TASK-RELATED MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES IN EFL CLASSROOMS: A GLIMPSE INTO TEACHER AND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

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ABSTRACT

TASK-RELATED MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES IN EFL CLASSROOMS:
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This mixed-methods study delved into how teachers and students perceived the importance of task-related motivational strategies (TRMS) in EFL classroom instruction. A seven-point Likert scale questionnaire with forty-eight items covering seven conceptual domains of TRMS were electronically delivered to EFL teachers (N = 96) operating at different tertiary institutions and private teaching centers in a large city in southern Vietnam and their students (N = 220). Concurrently, thirty-four journal entries were obtained from the teacher (N = 17) and student (N = 17) survey respondents to shed further light on their perspectives concerning TRMS. Descriptive statistics results showed similar as well as different directions in the two groups' ranking order of the seven conceptual domains and of specific strategies. Importantly, non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test results showed both groups' central tendencies in which they generally agreed on the motivational value of 'task nature', 'task relevance', 'task materials', 'task-related feedback', and 'during-task teacher behavior', yet their perceptions of 'task presentation' and 'task level' diverged. Specific item analyses further revealed statistically significant differences in their perceptions of as much as 23 percent of the total number of TRMS being studied. Recursive analysis of the journal data corroborated a substantial part of the quantitative results and offered explanations for why each specific difference occurred. Mismatches between teacher and student perceptions provide important pedagogical implications for how Vietnamese EFL teachers can strategically design and implement tasks in the way that is motivating to students whose English learning is entirely confined within classroom walls.

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INTRODUCTION

‘Hey, how did you feel about our class?’

‘Well, not bad. But I didn’t like transforming the verbs in brackets.’

‘Neither did I!’

‘…….’

This was a small conversation between two students that I overheard when we were rushing out the door of a private English language center in Vietnam where I had been teaching for a few years. It has since struck a chord with me. This conversation can be one of the examples of a real-world situation in which two students comment on their English grammar exercise after class. Oftentimes, a similar incidence can happen wherever teaching and learning English is carried out through pen-and-paper grammatical tasks. It may however occur even more often in an English as a foreign language (EFL) context as in Vietnam, where learning English is confined to the classroom walls, and there are very few, if not to say almost no, extramural opportunities for students to use English. Students bring their expectation to communicate to the classroom, but they unfortunately end up having a learning experience they do not expect. Part of the reason for their negative experience could be that the ‘tasks’ (activities) they do in class are far from the ones that help them communicate in English as they expect; rather, these quasi-tasks are more of a test per se for what and how much they know about the structural rules of the English language. This is a warning bell for EFL practitioners heavily informed by grammar-directed teaching approaches, which have, for several decades, applied in formal English education in Vietnam. While students’ spirit of learning plays a definite role in how much they devote to learning, teaching practices with a strong focus on grammatical form inevitably diminish their motivation, because the teaching of impractically functional knowledge

of English grammar generally does not match their needs for strong English proficiency that is a prerequisite for competitive employment with foreign organizations, for international scholarship hunting, and for study-abroad opportunities in today's Vietnam (Phan, 2009).

In the Vietnamese EFL context, where most English learning takes place inside the classroom, instructional practices should take students' motivation into special consideration. This is because motivation, as Dörnyei (1998) emphasized, "provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved in L2 acquisition presuppose motivation to some extent" (p. 117). What is suggested from this emphasis is that low motivation is an indicator of little learning, and subsequently, of little achievement, whereas high motivation potentially pays off because the strong driving force behind students' learning can push them to perpetuate their resilience over an extended, and often effortful, process of learning. Motivation is thus a positive predictor of L2 achievement (Gardner & Bernaus, 2008). To make motivation a central part of classroom instruction in Vietnam, there needs to be a shift from traditional grammar-based teaching to communicative orientation, employing meaningful tasks (classroom activities) that are informed by the empirically proven, well-reasoned perspectives of task-based language teaching (TBLT) and those of L2 motivation. TBLT, which approximates classroom tasks to students' real-world tasks and aims to advance students' communicative competence needed for real-life purposes (Bygate, Norris, & Van den Branden, 2015), provides a pedagogical framework for what and how tasks are designed and implemented. L2 motivation perspectives, when embedded into task design, can determine how much students dedicate themselves to doing the tasks. These combined, if effectively employed in EFL classrooms, would have strong, direct impacts on students' learning experience in general, and their learning motivation in particular.

Alerted by the need to renovate foreign language education, the Vietnamese government has invested abundant resources, both intellectual and material, in the National Foreign Language Project 2008-2020, aiming to enhance EFL teachers' proficiency through extensive training programs across the country (see Nguyen, 2017, for details about this project). The belief behind this project is that teachers' higher levels of communicative competence can paint a finer picture of teaching and learning EFL on a large scale, probably because it is believed that their heightened abilities to communicate in English run parallel to their orientation to teach communicatively. However, it may undermine the fact that the quality of teaching and learning EFL relies less on how well teachers can use English communicatively, but more on how effective their classroom instruction can be. Until today, the failure of the project on the national level has called attention to the immediate practices of classroom teaching. Even if teachers are more proficient, students neither feel motivated by nor benefit much from their actual poor teaching performance. In such a situation, renovating EFL pedagogy with an emphasis on TBLT and motivation, the significance of which is described above, should deserve a consideration and necessarily be a response. Nevertheless, TBLT has not been widely implemented in Vietnam and classroom instruction often witnesses a mix of meaning-focused tasks and forms-focused tasks (grammar exercises), so mentions of *task* in this context should refer to classroom activities that teachers design and implement to facilitate students' learning. For this reason, throughout this study, *task* is also used in a similar sense.

To this end in Vietnam's current EFL context, developing teaching practices incorporating TBLT-derived tasks and L2 motivation rather than studying them theoretically seems to be beneficial for learning. Given that motivation is a complex and challenging issue in foreign language instruction, teachers should pay more attention to establishing practical

motivational strategies (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014), of course, with the involvement of tasks, to transform students' learning experience and propel them into expending efforts to learn. While L2 achievement is influenced by motivation, motivational strategies in teaching influence students' motivation Dörnyei, 1994; Dörnyei, 1998; Dörnyei, 2001). Since EFL students primarily learn English in the classroom, use of strategies related to tasks is even more important in determining how motivated they are to learn. Relating to this issue are two major concerns about the generation and the carrying out of task-related motivational strategies (TRMS). First, questions can be raised about what aspects of tasks appeal consistently to Vietnamese EFL students, and how motivational teaching strategies can be integrated into tasks. Second, paramount importance should be attached to what specific task-related motivational strategies are deemed as having significant motivational power both by teachers and by students. Although what and how to teach is often in the hands of teachers, students' opinions should never be disregarded, because students' personal orientations and beliefs do have interventional effects on their motivation and performance, as have been suggested by many studies (e.g., Elliot, 1999; Reeve & Jang, 2006; Tobias, 1994).

These concerns seem to be inadequately attended to in Vietnam, where the situationally specific practices of the EFL classroom markedly differ across instructional settings. Commonly, formal English education takes place in public schools (e.g., colleges, and universities), where teaching and learning are often dictated by test-driven curricula. However, this formal sector, due to its linguistically oriented teaching tradition, has seemingly failed to qualify students' English competence for effective communication (Tran T. T., 2012). This has resulted in growing numbers of students turning to privately-owned, commercial English language centers (CELCs), where a higher portion of English teaching embraces communication, with the hope of

ameliorating their communicative competence. However, whether teaching and learning in these centers is of high quality remains an under-investigated issue (Tuoi Tre News, 2014, as cited in Tran L. H. N, 2015), especially when they are commercially operated. However different these two types of institutions are, they share one similarity today, becoming increasingly aware of communicative teaching and students' demands for productive English capabilities, and in fact, communicatively oriented tasks have found their way into the classroom there. Thus, as far as teacher and student perceptions of the characteristics of task-related motivational teaching practices are concerned, it is essential to investigate the differences as to what beliefs these classroom stakeholders from different institutions hold. Mismatches in their perceptions can more or less make them discontented with their English class, bring down their motivation, and even leads to the termination of their learning (Kern, 1995, as cited in Brown, 2009).

Although considerable research has been done on motivational strategies in many countries including Hungary (Dörnyei & Csízer, 1998), Taiwan (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007), Spain (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008), the United States (He, 2009; Ruesch, 2009), South Korea (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Guilloteaux, 2013), Turkey (Deniz, 2010; Yücel, 2003; Taşpınar, 2004), Indonesia (Kassing, 2011); Thailand (Cho, 2013), Taiwan (Hsu, 2016), and Australia (Bokan-Smith, 2016), this area is still under-investigated in the EFL context of Vietnam, and therefore provides an interesting avenue for research. Task-related motivational strategies aside, there has been little research on this area, and probably, no research on how both teachers and students consider their value. It is however important that what teachers and students think about task-related motivational strategies and what they bring along with them to the classroom should be equally considered, because they share a reciprocal relationship in the entire process of classroom learning (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Stimulated by this issue,

the current study seeks to uncover the perceptual dynamics of motivation and motivational teaching practice by looking at task-related motivational strategies as perceived by EFL teachers and students from higher education institutions and CELCs in Vietnam. While alive to the fact that perceptions do not necessarily reveal all what realistically happens in the classroom, this study takes a stance that perceptions can be translated into realities and affect the practice of teaching and learning. As such, this study is significant in terms of (1) providing Vietnamese teachers of EFL with a better understanding of students' L2 English learning motivation and the task-related strategies contributing to it; (2) uncovering the discrepancies in teacher and student attitudes to task-related motivational strategies; (3) informing teachers of the appropriateness of their thoughts of the task-related motivational strategies they practice in their English classes as compared to their students' standpoints; and (4) paving the way for any pedagogical adjustments teachers need to make to complement their teaching practices on one hand, and take better control over their students' motivation in learning English on the other.

This thesis, a complete report of the study, comprises five principal chapters. Chapter 1 presents a summary of socio-psychological theories of motivation, major frameworks of L2 motivational strategies, and studies on task-related motivational strategies. Chapter 2 gives a detailed description of research aims, research questions, methodology and participants, and data collection and analysis. Chapter 3 is where results from statistical tests and qualitative text analysis are provided. Chapter 4 critically discusses these results in reference to theoretical and experimental perspectives of L2 motivation and draws some conclusions that follow. Finally, Chapter 5 highlights the study's contributions to the understanding of motivational teaching practice in the Vietnamese EFL context as well as acknowledges some limitations that warrant critical considerations and further research.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. A Glance at Socio-Psychological Theories of Motivation

In the literature of motivation, it is hard to find one single definition of motivation because of the diversity of socio-psychological perspectives on this human construct. However, at its most basic, motivation accounts for, specifically, the reasons for people's decision to do an activity, the efforts they exert in pursuit of a specific goal in that activity, and their persistence during the entire process of achieving the goal (Dörnyei, 2001). In Dörnyei's (1998) definition, motivation is "a process whereby a certain amount of instigation force arises, initiates action, and persists as long as no other force comes into play to weaken it and thereby terminate action, or until the plan outcome has been reached" (p. 118).

Traditionally, research on motivation throughout most of the twentieth century had its roots in social psychology (Dörnyei, 1998, 2001). In this field, it is the relationship between human beings' cognitive processes and their actual behaviors that is of concern to socio-psychological motivation researchers. In general, they seek to explore the reasons for people choosing to do a given activity, the efforts they exert in pursuit of what they desire in that activity, and their persistence during the entire process of achieving it. Although such a relationship is a common concern, there have been multiple perspectives on motivation due to researchers framing their theories on the basis of some human motives they consider more important than others. Dörnyei (2001) provided a relatively exhaustive list of these cognitive theories of motivation.

One of the earliest theories of motivation was the *expectancy-value theory* (Brophy, 1999; Eccles & Wigfield, 1995). As its name suggests, the theory supposes that when people expect success in a specific task and appreciate such values of the task as fulfillment of their personal desires, task-induced enjoyment, contributions task performance makes to approaching

prospective goals, and physical and mental expenses (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995), they feel motivated to engage themselves in the task. In contrast, without their expectancy of success and their awareness of its value, they might see no compelling reason to invest their time and energy in performing the task.

With success being a motivator, the expectancy-value theory seems to place importance on an orientation towards achieving end goals and the values of the goals. This orientation reflects "a need for achievement", a motivating component Atkinson and Raynor (1974) included in their *achievement motivation theory*, an expansion of the expectancy-value theory. If, for example, expected success is the finished product of an activity of intellectual inquiry, then the need for achievement is fueled by what Atkinson (1957) referred to as intellectual curiosity, an urge to discover the unknown. However, when people desperately need to achieve a goal, they might experience such negative feeling as fear of failure and try to avoid any failure they see as probable (Atkinson and Raynor, 1974).

