation definitions that are centred around the language learner and do not involve the learning setting. She claimed that “classroom learning cannot be fathomed without teacher-student and student-student interactions” (p. 9). She pointed out that a definition of L2 motivation should include the classroom environment and highlight the fact that motivation is not static. Combining the researchers’ and teachers’ perspectives of motivation, Csizér (2020) put forward the following definition of L2 motivation:

an interactional process which subsumes effort and persistence to learn a foreign language and which is co-constructed by teachers and students alike in the classroom with an effect on activities and learning taking place both within and outside the classroom. (p. 11)

In this context, the present study seeks to contribute to the field of studies on classroom motivational practice in the Tunisian higher education context by taking both teachers' and students' perspectives into consideration and aims to offer ways to enhance students' motivational behaviour.

Research Context

Tunisia is a North-African country where Arabic is the first language, and French is the second language. In Tunisia, English is taught in state primary schools from Grade 5 (and, in some schools, Grade 4). It is the most common foreign language after French. Still, there is a significant difference between the use of these two languages. Indeed, French plays an important role in Tunisia as a *de facto* second language along with Tunisian Arabic, which has many embedded French loanwords and syntactic structures (Boukadi & Troudi, 2017). English is mostly restricted to instructional contexts and is not as frequently used by students as French outside of the classroom (Abdeljaoued & Labassi, 2021). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that digital media stand out in this context since a growing majority of ads and foreign series are presented in English, which makes teenagers exposed to English more than ever before.

Language Learning Motivation Research

Motivation research started in Canada (Gardner, 1985), a bilingual country where French and English are spoken. Social psychology researchers were primarily interested in learners' attitudes towards the language other than their mother tongue, their motives for learning it, as well as the learners' views of its speakers. Two types of motivation were identified in the Canadian context: instrumental and integrative. The applicability of integrativeness with the global spread of English became a controversial issue (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009) as the concept originally assumed a clear target language community, which

becomes problematic when English functions as a global lingua franca rather than being tied to a specific cultural group. The conceptualisation of L2 motivation then transformed from being viewed as a fixed personal trait to being conceptualised as a dynamic construct that is bound to temporal and contextual changes. This has been an important change as the first theories of L2 motivation (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 1985; Gardner, 1985) considered learners' L2 motivation as a static dichotomy of instrumental versus integrative or intrinsic versus extrinsic. This perception has gradually shifted into a more dynamic view that involves complex systems of interaction. Additionally, the notion of self has come into the foreground (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009) and has been developed into the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS, Dörnyei, 2005). The L2MSS model includes three components, namely the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and the L2 learning experience. The latter entails “the impact of the L2 teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, and the experience of success” (Dörnyei & Ryan 2015, p. 88).

In line with the inclusion of the L2 learning experience, Ushioda (2013b) urged L2 motivation researchers to focus more on “teacher- and classroom-focused empirical studies to investigate how teachers’ instructional and interactional practices contribute to shaping processes of motivation in their classrooms” (p. 237). Ushioda (2013a) proposed that English—because of its global status—has gained a privileged status in educational policy and in the job market. In fact, the issue of motivation is all the more present on the agenda of teachers and students alike. However, as pointed out by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), the L2 motivation research might lack “a level of sophistication that would allow scholars to translate research results into straightforward educational recommendations” (p. 104).

Motivational Strategies

Keller (2010) opened his seminal book on motivational teaching with a photo depicting two teachers debating whether they should be held responsible for motivating their students. While the image raises the question rhetorically, the field has long acknowledged that teachers play a central role in student motivation. Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) affirmed this when they stated that “teachers’ motivational practice does matter” (p. 72). Indeed, the importance of teachers’ motivational strategies was already emphasised during the early cognitive-situated period of motivation research. For instance, Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) proposed a set of ten motivational teaching commandments based on a large-scale study conducted in Hungary. Reinforcing the assumption that learners are not fixed in their motivational states, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) asserted that “*most* students’ motivation can be ‘worked on’ and increased” (p. 113). Along these lines, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) defined motivational teaching strategies (MotS) as the instructional techniques deployed “to consciously generate and enhance student motivation, as well as maintain ongoing motivated behaviour and protect it from distracting and/or competing action tendencies” (p. 103).

Lamb (2019) highlighted the importance of teachers’ use of motivational teaching strategies as such use “has the potential to speak directly to teachers, since it deals centrally with their conscious behaviours and the impact on learners” (p. 288). Furthermore, Lamb pointed out that the overall majority of teachers believe that it is their duty to motivate learners to varying degrees. He stated that “there will be times (e.g., Monday morning?) or tasks (grammar revision sessions?) when deliberate attempts to motivate may feel more urgent, and of course some learners for whom such efforts will be more necessary” (p. 287).

Ushioda (2022) considered the use of MotS as a ‘nudging practice’. She pointed out that “teachers have an educational and moral responsibility to steer students toward making optimal choices” (p. 14). However, she warned teachers against the ethical considerations of over-employing MotS as she believes that students may become reliant on their teachers’ use of MotS and would be unable to build their independent sense of agency and control over their learning process (Ushioda, 2022). Instead of consciously applying MotS, she supports the view of “nurturing students’ own motivation to learn” (Ushioda, 2022, p. 11).

In the Hungarian high school context, Kouraichi and Lesznyák (2022) explored the use of MotS by EFL teachers through online and in-person classroom observations and through administering a questionnaire to students and to teachers. Teachers’ reported use of MotS was compared with their students’ questionnaire answers, which confirmed the effectiveness of the teachers’ strategies. Interestingly, classroom observations highlighted the importance of more attention-getting strategies in contrast with the satisfaction-generating strategies reported in the questionnaires. Moreover, teachers who were observed both during face-to-face and online classes were found to employ MotS more frequently in online classes.

The ARCS Model

The attention, relevance, confidence, satisfaction (ARCS) model was proposed by Keller (2010). The four elements of the model are as follows:

- **Attention** focuses on capturing and sustaining learners’ interest through stimulating and varied instructional methods.
- **Relevance** ensures the material connects with learners’ goals, experiences, or needs, making it meaningful to them.
- **Confidence** involves helping learners believe they can succeed by providing clear expectations and achievable challenges.

- **Satisfaction** refers to reinforcing learning through rewards, feedback, or a sense of accomplishment that motivates continued effort.

The ARCS model was driven by the complexity of conceptualising motivation, which can be due to “the complexity of environmental, cultural, and personal factors that interact to influence a person’s motivation at any given point in time” (Keller, 2010, p. 12). To illustrate his point on the complexity of motivation, Keller (2010) used the metaphor of ‘leaves or a rock’. He raises the question of whether motivation should be compared to a pile of dry leaves or to a rock. Some people would view motivation as a pile of leaves since it “can be unstable, frequently changing, elusive, and easily modified by external forces” (Keller, 2010, p. 21). If we apply this view to a classroom context, students can be highly motivated at one point, and then their motivational state might quickly drop. As a matter of fact, even though teachers employ motivational techniques, their effectiveness might be short-lived. Those who would opt for the rock metaphor, consider motivation “as being determined, single minded, strong willed, and resistant to change” (Keller, 2010, p. 21).

In his model, Keller (2010) classified motivation into the four ARCS categories, which “enable you to quickly gain an overview of the major dimensions of human motivation, especially in the context of learning motivation, and how to create strategies to stimulate and sustain motivation in each of the four areas” (p. 44). Consequently, the application of these strategies is straightforward for teachers, who might choose to bear in mind these four elements to enhance their students’ motivation.

Research Questions

The present research aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the motivational strategies that Tunisian EFL teachers in higher education employ?
2. Is there a significant difference between students' perception of MotS and their teachers' reported use of MotS?
3. What is the relationship between teachers' self-reported use of MotS and their actual classroom practice?

Methods

This study applies mixed methods research, which is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analysing, and integrating quantitative and qualitative research data in a single study or a longitudinal inquiry. Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative results, the present study aims to compare both sets of data and obtain a thorough picture of teachers' motivational practice.

Data Collection

The data collection was carried out during the academic year 2021–2022. The process covered nearly two semesters, starting from September 2021 and ending in May 2022. The call for teacher participants was shared in the autumn semester of 2021 when the pilot study was conducted. Then, during the spring semester, the main data for this study were collected. During the class observation phase of the data collection period, classes were held in person, and masks were compulsory in the classroom due to COVID-19 safety measures. Heads of English departments in Tunisian universities were contacted via phone or email, and written or oral consent was obtained before the start of the data collection process. A Google form

was shared on Facebook with my network and in groups of teacher associations in Tunisia to recruit teachers willing to participate in the study. A total of 46 teachers of English from nine universities answered the questionnaire while nearly half agreed to take part in the classroom observations. Student participants and teacher participants were then contacted at the beginning of the spring semester of 2022.