Expectancy of success and achievement can be further understood through the theoretical lenses of attribution, self-efficacy, and self-worth (Dörnyei, 1998). *Attribution theory* is concerned with the way individuals subjectively views their past experiences (e.g., successes and failures), and their subjective viewpoints can predict how they are going to take prospective actions (Weiner, 1992). Weiner (1979) argued that when people ascribe their failures to internal rather than external factors, their future achievement-oriented behaviors may be stymied at a greater level. In educational contexts, for example, if an individual student attributes a past failure to his or her poor abilities (internal), he or she is less likely to strive again for success than when he or she ascribes that failure to chance and insufficient effort (external).

Related to the ability to perform a given task, *self-efficacy theory* refers to the extent to which people believe in their personal efficacy (skills and knowledge). According to Bandura (1997), the level of self-efficacy changes in accordance with the difficulty level of the task being done. When confronted with any challenge of the task, people with high self-efficacy tend to process the challenge confidently and their strong sense of achievement adds to their perseverance and commitment. Conversely, those who perceive a low sense of self-efficacy are often obsessed with their deficiency of capabilities and therefore lose control of how to proceed with the task. In this sense, because self-efficacy depends on people's perception of their actual capabilities in relation to their immediate experience (e.g., the task), it is affected by the factors related to that experience. First, doing a task similar to the one they did previously can give people a sense of confidence in accomplishing its goal due to their accumulated experience (performance accomplishment). Second, by observing how others perform the task (vicarious experience), people can sketch their action plan accordingly. Third, when people receive feedback (external comments) on their competence and areas of improvement, they can know how capable they are of doing the task. Finally, the condition in which people perform the task also affect their emotions (emotional arousal). Overall, performance accomplishment, vicarious experience, external comments, and emotions have a role to play in people's judgement of their own capacities.

One more theory that sheds further light on human expectancy of success and achievement is that of *self-worth*. While referring self-worth to aspirations for acceptance, Covington (1992) postulated that people's motivation is intensified by their sense of personal worth aroused by their abilities being proven and publicly accepted. In other words, people concerned about their self-worth care about whether others recognize their ability and honor

them for their abilities to succeed. Even in the case of failures, they would not accept that they have low ability but that there are other reasons for the failure. For the sake of their personal worth, people are convinced that their success is due to their capabilities, and that their failure, if any, might be because of their insufficient efforts rather than because of them being incapable. In school settings, self-worth is measured by academic achievements that manifest students' abilities (Covington, 2000).

Furthermore, human achievement behaviors have been categorized as *intrinsic motivation* and *extrinsic motivation*. Intrinsically motivated behaviors come from the inside of individuals who engage in a given task to satisfy their internal desires such as quenching their curiosity about the unknown or seeking enjoyment and pleasure (Dörnyei, 1994). Differently, if they consider their task engagement as a way of serving an external purpose, for example, getting a compliment or earning an award (Dörnyei, 1994), they exhibit their extrinsically motivated behaviors. Ryan and Deci (2000) placed higher value on intrinsic motivation than on extrinsic motivation. They supposed that external factors are secondary, playing merely a minor contributory role in the fluctuation of the motivation that lies within every individual.

Relative to the intrinsic and extrinsic dichotomy is *self-determination theory*, one that was best known through the work of Deci and Ryan (1985). The concept behind this theory is that the intrinsic and extrinsic orientations of motivated behaviors lie on a linear continuum on which motivation changes from the least self-determined (extrinsic) to the most self-determined (intrinsic). The more self-determined people are, the more motivated they tend to become, because they can assume the greater freedom to choose to do what they prefer doing and accordingly enjoy a greater level of internal pleasure. One component of this theory that regulates people's behaviors is *autonomy*, which is referred to as their capacity for making

independent choices, for being conscious of their volition, and for self-evaluating their choices. To achieve greater self-determination, people also need a sense of *competence*–their capacities of doing a certain activity. The activity therefore should not be far beyond their abilities; they would feel unconfident to do it, otherwise. The last component is *relatedness*, which stresses the relevance of the activity which people are doing to satiate their personal needs and interests and increase their sense of engagement in that activity.

Enormous attention has also been paid to the importance of *human needs* being best known in Maslow's (1979) hierarchy of five need levels (e.g., physiology, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualisation). In motivation research, the notion of needs has been substituted by the notion of goals Dörnyei (1998). Unlike a need, a goal seems to be more visual and specific, thus creating more stimuli for an action to be taken as well as providing a headlight for the steps taken on the trajectory of reaching the goal. Two broadly known theories of goals concern goal setting and goal orientation. Being untiring advocates of *goal setting theory*, Locke and Latham (1990, 1994) argued that there always exists at least one goal of each human action, and until that goal is identified and clarified, the action does not occur. To perform its motivational function, the goal should be specific and reasonably difficult (Locke & Latham, 2002). Its specificity allows people to concretely visualize what they are attempting to attain, and consequently, they have substantial reasons for putting forth effort. Its appropriate level of difficulty can both make the goal fascinating and sustain persistence in working toward it. For this reason, there is almost always a strong positive relationship between a specific and difficult goal and the degree of achievement (Dörnyei, 2001). Locke and Latham (2002) further added that goal commitment is also a vital factor influencing goal-oriented behaviors. People are committed to laboring towards

the goal, as Dörnyei (1998) suggested, if they feel sufficiently capable of attaining it (self-efficacy), and if such an attainment is of significance to them (expectancy-value).

Goal orientation theory reflects the efforts of educational psychologists in gaining an understanding of how children learn and perform in formal educational settings (Ames, 1992). Ames (1992) drew a detailed picture of this theory that highlights two types of goal: mastery and performance. The former explains how students pursue the mastery of learning content as their ultimate goal, and the latter provides a window into their positive competitive behaviors, for example, demonstrating their abilities, achieving excellent academic records, or comparing their performance with others'. The mastery orientation is more effective than the performance one because, as Ames (1992) argued, mastery goals are the driving forces for students to devote themselves to shooting for academic knowledge and success, while performance goals mainly drive them into making reciprocal comparisons.

Overall, what is common among the above socio-psychological theories of motivation is that they were all constituted in attempts to uncover the complexities of human behaviors from different cognitive perspectives. These perspectives represent cogent interpretations of human motivation. However, the interpretations do not relate to or corroborate one another because each of them focuses on a separate general orientation of motivation, thus resulting in "a rather fragmented overall picture" (Dörnyei, 2001, p.12) of its dynamic nature. Therefore, for a fuller understanding of motivation within an individual or a group of individuals, it is important that these theoretical issues be pulled together. In the L2 field, these socio-psychological theories are all applicable in decoding L2 learners' motives behind their decision to throw themselves into learning the L2. Specifically, L2 learners may feel motivated when:

- expecting success in mastering the L2 and are aware of how valuable this success is to their personal, academic, and professional welfare (*expectancy-value theory*);
- having a compelling need to achieve a better competence in using the L2 that will help serve their own purposes (*achievement motivation theory*);
- imputing their initial unsuccessful learning to factors that they perceive as remediable, and they might try harder to fix the problems not to discontinue their learning process (*attribution theory*);
- believing that doing certain L2 learning tasks is within their own abilities and that they can perform well without much external assistance (*self-efficacy theory*);
- getting recognized and honored for their academic performance and success in learning the L2 (*self-worth*);
- having the freedom to make choices on the aspects of the L2 they want to learn as well as decide what is most relevant to their needs and interests (*self-determination theory*);
- knowing the specific goal of an L2 learning task they are going to take part in and how important achieving the goal is to themselves (*goal setting theory*);
- identifying a clear purpose for mastering the content of L2 learning tasks in which they are participating (*goal orientation theory*).

1.2. L2 Motivation and Motivational Strategies

With a large body of research focusing on it over the past decade, L2 motivation has received increasing attention and established its special status in SLA literature (Boo, Dörnyei, & Ryan, 2015). The growing interest on this SLA strand has highlighted the role of L2 motivation as one of the strongly influential factors in L2 learning, acquisition, and development; it is believed to have the power to cognitively and emotionally arouse learners' proclivity for taking

conscious actions and for expending mental and physical efforts in attain a pre-established goal (Williams & Burden, 1997). Traditionally, research on L2 motivation was fundamentally based on the science of social and educational psychology. In this research agenda, primary attention was paid to socio-psychologically conceptualizing L2 motivation, breaking it down into different categories, and establishing and validating its constructs in relation to L2 learning (Alshehri, 2013).

Among the pre-1990 perspectives on L2 motivation are Gardner and his associates (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert, 1972), who proposed and developed their socio-educational dichotomy of motivational orientations: *integrative motivation* (learners' desire to belong to the target culture) and *instrumental motivation* (learners' pragmatic purposes such as seeking a good job or gaining an admission to college). Despite having been influential in the multicultural and multilingual context of Canada, where it emerged, this dichotomy is said to contain no specific integrative and instrumental elements but only "motivational antecedents that help arouse motivation and direct it towards a set of goals" (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 123). It is also necessary to note that in an EFL environment where it is less likely for learners to directly contact with native speakers and the target culture or in the context of English as a global language, the claim that integrative orientation is a solid indicator of learning seems contextually irresponsive (Au, 1988; Crystal, 2003; Oxford & Shearin, 1994).

Another pre-1990 development in L2 motivation was made by Richard Clément and his associates. They drew on the psychological theory of self-efficacy to coin the term *linguistic self-confidence*, which basically refers to L2 learners' communicative competence and exhibition of low anxiety in producing the L2 (Clément, Dörnyei & Noels, 1994). Linguistic self-confidence occurs at the interplay of language anxiety (an affective factor) and L2 proficiency (a cognitive

factor); the lower the former and the higher the latter, the more confident learners are in using their L2. Self-confidence in the target language is an important source of L2 motivation because it leads learners to believe that they can be competent to use the L2 to complete their tasks and achieve their goals. Self-confidence also encourages learners to confidently contact with the target speech community, either physically or in indirect ways, where a substantial part of learning and acquisition can take place.

A common thread among these pre-1990 perspectives is that they looked at L2 motivation as a broad tendency to learn the L2. However, since the 1990s, the focus has shifted from researching general orientations of L2 motivation to the translation of L2 motivation concepts into practical strategies that contribute to L2 learning motivation in classroom settings (Dörnyei, 2001; Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei 2008;). As Dörnyei (1998) noted, this marked shift has brought with it L2 motivation being reconceptualized as having "explanatory power with regard to specific language learning tasks and behaviors and not just broad, whole community-level social tendencies" (p. 124), and as a way of "looking at classroom reality and identifying and analyzing classroom-specific motives" (p. 125). Along with this revolutionary switch of focus, much work has been done to establish conceptual frameworks that accommodate a multiplicity of different socio-psychological constructs of L2 motivation as well as related instructional techniques for provoking, promoting, and prolonging L2 learners' motivation in a classroom-based learning context. These techniques are, in the perspective of Dörnyei (2001), *motivational strategies* for regulating L2 learners' goal-directed behaviors. Such strategies have influences, often expected to be positive, on encouraging students take concrete conscious actions to "achieve some systematic and enduring positive effect." (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 28).

One of the notable frameworks of motivational strategies is Dörnyei's (1994) *triadic motivational framework*, which operates across three levels of L2 motivation: language level, learner level, and learning situation level. In this framework, the target language, the learner, and the immediate learning environment are interconnected; the motivation of the learner can be understood appropriately only when viewed in relation to the motivational aspects of the target language as well as the situational factors of the classroom. At the language level, Dörnyei (1994) saw learners' tendency to integrate into the community of the target language (integrative motivation) and the utilitarian motives leading them to commit to learning the target language (integrative motivation) as critically important. Thus, the learner level sees motivation as situating within learners themselves. At the learning situation level, learners' immediate experiences in the context of L2 learning are vital to their motivation. In an L2 course, the appropriateness and relevance of the instructional materials and the learning tasks all play significant motivational roles during the course. Learning groups (e.g., norm and reward system, group cohesion, and classroom goal structure) are also of importance to learners' motivational state because they contribute to the energetic atmosphere of the classroom, and it is with their group that learners learn much more than with their teacher. The teacher's role, however, does not contribute less to learners' motivation. Because the teacher directly builds up learners' experience, his or her in-class behaviors, communicative styles, teaching methods, and even personal attributes exert constant impacts on learners' attitude toward the teacher on the one hand and toward the learning situation on the other. Under these motivational components, Dörnyei (1994) put forward as many as thirty motivational strategies that can be practiced in L2 classroom instruction.