Participants

A total of 264 undergraduate students were recruited (English majors: $n = 248$ and non-English majors: $n = 16$). Table 1 below gives more information on the student participants. Interestingly, some respondents ($n = 36$) did not indicate their age and/or their gender. However, most students were between 19 and 24 years old, which is the usual age for undergraduate students in Tunisia. Only a few participants were aged 25 or above. Student participants were recruited from different universities across Tunisia. However, the majority were from one university, which was the easiest to access.

Out of the total number of participants, 21 teachers volunteered to take part in the classroom observation phase. Given the relatively large number of observations scheduled over a short period of time and the different universities involved, only one class observation was scheduled per teacher. The study involved participants with a wide range of experience as some were novice teachers, midcareer, and even approaching retirement. All participants were Tunisian with Arabic as their first language, French being the second, and English the third language.

Table 1*Participants*

	Age	Gender	
		Female	Male
<i>Students</i>	19–30	171	57
<i>Teachers</i>	28–59	42	4

Questionnaire

The instructional materials motivational survey (IMMS) was originally designed by Keller (2010). It follows the main four categories of the ARCS model: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. Min and Chon (2020) adapted the original IMMS and designed a teacher version. The difference between the original questionnaire designed by Keller and the version that was developed by Min and Chon is mainly the degree of explicitness in the wording of items. Their adapted version includes 40 items listed as close-ended statements and was validated in the Korean context. The same items were addressing either students or teachers. In the student version, items start by “Teacher gives...”, whereas in the teacher version items are formulated as questions “Do you use ...?”. Both the student and teacher questionnaires of Min and Chon’s study were used in the present study. The administered versions had two parts. The first part collected participants’ background information including their age, gender, university, and years of teaching experience (for teachers). In the teacher version, the second part asked participants to report on the MotS they employ, while in the student version, participants were asked to evaluate their teacher’s motivational practice. The following are examples of each of the ARCS categories:

- Attention (10 items): For example, teacher varies teaching materials or presentation style when necessary.
- Relevance (10 items): For example, teacher clearly explains the relevance of the lesson to what I already know.
- Confidence (10 items): For example, teacher tells us about what we will be able to do after successfully completing the lesson.
- Satisfaction (10 items): For example, teacher shows personal interest when I work hard or complete an assignment successfully.

Classroom Observation

The motivational orientation of language teaching (MOLT) observation scheme that was developed by Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) was used for the class observations. The MOLT scheme was designed following two main frameworks: Dörnyei's (2001) process model of motivational strategies and Spada and Fröhlich's (1995) classroom observation scheme, which is the communicative orientation of language teaching (COLT). The MOLT observation scheme comprises two major parts. The first part is used to report the teachers' use of motivational strategies. It includes 25 items that are grouped into four categories: teacher discourse, participation structure, encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation, and activity design. Teacher discourse includes elements such as arousing students' curiosity or attention, stating the communicative purpose or utility of the activities, providing appropriate strategies and/or models to help students complete an activity successfully, and other similar activities. Apart from this formal discourse, teachers may also engage in informal social conversations with students. Whether or not students work in pairs or groups is determined by the participation structure. To promote positive retrospective self-evaluation, teachers should discuss exercise answers with the class without expressing any judgement or

criticism of the students' answers, concentrate on what can be learned from the students' mistakes, help students learn from their own mistakes, revise their work, or review and correct their peers' work, among other strategies. Activity design looks at whether an activity gives students the chance to express their personal opinion; includes elements of curiosity, creativity, or fantasy; poses an intellectual challenge; results in the creation of a tangible product; and promotes individual or team competition.

The second part of the observation scheme documents students' motivated behaviour that can be measured in terms of three variables: attention, engagement, and volunteering. Students show attention when two-thirds or more are eagerly following the teacher's talk and movements, noticing their classmates when they participate, watching any visual or listening to auditory stimuli provided by their teacher. Engagement is measured when at least two-thirds of the class are actively participating in a discussion with the teacher, working on their assignments, or exhibiting any nonverbal body sign that they are engaged with the teacher. Students' volunteering is noted when one-third of the class volunteer to engage in a speaking activity without the teacher assigning them to speak, for instance.

The MOLT scheme followed a time sampling method, which "gives a chronological representation of the flow of the whole class, that is, the distribution of the particular phenomenon throughout the class" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 180). The observer records minute-by-minute the above-mentioned variables as each minute elapses on the timer. Following Spada and Fröhlich's (1995) recommendation, whenever more than one event is observed under the same category, only the event that lasts longer should be recorded in a 1-minute segment.