A further exhaustive collection of motivational factors closely relevant to instructional practices was that of Williams and Burden (1997), who drew largely on the constructs of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and many other learner-related elements such as affective characteristics, age and gender. Conceptualizing L2 motivation as a multidimensional construct, this framework is home to a wide range of motivational strategies placed under several components of two motivational orientations: *internal* and *external*. According to Williams and Burden (1997), internally, L2 learners' motivation is directed by such within-learner factors as personal interest in a learning task, perceived value of the task, sense of agency, degree of mastery, self-concept, attitudes to the target language and culture, and personal characteristics (e.g., age and gender). Externally, learners are motivated by socio-cultural factors including their interaction with their significant others (e.g., parents, teachers, classmates), their learning situation, and the larger society in which they live. Many different motivational strategies can be induced from these factors. For instance, on the internal level, if learners are sensitized to the value of a specific instructional task that is relevant to their interests and promisingly profitable for them, they are highly likely to throw themselves into that task. On the external level, if teachers can create a classroom atmosphere with comfort, vividness, and exhilaration, their learners may feel pleasure in learning and a strong sense of belonging and engagement.

Given that L2 learning is a process, be it the entire long process or the process of a specific classroom task, then the motivation that generates, whets, and sustains the act of learning goes through all the stages of this process. This concept is the basis of the process-oriented approach to framing L2 motivation (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998). According to this approach, L2 motivation is present in three stages of a conscious action taken in consecutive points in time. In the preactional stage, learners identify their goals and intentions

for an action (*choice motivation*). In the actional stage, their action is protected and perpetuated (*executive motivation*). Upon the completion of the action, they reflect on their action, evaluate their performance, change their beliefs about the action, or even form a new belief system in the postactional stage (*retrospective motivation*). These stages of the action-based process are where teachers can practice relevant strategies to lift students' spirit of engagement in the classroom task. Illustrative of this can be a strategy for helping students realize their specific goals for the preactional (pre-task) stage and drawing up a detailed plan for how to reach these goals, which can invigorate their thirst for success. Another strategy for keeping their learning going in the actional (during-task) stage is to effectively organize collaborative work in the way that offers them meaningful, useful, and enjoyable interactions. Offering feedback in the postactional (post-task) stage is also a necessary act of motivating students to perform prospective tasks because the experience they accumulate from one task will likely be transferred to another.

In further addressing the issue as to how process-oriented motivation can be practicalized in an instructed L2 context, Dörnyei (2001) presented in his book-length publication, *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*, with four key stages of motivational teaching practice including a comprehensive set of more than one hundred motivational strategies friendly to classroom practitioners. These stages are (1) creating basic motivational conditions, (2) generating initial motivation, (3) maintaining and protecting motivation, and (4) encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation. In fact, this framework of motivational strategies is an expansion of the process-based approach Dörnyei and his associates had developed (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998). Bokan-Smith (2016), while commenting on this interconnectedness of the motivational stages, also agreed that the model "reflects the circular movement and strong connection that motivation has as well as its dynamic nature in the

L2 classroom" (p. 4). Below is a summary of the four components of motivational teaching strategies along with a synthesis of those related to classroom tasks.

Table 1. *A Summary of Dörnyei's (2001b) Motivational Teaching Practice Components*

Stages	Components	Micro-strategies related to tasks
Creating basic motivational conditions	• Appropriate teacher behavior. • A pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom. • A cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms.	• Use ice-breakers at the beginning of a course. • Regularly use small group tasks where students can mix. • Include activities that lead to the successful completion of whole-group tasks or involve small-group competition games.
Generating initial motivation	• Enhancing the learners' L2- related values and attitudes. • Increasing the learners' expectancy of success. • Increasing the learners' goal-orientedness. • Making the teaching materials relevant for the learners. • Creating realistic learner beliefs.	• Make sure that they [students] receive sufficient preparation and assistance for tasks. • Make sure they know exactly what success in the tasks involves. • Draw attention from time to time to the class goals and how particular activities help to achieve them.
Maintaining and protecting motivation	• Making learning stimulating and enjoyable. • Presenting tasks in a motivating way. • Setting specific learner goals. • Protecting the learners' self-esteem and increasing their self-confidence.	• Vary the learning tasks and other aspects of teaching as much as you can. • Make tasks challenging. • Make task content attractive by adapting it to students' natural interests. • Personalize learning tasks. • Select tasks that use tangible, finished products.

Table 1 (*cont'd*)

	• Allowing learners to maintain a positive social image. • Creating learner autonomy. • Promoting self-motivating strategies. • Promoting cooperation among the learners.	• Explain the purpose and utility of a task. • Whet students' appetite about the content of the task. • Provide appropriate strategies to carry out the tasks. • Adjust the difficulty of tasks to students' abilities and counterbalance demanding tasks with manageable ones. • Select activities that contain good roles for students. • Set up tasks in which teams of learners are asked to work together toward the same goal.
Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation	• Promoting motivational attributions. • Providing motivational feedback. • Increasing learner satisfaction. • Offering rewards and grades in a motivating manner.	• Regularly include tasks that involve the public display of students' skills. • Offer rewards for participating in activities that students may get drawn into.

What seems obvious from the table above is that a catalogue of motivational strategies involving classroom tasks and task implementation constitute a large portion of motivational teaching practice. This emphasizes the role of tasks in generating, promoting, and maintaining L2 learners' motivation to learn. Having said this, it does not mean that strategies involving other aspects of motivational teaching practice are of less importance in this case; all the strategies in the framework are equally important because they all directly influence L2 learners' immediate learning environment (e.g., classroom experience). In an EFL context where most of learners'

experience come from their classrooms, appropriate use of these strategies is even more important to sustaining their motivation.

1.3. Research on Motivational Strategies

The 1990s switch of research focus from the constitution of motivational theories to the examination of situated learning behaviors have brought about abundant studies on motivational teaching strategies (Alshehri, 2013; Bokan-Smith, 2016; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Cho, 2013; Deniz; 2010; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Fryer, 2012; He, 2009; Hsu, 2016; Kassing, 2011; Manning et al., 2012; Ruesch, 2009). The landmark study that laid a background for the following ones was probably one that Dörnyei & Csizér (1998) conducted in the EFL context of Hungary. This study concerned itself with only teacher perceptions of motivational strategies, while many of the subsequent studies also took into account student perceptions. The inclusion of student perspectives is important in developing a thorough understanding of classroom practices, given the reciprocal relationship between teachers and students in classroom teaching and learning (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Tudor, 2001).

Table 2. *Studies on Perceived Motivational Strategies (MS) in L2 Instruction*

Study and context	Focus	Method	Important results
Dörnyei & Csizér, (1998) in Hungary	Teacher ratings of MS importance and frequency	Survey	'Presenting tasks properly' ranked third in the top five strategies. Ten commandments for motivating learners (see Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998, p. 215 for a complete list).
Cheng & Dörnyei (2007) in Taiwan	Teacher perceptions of MS importance and frequency	Survey	'Presenting tasks properly' ranked among top five strategies. Some motivational strategies are contextually transferrable, but others are culturally specific.

Table 2 (*cont'd*)

Bernaus & Gardner (2008) in Spain	Student and teacher perceptions of MS frequency and their effects on motivation	Survey	Students and teachers had agreement on some strategies, but they disagreed on many others. Studies might have held misconceptions about teachers' beliefs and their classroom instruction principles.
He (2009) in the U.S.	Student perceptions of MS importance and frequency	Survey	'Presenting tasks properly' and 'making learning tasks stimulating' were in the top five strategies. Students' L1s and gender impacted their choices.
Guilloteaux & Dörnyei (2008) in South Korea	Link between teachers' motivational teaching practice and students' motivational level	Survey, classroom observation	Teachers' motivational teaching practice was connected to increased degrees of learners' motivated learning behaviors and their motivational state.
Ruesch (2009) in the U.S.	Student and teacher perceptions of MS importance	Survey	Students valued task-related strategies more than teachers did.
Deniz (2010) in Turkey	Student perceptions of MS importance	Survey and interview	Student ratings of MS were similar to Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) and Cheng and Dörnyei (2007). Teachers did not frequently used the strategies students considered important.
Kassing (2011) in Indonesia	Student and teacher perceptions of MS importance	Semi-structured and focus group interviews	Students and teachers agreed mostly on the first and last stages of motivation from Dörnyei (2001) but disagreed in terms of the second and third stages.
Cho (2013) in Thailand	Teachers' frequency of use of MS and students' preferences	Survey	Teachers equally used traditional and innovative strategies while students preferred the latter. Teachers used less innovative strategies that students demanded.

Table 2 (*cont'd*)

Fryer (2012)	Student preferences for MS	Semi-structured interview	'Using real-world, communicative tasks to reduce the negative effects of testing' ranked first in students' preference list.
Guilloteaux (2013) in South Korea	Teacher perceptions of MS importance and frequency	Survey	Evidence for strategy transferability across contexts. Examined strategies were all underused compared to their perceived importance.
Alshehri (2013) in Saudi Arabia	Student and teacher perceptions of MS importance	Interview, survey, and post-survey interview	Significant perceptual differences in terms of teacher behavior, goal setting, tasks, classroom atmosphere, promoting learners' confidence. Students preferred strategies for enhancing their academic success; teachers valued those related to learning experience.
Bokan-Smith (2016) in Australia	Teachers' identification and implementation of MS and students' perceptions of MS	Survey, interview, and classroom observation	Teachers and students considered 'presenting motivating tasks' as one of the top five strategies. Teachers' perceptions aligned with their classroom practices. Expert teachers used more strategies.
Hsu (2016) in Taiwan	Student and teacher perceptions of MS importance and frequency	Survey	Students liked a pleasant environment, while teachers prioritized strategies for recognizing students' efforts. Strategies seen as important were underutilized in the classroom.

A closer look at the previous studies on motivational strategies for L2 classroom instruction highlights some important characteristics of research on this instructional strand: (1)

almost all studies concerned themselves with a wide range of motivational strategies derived from Dörnyei's (2001b) framework for motivational teaching practice; (2) they used surveys as a main instrument to examine not only teacher but also student perceptions of motivational strategies in terms of their importance and/or frequency of use; (3) most of them found that motivational strategies that were perceived as important by students were not frequently used by teachers; (4) they also found both similarities and differences between teacher and student perspectives of motivational strategies; (5) their results confirmed the transferability of some motivational strategies across cultures and contexts as well as the cultural and contextual sensitivity of others; and (6) importantly, many of them reported a high preference for strategies related to the conducting of classroom tasks.

1.4. Classroom Tasks and Task Design

Tasks have been defined in a variety of ways in light of on the pedagogical perspectives on which the definitions are based. Mention of tasks in recent decades have usually referred to task-based language teaching (TBLT), an outgrowth of communicative language teaching (CLT) that has a focus on L2 classroom processes (Richard, 2006, p. 30). That is, classroom-based L2 learning occurs within an interactional process, and the way to operate such a process is to use tasks specifically designed to facilitate interactions that help students reach their preset linguistic or non-linguistic goals. Tasks are therefore the fundamental unit of a syllabus.

Long (1985) drew a distinction between tasks used in L2 classrooms and those that students do in real life. Specifically, the activities L2 learners do in the classroom along with necessary materials to support their task performance are *pedagogical tasks* in comparison to *real-world tasks* done in everyday life (Long, 1985. When working on a pedagogical task, learners process, comprehend, manipulate, interact, and produce in the target language to reach a

non-linguistic goal, and in doing so, they attend for the most part to meaning rather than form (Nunan, 1988, 2014). Meaning-focused interaction is therefore the nature of such a task in the TBLT approach. Nevertheless, it is irrefutable that dimensions of linguistic competence such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation can be achieved, mostly implicitly, during and after the task process, because the ultimate goal of L2 instruction after all is to help students improve their language abilities.

This notion of pedagogical tasks is in accordance with Williams and Burden's (1997), who saw tasks as "a forum" (p. 186). On this forum, all the participants involved in doing tasks interact with one another by exchanging information and negotiating meaning, and such exchanges and negotiations result in increases in their language levels. This description values the social aspects of learning via tasks, stressing that learning yields good results when there is collaboration and cooperation of multiple participators in working towards achieving something meaningful by discussing in a task. In such discussions, meaning is negotiated through the use and exchange of the target language; as a result, the language levels of the participators could be improved when they mutually learn from noticing each other's language use. Tasks, from this point of view, create essential conditions for interactions where the acquisition of the target language transpires. Because of this, tasks are indispensable where the interaction-based approach to instructed L2 acquisition underpins the practices of teaching and learning (see Gass, 1997; Long 1991; Pica, 1994, for the Interaction Approach).