All classroom observations were done during the spring semester of the academic year 2021–2022 (February–March 2022). A total of 21 face-to-face classes were observed. They were taught by 21 teachers from different universities and different classes (language,

culture studies, literature). Only four teachers were teaching ESP classes, while 19 taught English majors. Following COVID-19 measures, only the researcher could observe classes after the approval of the head of institutes or department chairs. During the classroom observation, the researcher was a nonparticipant-observer (Dörnyei, 2007). Since the observer used an observation scheme, structured observations were carried out (Dörnyei, 2007).

During each of the class observations, I chose a place in the classroom where I could get a clear view of all the students as well as the teacher. To be unobtrusive I usually sat at the back equipped with the observation scheme (on which I also took notes) and my phone to use as a timer. Before each classroom visit, the researcher showed the teachers the MOLT observation scheme. However, they did not get a copy of the scheme in order not to impact on their lesson planning. When the class was over, the researcher had a short conversation with the teachers, who would often ask to check the observation scheme and were eager to know what had been recorded. The researcher took this chance to double check the reliability of the coding and to hear the participants' perspectives. All participating teachers confirmed the adequacy of my coding and at times commented on the class dynamics, students' levels of engagement and even explained why they had overused a specific item (e.g., by stating the purpose of an activity). Agreement between the observer and the teachers attested to the reliability of the observation results.

Observation Analysis

The analysis of the MOLT observation data followed the procedure proposed by Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) and Guilloteaux (2013). At a second stage, quantitative comparisons were made between teachers' questionnaire data and their observation results through the ARCS categories. As suggested by Dörnyei (2007), "processing structured

observational data is relatively straightforward and can be further analysed by means of statistical procedures” (p. 185). In fact, no inferential statistical tests were used for the analysis. SPSS was only used to compute standardised z -scores.

The first step of the observational data analysis consisted in computing all the MOLT data through an Excel sheet for each lesson. This was calculated through entering the tally marks that corresponded to the number of minutes for each activity. As some classes started or ended at different times, all classes were standardised into a 45-minute observation time frame. The frequency of each variable was calculated then entered into SPSS to compute z -scores, which were compared to the z -scores generated from teachers’ questionnaire results for all ARCS categories. The MOLT items that document teachers’ motivational teaching were categorised according to the ARCS categories (Kouraichi & Lesznyák, 2022).

Attention-getting strategies are represented through social chat, arousing curiosity, and creative elements. Relevance-producing strategies include elements such as signposting, stating purpose, establishing relevance, promoting integrative and instrumental values, referential questions, and personalisation. The confidence-building strategies are composed of scaffolding, promoting cooperation or autonomy, pair work or group work, intellectual challenge, and tangible task product. The satisfaction-generating strategies are tangible rewards, individual or team competition, neutral or process feedback, self or peer-correction, class applause, and effective praise. The mean length of each strategy is presented in minutes (see Table 2).

Findings

Table 2 illustrates the frequencies of the MOLT items that are designed by Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008). The MotS observed follow Dörnyei's (2001) process model of motivational teaching. First, teachers' motivational practice is reported in terms of four categories: teacher discourse, activity design, participant structure, and positive retrospective self-evaluation. The second part reported students' motivated behaviour, which is documented through students' attention, engagement, and volunteering. The results of the student questionnaire were not analysed as they are not part of the research questions for the present study. More focus was given to teachers' observed use of MotS as compared to their questionnaire responses.

Under the category of participant structures, group work was the most frequently observed strategy. Teachers opted for structuring teamwork in groups more often than in pair work. As for teacher discourse, scaffolding was the most frequently used strategy followed by signposting, establishing relevance, and stating purpose. During the class observations, some items from the observation scheme were not observed. These include promoting integrative and instrumental values, promoting autonomy, personalisation, tangible task product, and team competition.

The relevance-producing strategies that pertained mainly to the teacher discourse category were the most frequently observed MotS. These strategies aim to remind the students of previously learned material and refresh their minds about relevant knowledge. Moreover, teachers made sure to state the purpose of tasks to motivate students to work on them. Making students in higher education aware of the goals as well as benefits and takeaways of a particular task would encourage them to complete it successfully. Examples of relevance-producing strategies include statements like “what did we see last week?”, “by the

end of this lesson, you will be able to ...”, “do you remember this structure?”, “look at us nowadays!”. It goes without saying that teachers tend to repeat the instructions over and over again, hence the importance of signposting.