How tasks affect learning depends majorly on task types as well as on the characteristics of each type of task. Julkunen (2001) claimed that use of a task that involves cognitive operations can help uncover the cognitive behaviors (i.e. motivational actions) and the affective characteristics (i.e. attitudes) students display in learning. This is possible because when students

are involved in doing the task, their cognition and affection function in helping them navigate and complete the task successfully.

Certain task types provide an understanding of how students work collaboratively toward task goals if the tasks are designed in the way that promotes group work (McGrath, 1984). For example, in a task that asks students to find resolutions for a viewpoint conflict, they need to negotiate with each other in terms of how they can reach a consensus.

According to Nation (1990), while being performed, some tasks can create conditions for students to bridge the gap between what they already know and what the tasks ask them to achieve. They can do this by means of comparing their previous experience with what they are currently experiencing, sharing their established knowledge with their peers to perform tasks together, giving guidance and support to each other, or using their own intellectual and linguistic resources to meet task requirements.

Tasks can influence how much students negotiate when they are concocting their ideas and language productions (Long, 1990). Accordingly, less negotiation work is done in a task that includes only giving information; conversely, when the task allows the information to be exchanged between students, they will negotiate at a greater level. Whether the completion of tasks leads to only one satisfactory answer or to a range of response options also decides the extent to which students negotiate meaning (Barnes, 1975; Doyle, 1983; Julkunen, 1989, 1990; Kauchak & Eggen, 1989; Long, 199).

How students learn and process the language exposed to them relates directly to what skills are needed to complete tasks and how tasks unfold. Oostdam & Rijlaarsdam (1995) suggested that tasks focusing on either receptive or productive language skills shape students'

learning and processing. That is, how they behave when receiving language input is different than when they are to assemble their own language.

Putting value on task sequence, van Lier (1988) emphasized that the link between different tasks used in a course is important for learning. As students can borrow the language and knowledge from one task to do another, they might feel more prepared to do the task. Likewise, when the connection between one task and an immediately following one is made clear, students can see the reason why they are doing the latter.

Linking task and motivation, Julkunen (1989, 1990) gave a description of a task that can encourage L2 learning. In general, this description concerns itself with the motivational nature of tasks. In particular, a motivating task according to Julkunen is one:

- that students do enjoyably rather than feel forced to do;
- that creates favorable conditions for students to practice the target language;
- that includes competition to encourage students' engagement;
- that makes students curious about new knowledge and skills and concerned about how to proceed with achieving them.

Table 3. *Types and Motivational Characteristics of Tasks in L2 Learning in Julkunen (2001)*

Studies	Approaches	Task types
Julkunen (2001)	Cognitive processes involved in task completion	***Memory tasks***: Recognizing and reproducing previously encountered information. ***Procedural or routine tasks***: Providing answers to critical questions or give possible solutions to a problem in accordance with a given or self-created procedure. ***Comprehension tasks***: Understand encountered information, dealing with the encounters, and drawing conclusions from reasoning. ***Opinion-giving tasks***: Expressing preferences (Doyle, 1983, 1992, as cited in Julkunen, 2001).

Table 3 (*cont'd*)

McGrath (1984)	Collaborative learning	***Generating ideas***: Planning tasks and creative tasks. ***Making choices***: Problem-solving tasks and decision-making tasks. ***Negotiating alternatives***: Conflict-resolving tasks and negotiations or bargaining. ***Executing actions***: Competitive tasks and performance tasks.
Nation (1990)	The gap between students' present knowledge and task requirements	***Experience tasks***: Activating and developing students' prior knowledge and previous experience. ***Shared tasks***: Bridging the gap through mutual support. ***Guided tasks***: Offering guidance and support, or teacher instructions. ***Independent tasks***: Using individual resources to complete the tasks.
Long (1990)	Promoting language learning	***One-way tasks***: Giving information in a one-way direction. ***Two-way tasks***: Including exchange of information.
Oostdam & Rijlaarsdam (1995)	Language learning and processing. Communication and learning strategies	***Receptive skill tasks***: Receiving and understanding language in a passive manner. ***Productive skill tasks***: Generating and producing language in an active manner. ***Receptive/productive skill tasks***: Including both language reception and production.
Barnes (1975); Doyle (1983): Kauchak & Eggen (1989); Julkunen (1989, 1990); Long (1990)	Level of negotiation	***Closed tasks***: Requiring a single correct answer. ***Open tasks***: Allowing for different plausible answers.

Table 3 (*cont'd*)

van Lier (1988)	Task sequence	***Task chains***: Tasks that lead to other related ones. ***Project tasks***: Requiring an extended amount of time and collective efforts.

Conclusively, each type of task from the summary table above encourages students to learn in a unique way; therefore, students' task motivation may vary across the tasks. However, all the task types and their qualities described in the table above contribute to positivizing students' experience in the L2 classroom. When their experience remains positive throughout a task process, there is a high possibility that their motivation to learn with (future) tasks can be developed and maintained. These benefits combined point to the significance of tasks not only as a unit for L2 learning but also as a source of motivation in situated learning environments. Given its importance, on-going research is needed to shed light on the motivating functions of different task characteristics, how classroom practitioners can design motivating tasks, and how students react to such tasks. This however should be done for specific populations of L2 teachers and students because it has been shown that some instructional techniques can be transferred across contexts but others have a high level of contextual sensitivity (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007).

1.5. Task-related Motivational Strategies

Empirical research has provided evidence pointing to the positive correlation between instructional interventions incorporating task motivation and L2 learning in general and students' linguistic improvement in particular (Dörnyei, 2002; Dörnyei & Kormos, 2000; Junkunen, 1989; Kormos & Dörnyei, 2004; Ma, 2009; Yanguas, 2007). Many studies have also been conducted on a diversity of motivational strategies in L2 classroom instruction (Alshehri, 2013; Bokan-

Smith, 2016; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Cho, 2013; Deniz, 2010; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Fryer, 2012; He, 2009; Hsu, 2016; Kassing, 2011; Manning et al., 2012; Ruesch, 2009). Still, little research has been done on a single aspect of motivational strategies, for example one that pertains specifically to classroom tasks, task design, and task implementation, not to mention an extremely limited number of studies on teacher and student perception of *task-related motivational strategies* (TRMS): Yücel (2003), Taşpınar (2004), and Henry, Korp, Sundqvist, and Thorsen (2017).

In studying the attitudes of EFL teachers in a large Turkish university's preparatory school towards and their use of a variety of motivational strategies derived from the work of many L2 motivation researchers (Brophy, 1998; Dörnyei, 2001, 2001b; Dörnyei & Csízer, 1998), Yücel (2003) devoted a distinctive part of his research to exploring the teachers' perceptions of the strategies relating to the motivational characteristics of classroom tasks. Through surveying and interviewing the teachers, Yücel produced a list of task-related motivational strategies that the teachers perceived as conducive to their students' task motivation. The table below described all what Yücel found about their perceptions of these strategies.

Table 4. *Yücel's (2003) Description of the Motivational Characteristics of Tasks*

Motivational Characteristics	Descriptions
Interaction	Collaborative work facilitated task performance through idea exchanging, and mutual support and learning. Also, interactively oriented tasks improved student-centered classroom teaching.

Table 4 (*cont'd*)

Fun	Fun tasks triggered students' enjoyment and laughter, indicating that they had a good time, and that they would make sustained efforts to do the tasks.
Being unusual	Change in task types and task environments minimized students' feelings of boredom caused by monotonous tasks.
Competitiveness	Competitive, game-like tasks induced a sense of determination to become the winner on the part of students.
Allowing movement	Tasks providing opportunity to move around the classroom reduced the stress of sedentary learning caused by sitting for long hours.
Challenge	Students tended to exert more effort in doing tasks that challenged their existing abilities because they could realize their limits and how to go beyond these.
Arousing curiosity	Tasks that made students curious about what would happen at the end or evoked their expectancy of fun were motivating.
Being visual	Visually supported tasks aroused students' interests thanks to their vividness.
Encouraging creativity	Tasks that allowed students to exemplify their creativity and creative skills through some finished product motivated them. However, this could be overwhelming and disappointing for those students without creativity.

As shown, most of the TRMS Yücel's (2003) teacher participants regarded highly seem to fall within one macro-strategy involving the nature of tasks. Literature on the inherent features

of tasks lent support to the claim that many of such features play a motivating role in L2 learning (Dörnyei, 2001; Williams and Burden, 1997; Brophy, 1998; Spaulding,1992). Task variability is one of such motivational characteristics of tasks. Regarding this characteristic, Dörnyei (2001) claimed that when variety is added to a task, the tedium of uniformity that stymies students' attention to it can be prevented and boredom eliminated. To fuel students' active participation, elements of fun, game-like competition, physical mobility, visual assistance, and humor should also be incorporated into task design. These elements, when appropriately handled, can create an enjoyable, pleasant classroom atmosphere for students, especially for those who bring along their stress from their work and life to the classroom. Thanks to these features, students will less likely feel boredom, and therefore participate more enthusiastically than when working on sit-down or pen-and-paper tasks.

Likewise, students' apathy can be adverted when they are introduced to tasks that contain unusual, that is, surprising elements (Dörnyei, 2001). Task that induce curiosity also have a similar effect, heightening students' exhilaration, because they are likely to feel excited to look forward to what will be happening in the tasks, and also because curiosity, as Williams and Burden (1997), Brophy (1998), and Dörnyei (2001) noted, is naturally characteristic of human beings' nature in general. However, Brophy (1998) cautioned that excessive levels of task-induced excitement may cause students to be sidetracked from the language in the tasks they are supposed to learn otherwise.

In addition, tasks that challenge students' abilities to create something meaningful or deal with tough problems, as suggested by Spaulding (1992) and Dörnyei, (2001b), are fascinating because these tasks are where students can identify their true capabilities. When their linguistic abilities are challenged by tasks, they will feel pushed to mobilize all linguistic resources

available to fulfill the tasks and negotiate more meaning. However, if too challenging, tasks may lead to disappointment because students may find themselves ineffectual or even impotent.

Communication-wise, Williams and Burden (1997), Brophy (1998) and Dörnyei (2001) all appreciated the interactive orientation of tasks, advising that discussion, debate, role-play, and project-based tasks be essential parts of a communicatively based classroom. Not only can such communicative tasks galvanize students into learning because they find themselves really using their target language to communicate in life-like situations, but they can also offer students the opportunity to learn from their interactive peers through negotiating meaning and exchanging ideas. While performing such tasks and being made aware of how helpful the tasks are to the development of their skills (e.g., teamwork skills, articulatory skills, etc.), they may show even greater signs of engagement.

Equally importantly, to get students to communicate meaningfully, tasks need to be authentic, mimicking what occurs outside of the classroom walls. Authenticity brings the tasks close to what students do in the real world, and what they do during tasks and the language they use in task performance can be utilized in the realities of their personal and professional lives. Use of authentic tasks increases the chances of task content and task language being pertinent to students' common or particular interests, needs, and goals, thus appealing to their attention and sparking off their engagement. As long as students discern the matches between their classroom tasks and their real-life desires, they tend to invest plenty of energy in trying to make use of what they learn in the classroom to make their desired achievements (Spaulding, 1992).

An outgrowth of Yücel (2003), another study that spotlighted a wider range of task-related motivational strategies was one that Taşpınar carried out in 2004 with the participants from a large university also in Turkey. Apart from adapting thirteen survey items about the

motivational qualities of tasks from Yücel (2003), Taşpınar (2004) devised her own three items (i.e. giving choice to students, using manageable tasks, and adjusting the difficulty of tasks) on the basis of the perspectives of self-determination and self-efficacy. However, while Yücel (2003) probed a range of motivational strategies besides those relating to tasks as perceived by only teachers, Taşpınar (2004) focused solely on task-related motivational strategies through the perceptions of both teachers and students.

Table 5. *Taşpınar's (2004) Domain-Specific TRMS and Teacher and Student Ratings*

Conceptual domains	Task-related motivational strategies	Teacher Ratings	Student Ratings
Presentation of tasks			
	1. Providing guidance about how to complete tasks for students.	5	1
	2. Giving choices to students while presenting tasks. *	11	8
	3. Using a variety of tasks in class.	1	11
	4. Giving clear instructions for tasks to students.	14	6
	5. State the purpose of every task.	4	5
Nature of tasks			
	6. Using authentic tasks (tasks that prepare learners for real-life applications).	10	15
	7. Raising students' curiosity by introducing unexpected tasks.	8	16
	8. Using game-like competitions in the classroom.	7	14
	9. Using tasks that allow students to interact with each other.	13	7
Tasks related to students' interests and needs	10. Considering students' needs rather than tests while presenting tasks.	17	9
	11. Considering students' interests rather than tests while presenting tasks.	3	17
	12. Using tasks that are interesting for students.	15	13

Table 5 (*cont'd*)

	13. Using tasks that allow students to have fun in the classroom.	2	12
Level of tasks			
	14. Adjusting the difficulty levels of tasks to students' abilities. *	9	4
	15. Making tasks challenging enough for students.	12	2
	16. Using tasks that do not exceed students' competence.	16	10
	17. Using tasks that are manageable for students. *	6	3

Note. * Taşpınar's (2004) self-devised items based on self-determination and self-efficacy theories.