Table 2

Observed Frequencies of MOLT Variables

Strategies	Mean	Min	Max	Strategies	Mean	Min	Max
Group work	15	0	21	Arousing curiosity	1.4	0	2
Process feedback	5.9	0	14	Promoting cooperation	1		1
Pair work	4.8	0	12	Tangible rewards	1	0	1
Referential questions	3.6	0	6	Creative element	1	0	1
Scaffolding	3.3	0	11	Individual competition	1	0	1
Establishing relevance	3.1	0	6	Neutral feedback	1	0	1
Intellectual challenge	3	0	3	Promoting integrative values	-	-	-
Stating purpose	2.8	0	5	Promoting instrumental values	-	-	-
Signposting	2.7	0	7	Promoting autonomy	-	-	-
Self/peer correction	2.5	0	5	Personalisation	-	-	-
Effective praise	1.7	0	3	Tangible task product	-	-	-
Social chat	1.5	0	2	Team competition	-	-	-
Class applause	1.5	0	2				

The following are some examples of MotS strategies by a sample of the participating teachers. Teacher 1 taught a writing class. She was helping students through eliciting their

answers (e.g., saying parts of a word: “contro....versial”). She stated the purpose of an activity: “Today we will watch a series. The purpose is to listen carefully and find out ...”

She then presented a PowerPoint presentation about argumentative essays. She explained the purpose of argumentative essays and provided steps to write one. In a fun atmosphere with many jokes, the teacher answered a phone call then told students, “it’s a colleague who is coming to pick up something”. At the end of class, she moderated a debate by asking guiding questions: “Do you agree with parents? Are you for or against drinking alcohol?” She made sure to provide positive feedback with words of encouragement like: “Nice! I knew you could do it!”. Teacher 2 taught a drama class. The class started with a presentation by three students on Tennessee Williams’s *The Glass Menagerie*. Once the presentation was over, the teacher tried to elicit students’ feedback: “What do you think of your friends’ presentation?”. She also gave presenters feedback on their time management and presentation skills as well as the content they presented. Then she said, “now let’s move to ... we are going to delve deeper into the dichotomy of realism and reality”, “Let’s go back to the idea of ...”. Teacher 3 taught a translation class. She started by checking students’ homework. She asked students about the translation problems that they had encountered when translating proverbs. She then asked them to check each other’s translations through peer feedback. She asked students: “How did you solve the problems you found? Did you use Linguee?” She praised a student by saying: “Look at your friend’s work! Thank you for your good work!”. Later, she gave a PowerPoint presentation about translation frameworks, the role of technology, multimodal genres, and examples of localisation. Teacher 6 taught an American culture class. She prepared a PowerPoint presentation about the Republican Party and factors that had contributed to its election victory. First, she apologised by saying: “Sorry the classroom was only assigned yesterday”. She tried to refresh students’ memory by asking: “What did we cover last week?”. She used signposting: “During the previous tutorials, I have explained what’s meant by...”, “I

am going to give you 2 minutes...”, “I would like to focus on... while reading”, “We are going to see why they won by a slim majority....”, “We mentioned that”, “This leads us to talk about....”. Teacher 7 gave a class on Arab American literature. A group of four students gave a presentation that focused on key concepts in Arab American literature entitled: “How do we define Arab-ness?”. The teacher tried to elicit peer feedback before giving her own feedback. She then facilitated a discussion: “What do you notice as literature students?”; “This is a good example of hyphenation from the text”. The class of Teacher 8 was about the structure of the US government. The teacher started the class by drawing a diagram on the board then started a discussion. Students were very involved, and the teacher praised them by saying: “That’s a very good idea! Very interesting questions, thank you”. Teacher 18 gave students a handout with grammar exercises, gave them time to work on the exercises individually then corrected the exercises. The teacher first explained adverb construction (quick–quickly, fluent–fluently, beautiful–beautifully). She also explained the difference between adjectives describing people and things (interested–interesting, motivated–motivating, bored–boring). Table 3 shows how much time was spent on each of the ARCS strategies.

Table 3

Observed ARCS strategies

ARCS	Attention	Relevance	Confidence	Satisfaction
Mean	0.8	7.6	6.4	7.1

The overall means for the time spent using each of the ARCS strategies highlight the use of relevance-producing strategies first ($M = 7.6$ min), followed by satisfaction-getting strategies ($M = 7.1$ min), and then confidence-building strategies ($M = 6.4$ min). Attention-

getting strategies ($M = 0.8$ min) come last with a considerable difference. Unlike the IMMS results reported by teachers in which confidence-building strategies were ranked first, classroom observations revealed that teachers resort to relevance-producing strategies the most. The only resemblance in the use of MotS is with the least used attention-getting strategies, which was revealed through both the questionnaire and the observation results.

It is worth restating that the MOLT categories are categorised under the four constituents of the ARCS model. Social chat, arousing curiosity, and creative elements are categorised under attention-getting strategies. Relevance-producing strategies are represented by elements such as signposting, stating purpose, establishing relevance, and referential questions. The confidence-building strategies include scaffolding, promoting cooperation, pair work or group work, and intellectual challenge. The satisfaction-generating strategies are composed of tangible rewards, individual competition, neutral or process feedback, self- or peer-correction, class applause, and effective praise. According to the results shown in Table 3, the teachers who were observed used relevance-producing strategies frequently. These MotS included signposting, stating the purpose of an activity, establishing relevance to previous knowledge, and posing referential questions. Interestingly, students' IMMS results also confirm the frequent use of relevance-producing strategies. Some MOLT items such as promoting instrumental and integrative values were totally absent during all classes observed. Hermessi (2017) explored the attitudes of Tunisian teachers of English towards including cultural aspects of English-speaking communities and found that cultural issues were considered too problematic or sensitive. It is probably for this reason why integrative or instrumental values were absent from the participants' classes. Moreover, even though group work was often used in their classes, there was no team competition. Group work was used only to facilitate tasks and promote cooperation among individual members.

At a second stage, standardised z -scores were computed in SPSS to compare the questionnaire results with those found during the observations. Interestingly, z -scores of observations and questionnaires for each teacher vary. Some teachers' z -scores are both positive. Some have two negative scores. Other teachers have one positive and one negative score for either of the instruments. The latter result is due to the fact that teachers either underestimate their actual use of MotS or use MotS more frequently than stated in the questionnaire answer. This difference in judgement may have been influenced by my presence as an observer or a colleague and by the participants' attempts to score higher on the MOLT scheme.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate the use of MotS by Tunisian teachers of English at university level and their students' perceptions of it. Relevance-producing strategies were documented as the most frequently used MotS during the observations. These strategies include asking referential questions and ways of establishing relevance under the category of teacher discourse. Confidence-building strategies were ranked in the second position with items like stating the purpose of an activity and scaffolding. Satisfaction-generating strategies included effective praise and process feedback. Attention-getting strategies are an important factor in enhancing students' motivation (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008). However, they were the least used MotS in this study. This finding could be due to the short effect of these strategies since students' attention cannot be stimulated for a long time, especially with university students. Moreover, the attention-getting strategies might be the most challenging. Indeed, despite the spread of IT and the internet nowadays, Tunisian university classrooms are still not equipped with internet-based and digital learning tools despite the fact that using technological means has proved to be motivating for Tunisian university students (Lachheb, 2013). Still, given the lack of these facilities, it is challenging

for EFL teachers to deploy online games, quizzes, or at times even the video projector to arouse students' attention. In the present research, going beyond the MOLT items was not an option since it was structured in a minute-by-minute way. Thus, taking notes of other strategies was quite challenging. Moreover, for the purpose of the study to compare the MOLT and ARCS categories, closely following the scheme was important. In fact, the comparison of teachers' *z*-scores revealed that there were some differences between reported and observed behaviour. Some teachers underestimated their motivational practice. It could also be the case that during the observation, the teacher employed more MotS than originally planned due to students' engagement. In other cases, teachers used fewer MotS than reported in the questionnaire. Reasons could include the teacher's underuse of MotS in general or any unexpected circumstances that might have affected the teacher's lesson plan. For instance, the teacher could be demotivated due to an administrative problem that occurred before class or due students' showing up late to class or not doing their assignments, which might result in a different lesson than planned.

Despite the effectiveness of Dörnyei's (2001) MotS expressed by teachers and learners, Lamb (2019) contended that "teachers do not use them as frequently as one would expect from their stated importance, and when they do, students do not always recognise them" (p. 295). This argument supports the result of the present study that students did not recognise the MotS used by their teachers and have a significantly different perspective on the reported use of MotS. Dörnyei's (2001) taxonomy could yield interesting results when combined with Keller's (2010) ARCS model, as suggested by the findings.

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