With respect to teacher perceptions, Taşpınar (2004) found that teachers reported that stating task purposes and offering guidance were exceptionally motivational. In contrast, they did not find much motivational value in giving clear instructions, using interesting tasks, using tasks suitable for students' competence, and considering students' needs rather than tests. This was attributed to contextual factors as multi-level proficiency classes, student density, curriculum and exam issues. In addition, although the teachers indicated their use of a wide range of task-related motivational strategies, they did not use them with equal frequency. Most frequently, they varied their tasks, added fun to the tasks, addressed students' interests, and clarified task purposes, because they considered these strategies more important in nurturing students' motivation. It is interesting to note that most of the teachers' frequently used strategies pertained to the presentation of tasks, which might have been because of their shared thought that the strategies of this type were easy to employ and adaptable across different classes, as Taşpınar (2004) explained (p. 78). Many of the strategies from among the other conceptual domains were less

frequently used, probably due to their certain difficulties in implementation and low contextual adaptability.

In terms of student perceptions, Taşpınar's (2004) students thought that they were most strongly motivated by their teachers' strategies for task presentation, task level, and task relevance to their needs and interests, whereas they did not find their teachers' tasks to be authentic, interesting, competitive, and unexpected. Again, this mismatch could be explained by the teachers' task design and teaching being dictated by their exam-driven curriculum. Comparing the students' responses wither their teachers' indicated a negative correlation; teachers positively perceived their task-related motivational strategy use, whereas students deemed many of the strategies, especially those about task nature, as either underexploited or ineffectively employed. Part of this difference, as Taşpınar explained, could have been because teachers might have accomplished high levels of self-efficacy in teaching through tasks, thus expressing more positive beliefs than what their students themselves encountered in actuality.

Unlike Yücel (2003) and Taşpınar (2004) in EFL contexts, in western Sweden, where English is extramurally used, Henry et al. (2017) qualitatively examined teachers' descriptions of the design and content of classroom activities they found effective in their teaching. Their content analysis of teacher responses showed that the teachers perceived activities with authentic materials – "cultural artifacts produced for a purpose other than teaching" (p. 1) – as a prominent motivator, although using such materials highly demanded them to refine their pedagogical and linguistic expertise. Similar importance was also assigned to activities incorporating digital technologies and providing spaces for creativity. Their detailed findings are summarized in the table below.

Table 6. *Motivational Classroom Activities in Henry et al. (2017)*

Conceptual domains	Sub-domains	Total descriptions	Examples
Focus and content	Popular culture	29	Activities using popular films, online videos with students' favorite music and idols, poetry, blogs, contemporary youth literature, and audio books
	National culture	12	Activities with materials having a sociocultural focus on the cultures of English-dominant countries
	Intercultural content	2	Activities promoting students' interaction with the L2 community (e.g., an imaginary talk with an American)
	Everyday surrounding issues	11	Activities involving students producing media work prominent social events
	Interests, experiences, and future plans	11	Activities relating to topics of personal interest and allowing for personal reflections on important life events
	Ethical issues	4	Collaborative project activities about topical issues such as human rights, climate change, etc.
Sources	Authentic materials	42	Activities using cultural artifact produced for a real-life but not teaching purpose (e.g., films, literary works, internet media materials)
	Textbooks	1	Textbook activities supported by authentic materials
	Teacher-created and -manipulated materials	8	Materials adapted by teachers (e.g., flashcards, games, protocols for text analysis)
	No materials used	20	Activities with real-time competition or challenge and without material requirements

Table 6 (*cont'd*)

	Other learning materials	5	Web-based learning tools, or a radio program
Final products and performance	Internal/non-authentic	28	Oral presentations with Powerpoint or keynote slides, essays, film and book reviews, drama activities, or two-sided debates
	Internal/authentic	21	News programs, reports and documentaries, podcasts, radio programs, advertising videos, food programs, travel programs, weather forecasts, screenplays, personal diaries, recipes, and classroom parties
	External authentic	7	Blogging, music-based projects, informative videos
Challenges and competition	Challenges	14	Activities involving an intellectual challenge (e.g., word meaning identification, reasoning)
	Competitions	7	Quizzes, games, and structured debates
	Curiosity	4	Imagining subsequent segments of a film or a book, creating a life history of a person, choosing a candidate for a prize
Personal expression	Creativity	30	Activities arousing fantasy or imagination (e.g., predicting how a film or book may end) or involving creative processes (e.g., producing literary and artistic works)
	Personal relevance	15	Activities engaging students in issues of personal interest such as diary writing and journaling, telling a memory, or talking about future
	Choice	6	Activities allowing students to choose topics and materials in which they have interest

In summary, the results from the studies of Yücel (2003), Taşpınar (2004), and Henry et al. (2017) shed light on some issues about perceived practices of task-motivational strategies in teaching and learning EFL. First, in designing a motivational task, it is advisable to take into consideration not only the task itself (e.g., task characteristics, task difficulty, task conduction, and task relevance) but also students' personal attributes and preferences. Because students' learning experiences are directly linked to the tasks they are doing, aligning task content, task design, and task implementation to what they expect can help respond to their motivational demands.

Second, teachers' opinions of the motivational attributes of tasks do not always align with how students would like the tasks to be, although certain congruence might exist. The perceptions of these classroom stakeholders about motivational teaching practice might be similar or different depending on a set of factors related to their personal, professional, academic, and cultural backgrounds and experiences. This indicates the further possibility of looking at task-related motivational strategies from different angles of teaching and learning across different contexts of L2 English instruction.

As noted in the literature on L2 task motivation (Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998; Dörnyei, 2005), a task is a process with many stages (pre-task, while-task, and post-task) and includes multiple aspects (the task itself, the teacher, the students, and the specific conditions for task implementation and task performance). Hence, motivational strategies built on tasks should be generative rather than limited to what Yücel (2003), Taşpınar (2004), and Henry et al. (2007). In fact, Dörnyei (2001) considered teaching materials, teacher behaviors, and retrospective feedback all important motivators in L2 learning. When linked to task implementation, these

motivators produce lots of strategies that are worth exploring. Expanding the conceptual domains of task-related motivational strategies promises an extensive avenue for further investigation.

CHAPTER 2: THE STUDY

2.1. Research Aims and Research Questions

Much of previous studies reviewed thus far has addressed a wide diversity of motivational strategies (Alshehri, 2013; Bokan-Smith, 2016; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Cho, 2013; Deniz, 2010; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Fryer, 2012; He, 2009; Hsu, 2016; Kassing, 2011; Manning et al., 2012; Ruesch, 2009). Still, modest attention has been directed to the strategies that involve different aspects of classroom activities. Given that communicatively oriented activities, in their various forms of presentation, are one of the important elements that constitute the cornerstone of L2 teaching and learning (Ellis, 2010), and that no study has featured classroom activities in the EFL context of Vietnam, this study was a response to the lack of focus on this area of inquiry. The study followed the tradition of previous related research (Henry et al., 2007; Taşpınar, 2004; Yücel, 2003), looking into task-related motivational strategies (TRMS) for the practice of English instruction in Vietnamese EFL classrooms. Accordingly, the scope of the study was limited within the strategies involving multiple aspects of tasks and task implementation issues. It is important to note, though, that in this study, the term *task* was used in its broad sense rather than limited to the sense of task-based language teaching (TBLT), given the fact that classroom instruction in the context of the study varies in the use of tasks. In brief, tasks, wherever used in this study, refer to classroom activities with a communicative element that EFL teachers in Vietnam design and implement to facilitate their students' English learning.

That said, the study did not investigate how TRMS were practically implemented in EFL classrooms in Vietnam or how effective the implementation could be. Rather, it concentrated principally on examining the perceived importance of the TRMS, and on how varying differences might exist between what students expected about motivating tasks and task

implementation and what teachers thought they should practice in their classrooms in response to their students' expectations. In this respect, the study took the stance that the perceptual differences between teachers and their students could potentially influence the students' learning experience and their motivation to learn. Such an influence could accordingly highlight task-related pedagogical issues to which Vietnamese EFL teachers should pay special attention when teaching with tasks in their classrooms.

In this direction, the study aimed to (1) explore what perspectives Vietnamese EFL teachers and their students held about different categories of TRMS; (2) illuminate the convergences and divergences between the teachers' and the students' perceptions of the strategies; and (3) provide implications for what strategies should be used to motivate EFL students in Vietnam. To these ends, the study endeavored to address the following questions:

1. How do teachers perceive the importance of TRMS to motivating their students to learn in the classroom?
2. How do students perceive the importance of TRMS their teachers may use to motivate them to learn in the classroom?
3. What are the convergences and/or divergences between the perceptions of the teachers and those of the students about the importance of TRMS?

2.2. Participants

All the participants were recruited using a snowball sampling technique, one that helps approach potential populations thanks to the recommendations of key participants over a certain period of time (Browne, 2005; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). In other words, several key participants (EFL teachers) were contacted and then requested to provide access to other participants (their

colleagues and students) whose academic and professional characteristics fit with the study. By means of extensive connections via email, this recruitment technique helped reach a large pool of participants over a relatively short period of time as well as target the participants whose profiles were relevant to my study's purposes. For a consistent inquiry into general perceptibility of TRMS in the Vietnamese EFL context, only in-service teachers and their students were chosen to participate in this study. Table 7 below shows the descriptive statistics for teacher participants.

Table 7. *Descriptive Statistics for Teacher Participants (N=96)*

Gender		Qualification			School		Age		Years of experience	
Male	Female	BA	MA	PhD	CELC	C/U	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
20 (20.8%)	76 (79.2%)	38 (39.6%)	56 (58.3%)	2 (2.1%)	59 (61.5%)	37 (38.5%)	31.24	6.7	8.3	6.3

Note: BA = Bachelor of Arts; MA = Master of Arts; PhD = Doctor of Philosophy; CELC = commercial English language center; C/U = college or university.

A total of 96 teachers (20.8% male and 79.2% female) responded to the survey. Of these, 58.3%% hold Master's degrees in English teaching or a related field, 39.6% Bachelor's degrees, and the tiny rest of 2.1% PhD degree. Their ages ranged between 22 and 61 (M = 31.24, *SD* = 6.7), and their accumulated teaching experience varied wildly between 1 and 35 years (M = 8.3, *SD* = 6.3). The teachers teach EFL in two different settings: higher education institutions (i.e., colleges and universities) and commercial English language centers (CELCs) in southern Vietnam.

The tertiary teachers (61.5%) mainly teach Academic English courses with a focus on developing English language skills (e.g., reading, listening, speaking, and writing) for English

majors and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses for non-English majors. Besides, they instruct courses specialized in English linguistics, literature, and translation and interpretation offered for undergraduate students of English Studies and those of English Education as degree programs at their colleges or universities.

The teachers at CELCs (38.5%) are mainly responsible for instructing short-term intensive courses to prepare students for taking standardized exams that entitle them to national certification (e.g., General English Certificates, Vietnamese Standardized Tests of English Proficiency) and international certification (e.g., TOEIC, IELTS, and Cambridge ESOL exams). Since these standardized exams assess all the four English language skills, they teach these skills separately or in an integrated manner, aside from teaching test-taking strategies that accounts for a large proportion of their instruction.

Table 8. *Descriptive Statistic for Student Participants (N=220)*

Age		Gender		School		Perceived proficiency		
M	*SD*	Male	Female	CELC	C/U	E	I	A
20.48	2.50	60 (27.3%)	160 (72.7%)	58 (26.4%)	162 (73.6%)	34 (15.5%)	159 (72.3%)	27 (12.3%)

Note: CELC = commercial English language center; C/U = college or university; E = elementary; I = intermediate; A = advanced.

As described in the table above, the EFL students participating in this study (N = 218, 27.3% male and 72.7% female) came from two common backgrounds (e.g., tertiary level students of different majors and working professionals) and were studying with the teachers involved. Their age (M = 20.48, *SD* = 2.50) differed considerably; the youngest of them was 18 years old and the oldest was 39. In terms of English learning, they fall within two categories: (1)

73.6% receive formal English instruction at tertiary institutions, and (2) 26.4% go to CELC tutoring services.

At colleges or universities, students study Academic English in the specialized courses of their English-major programs, and those who do not major in English are required to learn English for Specific Purposes. One common point among them is that they are trained to listen, read, speak, and write in English in skills-based courses often occurring in the day time. The students who learn English at CELCs have diverse backgrounds. They can be tertiary students, high school students, teachers of non-English disciplines, and other working professionals. Classes for those students are most often held in the evening, because they all are occupied in their daytime with studies and work.

The students' perceived English proficiency range from elementary (A1-A2) to intermediate (B1-B2) to advanced (C1-C2) levels according to the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR), which has since the start of 2010s been officially translated into the assessment of English proficiency in Vietnam (Ministry of Education and Training, 2008). Any students who rated themselves as true beginners with absolutely no knowledge of English were excluded from the study, because at this level, they still have an extremely limited amount of classroom learning experiences, and their low proficiency level may interfere with their understanding of what they are asked to do for the research.

2.3. Methodology and Instruments

A mixed-method approach, referred to in research literature as the combination of elements of quantitative and qualitative research approaches for a bread and deep understanding of the issue being researched (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007), was employed for the

study. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010), this approach has been used extensively for research in educational, social, and behavioral sciences, and it is claimed to be highly facilitative of answering research questions from different angles. That is, if both quantitative and qualitative data are put together for the interpretation of one single research issue, and if they are mutually supportive, research results can be strongly corroborated. Besides, combining the two methods can not only help address the complexities of the issue being investigated but this combination can also allow one set of results to complement or expand the understanding of the other. Given that L2 motivation in general and teacher and student perceptions are complex, using multifarious sources of data related to them can allow for copious analyses, leading to a deep interpretation of the issue being studied (Dörnyei, 2001; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2012). However, Brown (2014) cautioned that different methods must be used in a systematic manner and in the way that they complement each other. In light of this, the quantitative phase of the study was conducted prior to its qualitative phase, because the latter was intended to supplement the findings from the former.

Quantitative data were collected using a 7-point Likert scale survey (1 = *not important*, 7 = *extremely important*) consisting of seven conceptual domains (macro-strategies) accommodating a total of 48 items (micro-strategies) nested under seven conceptual domains. The domains concerning task presentation, task nature, tasks' relevance to students' interests and needs, task difficulty were adapted from Yücel (2003) and Taşpınar (2004), who had previously drew on the studies of many L2 motivation researchers (Brophy, 1998; Dörnyei, 2001, 2001b; Dörnyei and Csízer, 1998). In reference to previous research on TRMS and EFL instruction in Vietnam in general, more items were added to three of these adapted domains. For instance, new items such as '*showing students how each task contributes to their language learning goals'* (30-

TP) and '*using Vietnamese to present tasks where necessary*' (43-TP) were subsumed under the domain of 'task presentation'. Some items such as '*including visual elements in tasks*' (17-TN), '*using tasks that require students to work together in groups*' (46-TN), '*using tasks in which students need to work together outside the classroom*' (21-TN), '*using tasks that students need to use technology (i.e. computer) to complete*' (36-TN), '*using tasks that need students to use their creativity to complete*' (6-TN), and '*using tasks that offer opportunity to move around in the classroom*' (37-TN) were also newly affixed to the domain concerning 'task nature'. The 'task difficulty' domain alone had '*using a series of tasks with increasing levels of difficulty*' (28-TL) as its new item.

The other conceptual domains (task materials, feedback on task performance, and teacher behavior during task time) were the developments made in light of Dörnyei (2001) and Henry et al. (2007). These three domains gave rise to an extension of 31 items in aggregate. As said, many of these items were derived from the motivational strategies from Dörnyei (2001) and Henry et al. (2007), while the rest of them, as mentioned above, grew out of the researcher's own experience teaching EFL in Vietnam. Although the motivational strategies in Dörnyei (2001) were not established specifically for tasks, they were adapted in the way that incorporated the involvement of tasks. For example, Dörnyei (2001) listed the teacher's facilitative role in the classroom as one of the important motivational teaching strategies, which was adapted into teachers' '*acting as a facilitator while students are doing tasks*' (44-TB).

Qualitatively, data were obtained through the delivery of a reflective journal writing task that ran parallel to the distribution of the survey. According to Janesick (1998), "journal writing allows one to reflect, to dig deeper […] into the heart of the words, beliefs, and behaviors" presented in the journals. Research-wise, reflective journal entries offer a way of interpreting

data in a dialogic manner, that is, the written communication between the researcher and his or her participants. By using this communication modality, the researcher was able to "read the minds" of the writers through what they conveyed on paper thanks to their journals containing a wealth of information about their own experience with EFL teaching and learning. Thus, their journals were instrumental in revealing further information about and providing explanations for how and why they perceived certain TRMS as important. When put together with the survey data, the qualitative data from the journals were highly supportive of elucidating the quantitative results.

Regarding the writing content, the participants, both students and teacher, were asked to reflect on their EFL teaching and learning experience. The teachers were asked to write a journal approximately two pages long at maximum about their beliefs of the importance of TRMS they might be using in their EFL classroom instruction. Simultaneously, the students were requested to write a similar journal at the same length expressing their attitudes toward and views of their teachers' TRMS use. The participants' writing was guided by seven questions that oriented their responses to seven TRMS domains of the survey, allowing for greater relevance between the quantitative and qualitative data. The participants, however, were told to freely contribute as many new aspects of TRMS as they saw fit.

2.4. Data Collection

Initially, the draft of the quantitative survey was reviewed by an Applied Linguistics professor at a large Midwestern U.S. university, five doctoral students of the university's Second Language Studies program, and a group of last-year MATESOL students from the same school. The purposes of this reviewing phase were to (1) confirm the relevance of each item to the

conceptual domain it represents, (2) eliminate any language-related ambiguity of the items, and (3) estimate the total time for survey completion.

As mentioned earlier, data collection relied on the snowball sampling technique. At first, several EFL teachers from different colleges, universities, and CELCs across southern Vietnam were contacted via email. In this email, the research and its purposes were introduced, along with an invitation to the teacher recipients. Upon their agreement, they were requested to provide the email addresses of their colleagues and students, who would be contacted afterwards. These persons would then either provide new participants' email addresses or forward the email to their own contacts. By this way, a large number of survey responses were gathered over the period from late October 2017 through early January 2018. When these individuals took the survey, they did not provide their names or email addresses, so they were not identifiable. In other words, all of their survey responses were all anonymous.

However, at the end of the survey, a small note was attached to invite the survey respondents to participate in the second part of writing reflective journals about TRMS. If indicating that they were interested in going on doing this part, they would provide their email addresses in a box underneath the note. During the course of survey distribution, invitations were sent to those teachers and students who had submitted their completed surveys and provided their email addresses. Upon their consent to participate in doing the writing task, they were sent a different email with the writing instruction and the guiding questions attached. They would need to complete their writing over a period of one month, because during this time, they could gain more experience learning with tasks in their classroom, and an extended time allowed them to reflect more deeply on their experience. Their journals, whenever completed, would be submitted via email.

2.5. Data Analysis

To analyze the quantitative, Likert-scale data coded on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*not important*) to 7 (*extremely important*), all the obtained data were entered into SPSS 20.0 and submitted them to a range of statistical tests, both descriptive and inferential. Descriptive statistics used to scrutinize and report the findings of the surveys included mean (*M*), standard deviation (*SD*), median (*Mdn*), interquartile range (*IQR*). These statistics gave answers to Research Questions 1 and 2 that asked about how Vietnamese EFL teachers and students perceived the importance of TRMS.

The highlight of the study lies in Research Question 3 that concerned the comparisons between the perceptions that the teachers and the students held of the TRMS being explored. Tapping into the similarities and differences of their perceptions offers benefits to not only the teachers but also students, because these classroom stakeholders have a reciprocal relationship in the process of learning, and what they bring to this process can dictate how they teach and learn (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). To unveil this perceptual correlation, decisions were made as to whether the distribution of the data was normal according to their skewness and kurtosis values. In case of any set of data that was normally distributed, independent samples *t*-tests would be applied to juxtapose the participants' TRMS perceptions. In case of poor data distribution, non-parametric Mann Whitney U tests were run to examine the data.

No matter what type of distribution the data sets exhibited, the practical significance of the differences between teacher and student perceptions of TRMS was measured by probability (*p*) values and the *r* effect size. In the field of SLA, it is widely accepted that when *p* is smaller than .05, between-group differences are considered significant. In terms of effect sizes, the general agreement is that the larger the *r* coefficient, the greater the statistical significance. As

noted by Cohen (1988), the *r* of .10, .30, and .50 correspond to small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively.

Concerning the qualitative data collected from reflective journals, a recursive analysis (Brown, 2014; Phung, 2015) was conducted. Two fundamental steps were taken in this analysis. First, the responses were read carefully multiple times to identify common themes and patterns. In fact, the seven questions provided in the writing instruction to guide the participants' writing corresponded to the seven conceptual domains in the quantitative survey. What needed to be identified in the first step was therefore the recurring themes and patterns under these domains. Second, the themes and patterns were assigned to different categories and checked for the frequency of their occurrence across the journals using a self-created checklist. The frequency was calculated on the basis of how many individual journal writers mention a specific theme instead of how many times the theme appears in a text (Namey at al., 2008). Below is the coding scheme used for the analysis of the qualitative data.

Table 9. *Coding Scheme for Qualitative Journal Data*

Codes	Subcodes
TP: Task presentation	Mentions of task presentation in terms of guidance, choice, variety, purposes, demonstration, contribution, L1 Vietnamese use.
TN: Task nature	Mentions of task nature in terms of authenticity, curiosity, competition, interaction, collaboration, technology, communication.
TR: Task relevance	Mentions of tasks in terms of relevance, needs, interests, fun.
TL: Task level	Mentions of task levels in terms of difficulty, adjustment, challenge, student competence.

Table 9 (*cont'd*)

TM: Task materials	Mentions of task materials in terms of material variety, culture, authenticity, language.
TF: Task-related feedback	Mentions of tasks in terms of teacher and peer feedback on task performance.
TB: Teacher behavior during task time	Mentions of while-task teacher behavior in terms of teacher roles, teacher engagement, teacher encouragement, teacher management, teacher mediation.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

3.1. Internal Consistency Reliability

Internal consistency reliability was computed for each scale (conceptual domain) of task-related motivational strategies (TRMS) on both teacher and student surveys. The reliability was measured by scale reliability coefficient (the Cronbach alpha α). This value is supposed to be .70 or above to for a scale to claim its reliability (Dörnyei, 2007). However, according to Dörnyei (2003), in social science research, the Cronbach alpha of .60 is acceptable for a scale with fewer than ten items, because such a scale is less likely to reach a value as high as .70. The table below shows the scale-specific reliability for both surveys.

Table 10. *Internal Consistency Reliability for Teacher and Student Surveys*

Scale (Conceptual domain)	Number of items in each scale	Teacher survey* (α = .96)	Student survey** (α = .94)
Task presentation	7	.75	.68
Task nature	10	.85	.78
Task relevance	4	.77	.53
Task level	5	.79	.64
Task materials	6	.80	.76
Task-related feedback	8	.84	.78
Teacher behavior during task time	8	.82	.77

Note. Number of cases in all the scales: * *N* = 96; ** *N*= 220

As also shown in Table 10 above, the Cronbach alphas for the 48 Likert-scale items on the teacher and student surveys were .96 and .94 respectively, which indicated very high levels

of overall reliability. This internal consistency could thus be considered as a reason for rejecting the need for a factor analysis of the items for both surveys.

All the scales in the teacher survey achieved the Cronbach alpha values exceeding .70 despite most of them containing less than 10 items. Of them all, “task nature’, ‘task materials’, ‘task-related feedback’, and ‘teacher behavior during task time’ (α = >.80) were substantially reliable. These combined suggest that the items in these scales had high degrees of internal consistency.

In terms of the student survey, three scales ‘task nature, ‘task materials’, ‘task-related feedback’, and ‘teacher behavior during task time’ were highly reliable, with their Cronbach alpha values all exceeding .70. “Task presentation’ (α = .68) and ‘task level’ (α = .64) were those scales that had acceptable reliability because of them containing less than 10 items. However, only the scale ‘task relevance’ had a low reliability coefficient (α = .53). This low coefficient value could be ascribed to the rather small number of items being used and the individual differences in the student sample. None of the items belong to this scale, if deleted, could increase the scale’s reliability coefficient, however.

3.2. Teacher Perceptions of the Importance of TRMS

3.2.1. Central Tendency of Teacher Perceptions

The teacher participants were asked to rate 48 TRMS according to their importance based on a 7-point importance scale. The table below shows the central tendency of the perceptions that the teachers held about each conceptual domain (scale) of TRMS. This tendency is represented by the mean and standard deviation of each scale. Because of the ordinal data, the median and

interquartile range are helpful in providing a fuller understanding of the tendency. The scales in the table are, however, presented in largest to smallest order of their means.

Table 11. *The Central Tendency of Teacher Perceptions of the Importance of TRMS*

Scale (Conceptual domain)	*M* *	*SD*	*Mdn*	*IQR*
Task level	5.47	.97	5.60	1.35
Task relevance	5.39	1.08	5.50	1.50
Task presentation	5.34	.87	5.43	1.10
Teacher behavior during task time	5.13	.95	5.19	1.18
Task nature	4.96	.92	5.05	1.07
Task-related feedback	4.89	.98	5.00	1.09
Task materials	4.84	.98	5.00	1.33

Note. *M* = mean; *SD* = standard deviation, *Mdn* = median; *IQR* = interquartile range. * 7-point Likert scale (1 = *not important*, 7 = *extremely important*).

It can be seen from the table that Vietnamese EFL teachers generally agreed on the considerable importance of 'task level' (*M* = 5.47, *SD* = .97), rating it as the most important among all the conceptual domains of TRMS. Assigned relatively equal importance were 'task relevance' (*M* = 5.39, *SD* = 1.08), and 'task presentation' (*M* = 5.34, *SD* = .84). 'Teacher behavior during task time' (*M* = 5.13, *SD* = .95), 'task nature' (*M* = 4.96; *SD* = .92), 'task-related feedback' (*M* = 4.89; *SD* = .98), and 'task materials' (*M* = 4.48; *SD* = .98), despite also being seen as quite important with their means standing between 4.61 – 5.40, were less valued domains of TRMS in comparison to the other two domains. Their perceived importance, however, was quite similar. The standard deviations of all the scale means were small (*SD* ≤

1.08), thus suggesting that there were no outliers that would have affected the interpretation of the mean scores.

3.2.2. Rank Order of Specific TRMS according to Teacher Perceptions

Table 12 below provides a breakdown of the teachers' perspectives of each TRMS represented by mean, standard deviation, median, and interquartile range. The mean and standard deviation were used to accurately organize the items from most importance to least importance. Besides means and standard deviations, median and interquartile range values were reported to shed further light on the tendency of teacher perspectives of each strategy that carried doubts about normal data distribution.

The mean-based rank order of teacher ratings was based on the calculation used by Cho (2013), who subtracted the highest level of the Likert scale by the lowest level and then dividing the obtained value by the total number of levels. Following this calculation, the difference between levels of importance on the 7-point Likert scale would be .85. Therefore, the interpretation of the rank order is *not important* (1.00 – 1.85), *slightly important* (1.86 – 2.71), *somewhat important* (2.72 – 3.57), *important* (3.58 – 4.43), *quite important* (4.44 – 5.29), *very important* (5.30 – 6.15), and *extremely important* (6.16 – 7.00).

Table 12. *Final Rank Order of Specific TRMS according to Teacher Perceptions*

Item	Label	*M* (*SD*)	*Mdn* (*IQR*)
47-TP	Clear task instructions	6.42 (1.023)	7.00 (1.00)
5-TL	Task difficulty adjustment	6.04 (1.230)	6.00 (1.00)
16-TP	Task variety	5.96 (1.213)	6.00 (1.00)

Table 12 (*cont'd*)

40-TB	During-task encouragement	5.84 (1.164)	6.00 (2.00)
1-TN	Task authenticity	5.84 (1.155)	6.00 (2.00)
44-TB	Teacher's facilitator role	5.80 (1.308)	6.00 (2.00)
2-TP	Task demonstration	5.80 (1.219)	6.00 (2.00)
45-TR	Tasks interesting to students	5.80 (1.411)	6.00 (2.00)
23-TN	Tasks for student interactions	5.78 (1.250)	6.00 (2.00)
41-TF	Post-task feedback	5.73 (1.365)	6.00 (2.00)
42-TB	Readiness to answer students' during-task questions	5.65 (1.330)	6.00 (2.00)
24-TM	Task material variety	5.57 (1.288)	6.00 (2.00)
4-TL	Task manageability	5.53 (1.297)	6.00 (1.00)
19-TL	Task challenge	5.49 (1.322)	6.00 (1.00)
3-TR	Considering students' needs	5.49 (1.306)	6.00 (1.00)
28-TL	Related tasks with increasing difficulty	5.47 (1.205)	6.00 (1.00)
17-TN	Visual elements in tasks	5.36 (1.495)	6.00 (3.00)
11-TF	Feedback on overall group task performance	5.32 (1.318)	5.00 (2.00)
26-TF	Feedback on the degree of task completion	5.28 (1.463)	6.00 (1.00)
13-TF	Reviewing students' during-task language use	5.21 (1.264)	5.00 (1.00)
14-TR	Tasks providing fun	5.17 (1.456)	5.50 (2.00)
46-TN	Tasks requiring small group work	5.15 (1.361)	6.00 (2.00)
32-TB	Equal talk time during task time	5.14 (1.404)	5.00 (2.00)
29-TN	Surprising, curiosity-arousing tasks	5.14 (1.396)	5.00 (2.00)
22-TP	Task purpose explanation	5.11 (1.562)	5.00 (2.00)
18-TR	Considering students' interests	5.11 (1.450)	5.00 (2.00)

Table 12 (*cont'd*)

39-TF	Feedback on group work issues	5.07 (1.438)	5.00 (2.00)
48-TP	Students' choices about task presentation	5.00 (1.465)	5.00 (2.00)
7-TM	Authentic materials	4.97 (1.461)	5.00 (2.00)
30-TP	Clarification of task contributions	4.97 (1.476)	5.00 (2.00)
6-TN	Tasks requiring creativity	4.96 (1.329)	5.00 (2.00)
20-TM	Task materials with target culture elements	4.88 (1.233)	5.00 (2.00)
38-TB	Students' attention to task content	4.88 (1.467)	5.00 (2.00)
25-TL	Tasks within students' abilities	4.86 (1.574)	5.00 (2.00)
12-TB	During-task teacher-student interaction	4.85 (1.487)	5.00 (2.00)
15-TN	Game-like competitions	4.79 (1.628)	5.00 (2.00)
8-TF	Feedback on task performance	4.79 (1.345)	5.00 (2.00)
35-TB	Students' expectancy of task success	4.68 (1.403)	5.00 (2.00)
37-TN	Task conditions for physical mobility	4.65 (1.529)	5.00 (3.00)
9-TM	Students' extramural material preparations	4.59 (1.455)	5.00 (2.00)
33-TF	Feedback on individuals' task performance	4.58 (1.533)	5.00 (2.00)
10-TM	Task materials with new language forms	4.57 (1.492)	5.00 (2.00)
21-TN	Task conditions for extramural collaboration	4.50 (1.487)	5.00 (3.00)
27-TM	Task materials with Vietnamese culture elements	4.49 (1.422)	4.00 (2.00)
34-TB	Teacher's participation in tasks	4.20 (1.867)	4.00 (4.00)
43-TP	Task presentation in Vietnamese	4.17 (1.594)	4.00 (2.00)
36-TN	Tasks requiring use of technology	3.52 (1.549)	3.00 (3.00)
31-TF	Immediate during-task feedback	3.15 (1.698)	3.00 (2.00)

Table 12 (*cont'd*)

Note. TP = task presentation; TN = task nature; TL = task relevance; TL = task level; TM = task materials; TF = task-related feedback; TB = teacher behavior during task time; *M* = mean; *SD* = standard deviation; *Mdn* = median; *IQR* = interquartile range. * 7-point Likert scale (1 = *not important*; 7 = *extremely important*).

As can be seen from the table, teachers placed the highest value on 47-TP '*giving clear instructions for tasks to students*' (*M* = 6.42, *SD* = 1.023), considering this strategy to be an extremely important motivator. In contrast, they considered '*giving immediate feedback while students are doing tasks*' (31-TF) (*M* = 3.15, *SD* = 1.698) as the least important motivator in motivational teaching practice.

From the top down, the TRMS cluster whose individual strategies were similarly rated as very important motivators ranged from 5-TL '*adjusting the difficulty of tasks to suite students' abilities*' (*M* = 6.04; *SD* = 1.230) to 11-TL '*commenting on the overall task performance of each group*' (*M* = 5.32; *SD* = 1.318). In this cluster, it is interesting to note that there were some strategies whose means were precisely the same, despite slight variations in their standard deviations. This suggests that these strategies were thought to have equal levels of importance in motivational teaching practice.

The next 23 strategies that were perceived as quite important motivators were those between 26-TF '*giving feedback on students' task performance'* (*M* = 5.28, *SD* = 1.463) and 27-TM '*using task materials that include the elements of the Vietnamese culture*' (*M* = 4.49, *SD* = 1.422). A similar phenomenon that the means were equal was found in a number of strategies in this cluster, indicating their comparatively equal motivational power in classroom teaching.

Rated as important motivators were two strategies: 34-TB '*participating as much as possible with students in completing tasks*' (*M* = 4.20, *SD* =1.867) and 43-TP '*using Vietnamese*

to present tasks when necessary' (M = 4.17; SD = 1.594). Although considered as important, these strategies were placed at the bottom of the list, indicating that students valued them considerably less than the other strategies.

The top ten that grew out of teacher ratings include the following strategies. Of these ten most preferred strategies, three come from the domain of 'task presentation', two from 'task nature', two from 'teacher behavior during task time'. 'Task level', 'task relevance', and 'task-related feedback' each contributes one strategy to this list.

- Giving clear instructions for tasks to students (47-TP)
- Adjusting the difficulty levels of tasks to students' abilities (5-TL)
- Using a variety of tasks in class (16-TP)
- Encourage students to speak during task time (40-TB)
- Use authentic tasks that prepare students for real-life applications (7-TN)
- Acting as a facilitator as students are doing tasks (44-TB)
- Demonstrate how to complete tasks (2-TP)
- Use tasks that are interesting to students (45-TR)
- Use tasks that allow students to interact with one another in English (23-TN)
- Give feedback after students have completed tasks (41-TF)

3.3. Student Perceptions of TRMS

3.3.1. Central Tendency of Student Perceptions

The scales (conceptual domains) and their items (TRMS) in the student survey were the same as in the teacher survey. That is, students were required to rate the same total of 48 TRMS according to their importance based on a 7-point Likert scale. Table 13 below paints a general

picture of the central tendency of student perceptions of the importance of TRMS. The scale means are presented in order from largest to smallest.

Table 13. *The Central Tendency of Student Perceptions of the Importance of TRMS*

Scale (Conceptual domain)	*M* *	*SD*	*Mdn*	*IQR*
Task relevance	5.30	.82	5.25	1.00
Task-related feedback	5.03	.86	5.00	1.25
Teacher behavior during task time	5.03	.90	5.00	1.37
Task presentation	5.02	.86	5.00	1.14
Task materials	5.02	.96	5.17	1.17
Task level	5.00	.86	5.00	1.20
Task nature	4.98	.82	5.00	1.20

Note. *M* = mean; *SD* = standard deviation, *Mdn* = median; *IQR* = interquartile range. * 7-point Likert scale (1 = *not important*, 7 = *extremely important*).

The data from the table suggest that 'task relevance' (*M* = 5.30, *SD* = .82) was most important as perceived by students, while 'task nature' (*M* = 4.98, *SD* = .82), despite not being considered as unimportant, assumed the lowest level of importance. The importance of 'task-related feedback', 'teacher behavior during task time', 'task presentation', 'task materials', and 'task level' were perceived in an obviously similar way, with their means standing at 5.00 or thereabouts. This means that they were all quite important in motivating students. All the scales' mean scores had their standard deviations lower than 1.00; indicating that there were no outliers influencing the ranking of the means.

3.3.2. Rank Order of Specific TRMS according to Student Perceptions

Similar to the representation of teacher-rated TRMS, student ratings of specific TRMS are represented by mean, standard deviation, median, and interquartile range. The means of the TRMS are organized in order from largest to smallest. Ranking was also based on the same criteria as applied in interpreting the ranking order of teacher-rated strategies: *not important* (1.00 – 1.85), *slightly important* (1.86 – 2.71), *somewhat important* (2.72 – 3.57), *important* (3.58 – 4.43), *quite important* (4.44 – 5.29), *very important* (5.30 – 6.15), and *extremely important* (6.16 – 7.00). Table 14 below provides details information about the ranking order of specific strategies as perceived by students.

Table 14. *Final Rank Order of Specific TRMS according to Student Perceptions*

Item	Label	*M* (*SD*)	*Mdn* (*IQR*)
42-TB	Readiness to answer students' during-task questions	5.77 (1.187)	6.00 (2.00)
45-TR	Tasks interesting to students	5.66 (1.223)	6.00 (2.00)
23-TN	Tasks for student interactions	5.66 (1.245)	6.00 (2.00)
47-TP	Clear task instructions	5.65 (1.379)	6.00 (2.00)
40-TB	During-task encouragement	5.61 (1.421)	6.00 (2.00)
7-TM	Authentic materials	5.52 (1.326)	6.00 (2.00)
14-TR	Tasks providing fun	5.51 (1.319)	6.00 (2.00)
17-TN	Visual elements in tasks	5.46 (1.262)	6.00 (1.00)
41-TF	Post-task feedback	5.45 (1.300)	6.00 (3.00)
16-TP	Task variety	5.37 (1.397)	6.00 (1.00)
6-TN	Task requiring creativity	5.35 (1.253)	5.00 (2.00)

Table 14 (*cont'd*)

20-TM	Task materials with target culture elements	5.29 (1.479)	5.00 (3.00)
28-TL	Related tasks with increasing difficulty	5.26 (1.258)	5.00 (2.00)
1-TN	Task authenticity	5.24 (1.254)	5.00 (2.00)
11-TF	Feedback on overall group task performance	5.24 (1.234)	5.00 (2.00)
13-TF	Reviewing students' during-task language use	5.22 (1.292)	5.00 (2.00)
26-TF	Feedback on the degree of task completion	5.20 (1.376)	5.00 (2.00)
8-TF	Feedback on task performance	5.18 (1.275)	5.00 (2.00)
5-TL	Task difficulty adjustment	5.17 (1.301)	5.00 (2.00)
18-TR	Considering students' interests	5.14 (1.242)	5.00 (2.00)
15-TN	Game-like competitions	5.12 (1.504)	5.00 (2.00)
32-TB	Equal talk time during task time	5.12 (1.419	5.00 (2.00)
48-TP	Students' choices about task presentation	5.10 (1.394)	5.00 (2.00)
39-TF	Feedback on group work issues	5.09 (1.330)	5.00 (2.00)
19-TL	Task challenge	5.09 (1.413)	5.00 (2.00)
24-TM	Task material variety	5.03 (1.471)	5.00 (2.00)
30-TP	Clarification of task contributions	5.01 (1.449)	5.00 (2.00)
44-TB	Teacher's facilitator role	4.99 (1.408)	5.00 (2.00)
29-TN	Surprising, curiosity-arousing tasks	4.98 (1.371)	5.00 (2.00)
46-TN	Tasks requiring small group work	4.98 (1.356)	5.00 (2.00)
10-TM	Task materials with new language forms	4.92 (1.399)	5.00 (2.00)
3-TR	Considering students' needs	4.92 (1.346)	5.00 (2.00)
33-TF	Feedback on individuals' task performance	4.91 (2.198)	5.00 (2.00)
12-TB	During-task teacher-student interaction	4.88 (2.400)	5.00 (2.00)

Table 14 (*cont'd*)

35-TB	Students' expectancy of task success	4.85 (2.113)	5.00 (2.00)
25-TL	Tasks within students' abilities	4.85 (2.150)	5.00 (2.00)
22-TP	Task purpose explanation	4.80 (2.638)	5.00 (2.00)
2-TP	Task demonstration	4.79 (1.794)	5.00 (2.00)
9-TM	Task conditions for extramural material preparations	4.75 (2.209)	5.00 (2.00)
21-TN	Task conditions for extramural collaboration	4.69 (2.353)	5.00 (2.00)
4-TL	Task manageability	4.67 (1.774)	5.00 (2.00)
27-TM	Task materials with Vietnamese culture elements	4.65 (2.075)	5.00 (2.00)
38-TB	Students' attention to task content	4.60 (2.076)	5.00 (2.00)
34-TB	Teacher's participation in tasks	4.46 (2.761)	4.00 (3.00)
43-TP	Task presentation in Vietnamese	4.45 (2.915)	5.00 (3.00)
37-TN	Task conditions for physical mobility	3.44 (2.503)	5.00 (3.00)
31-TF	Immediate during-task feedback	3.99 (2.689)	4.00 (2.00)
36-TN	Tasks requiring use of technology	3.93 (2.877)	4.00 (2.00)

Note. TP = task presentation; TN = task nature; TL = task relevance; TL = task level; TM = task materials; TF = task-related feedback; TB = teacher behavior during task time; *M* = mean; *SD* = standard deviation; *Mdn* = Median. *IQR* = interquartile range. * 7-point Likert scale (1 = *not important*; 7 = *extremely important*).

As shown in the table above, no TRMS was perceived by students to be extremely important motivators, as demonstrated by no mean scores falling somewhere in the range 6.16 – 7.00. However, the students recommended 42-TB '*being ready to answer students' questions during task time*' as a number one strategy to motivate them, although the mean of this strategy (*M* = 5.77, *SD* = 1.187) was not far above those in the cluster of strategies that were seen as very

important motivators. On the contrary, students saw 36-TN '*using tasks that students need to use technology (i.e., computer) to complete*' (*M* = 3.93, *SD* = 2.877) as the least important motivational strategy.

According to the criteria set above, the cluster of strategies rated as very important motivators included those from 45-TR '*using tasks that are interesting to students*' (*M* = 5.66, *SD* = 1.223) to 6-TN '*using tasks that need students to use their creativity to complete*' (*M* = 5.35, *SD* = 1.253).

The cluster of 34 strategies that students deemed as quite important strategies ranged from 20-TM '*using task materials that introduce the cultures of English-speaking countries*' (*M* = 5.37, *SD* = 1.397) to 43-TP '*using Vietnamese to present tasks when necessary*' (*M* = 4.45, *SD* = 2.915).

The last three strategies that made up the cluster of important motivators included 37-TN '*using tasks that offer opportunity to move around in the classroom*' (*M* = 3.44, *SD* = 2.503), 31-TF '*giving immediate feedback while students are doing tasks*' (*M* = 3.99, *SD* = 2.689), and 36-TN '*using tasks that students need to use technology (i.e., computer) to complete*' (*M* = 3.93, *SD* = 2.877). It is necessary to note that these strategies, regardless of their still important positions, were positioned at the very bottom of the students' preferred strategies.

Derived from the Table 14 above, following is the list of top ten TRMS that students believed are most motivating to them. The domains of 'task presentation', 'task nature', 'task relevance', and 'teacher behavior during task time' each contribute three TRMS to this top-ten rank-order. The other two strategies come from 'task materials' and 'task-related feedback' respectively.

- Being ready to answer students' questions during task time (42-TB)

- Using tasks that are interesting to students (45-TR)
- Using tasks that allow students to interact with one another in English (23-TN)
- Giving clear instructions for tasks to students (47-TP)
- Encourage students to speak during task time (40-TB)
- Using authentic materials produced by native English speakers for real-life communicative purposes (7-TM)
- Using tasks that allow students to have fun in the classroom (14-TR)
- Including visual elements in tasks (17-TN)
- Give feedback after students have completed tasks (41-TF)
- Using a variety of tasks in class (16-TP)

3.4. Teacher-Rated and Student-Rated Top Ten TRMS

The top-ten TRMS rank-ordered by teachers and those by students are cross-compared and shown in the table below. A cross-comparison of the rank-order between these two top ten list shows some convergences and divergences between the participants' strongest preferences for specific TRMS.

Table 15. *A Cross-comparison of Teacher and Student-rated Top Ten TRMS*

Teacher-rated Top Ten TRMS	Rank Order	Student-rated Top Ten TRMS
47-TP Giving clear instructions for tasks to students (M = 6.42)	1	42-TB Being ready to answer students' questions during task time (M = 5.77)
5-TL Adjusting the difficulty levels of tasks to students' abilities (M = 6.04)	2	45-TR Using tasks that are interesting to students (M = 5.66)

Table 15 (*cont'd*)

16-TP Using a variety of tasks in class (*M* = 5.96)	3	23-TN Using tasks that allow students to interact with one another in English (*M* = 5.66)
40-TB Encouraging students to speak during task time (*M* = 5.84)	4	47-TP Giving clear instructions for tasks to students (*M* = 5.65)
1-TN Using authentic tasks that prepare students for real-life applications (*M* = 5.84)	5	40-TB Encouraging students to speak during task time (*M* = 5.61)
44-TB Acting as a facilitator as students are doing tasks (*M* = 5.80)	6	7-TM Using authentic materials produced by native speakers for real-life communicative purposes (*M* = 5.52)
2-TP Demonstrating how to complete tasks (*M* = 5.80)	7	14-TR Using tasks that allow students to have fun in the classroom (*M* = 5.51)
45-TR Using tasks that are interesting to students (*M* = 5.80)	8	17-TN Including visual elements in tasks (*M* = 5.46)
23-TN Using tasks that allow students to interact with one another in English (*M* = 5.78)	9	41-TF Giving feedback after students have completed tasks (*M* = 5.45)
41-TF Giving feedback after students have completed tasks (*M* = 5.73)	10	16-TP Using a variety of tasks in class (*M* = 5.37)

Note. TP = task presentation; TN = task nature; TL = task relevance; TL = task level; TM = task materials; TF = task-related feedback; TB = teacher behavior during task time.

Table 15 above shows that a total of 6 TRMS (in color) were present in the two top ten list, although their rank orders were different between the lists. These strategies included 47-TP '*giving clear instructions for tasks to students'*, 16-TP '*using a variety of tasks in class*', 48-TB '*encouraging students to speak during task time*', 45-TR '*using tasks that are interesting to students*', 23-TN '*using tasks that allow students to interact with one another in English*', and 41-TF '*giving feedback after students have completed tasks*'. A closer look at the mean scores of these 6 strategies shows that the teacher mean scores were either considerably or slightly higher

than the student scores. This suggests that although these strategies were among the top ten, they were held in higher regard by teachers as compared to how important they were claimed to be by students.

This cross-comparison also highlights some differences between these two lists of top ten TRMS. In terms of 'task nature', for example, teachers put high value on 1-TN '*using authentic tasks that prepare students for real-life applications*', while students valued 17-TN '*including visual elements in tasks*' as a very important motivational strategy. When it comes to 'teacher behavior during task time', students emphasized teachers' 42-TB '*being ready to answer students' questions during task time*' as a considerably important strategy. Teachers, however, placed emphasis on their role in 44-TB '*acting as a facilitator as students are doing tasks*'. In addition, teachers cared about 5-TL '*adjusting the difficulty levels of tasks to students' abilities*' (the 'task level' domain) and 2-TP '*demonstrating how to complete tasks*' (the 'task presentation' domain), while these were not present in the students' top ten list. Students instead attached importance to 7-TM '*using authentic materials produced by native speakers for real-life communicative purposes*' (the 'task materials' domain) and 14-TR '*using tasks that allow students to have fun in the classroom*' (the 'task relevance' domain).

3.5. Comparisons Between Teacher and Student Perceptions

3.5.1. Comparisons Based on Conceptual Domains of TRMS

The normality of quantitative survey data distribution per scale (conceptual domain) was measured by skewness (a measure of the lack of symmetry with respect to the center point in a distribution) and kurtosis (a measure of the degree of peakedness, that is, whether the data are peaked or flat in relation to normal distribution). According to Field (2009) and Pallant (2010),

positive skewness indicates that more item rating scores are piled up at the low end of the distribution, while negative skewness indicates the scores cluster at the high end. Concerning kurtosis, when it is positive, the distribution is peaked near the mean of the data, and when it is negative, the distribution tends to have a flat top near the mean. Statistically, if a set of data is normally distributed, as suggested by Field (2009), the skewness and kurtosis records flat out at about zero; otherwise, the data distribution is considered non-normal.

Table 16. *The Skewness and Kurtosis of Quantitative Survey Data Distribution*

Scale	Teacher Survey				Student Survey			
	Skewness	*ses*	Kurtosis	*sek*	Skewness	*ses*	Kurtosis	*sek*
TP	-1.194	.246	4.455	.488	-.280	.164	-.010	.327
TN	-.774	.246	2.128	.488	-.076	.164	-.329	.327
TR	-.970	.246	1.455	.488	-.364	.164	.261	.327
TL	-1.336	.246	4.045	.488	-.059	.164	-.616	.327
TM	-.752	.246	1.528	.488	-.761	.164	1.230	.327
TF	-.798	.246	1.734	.488	-.206	.164	-.178	.327
TB	-.813	.264	2.201	.488	.037	.164	-.700	.327

Note. TP = task presentation; TN = task nature; TL = task relevance; TL = task level; TM = task materials; TF = task-related feedback; TB = teacher behavior during task time. *ses* = standard error of skewness. *sek* = standard error of kurtosis.

Table 16 above shows that the data distributions of all the scales the teacher survey were non-normal because their skewness and kurtosis, according to Field (2009), were far above or below zero. However, in case of the coefficient of skewness falling somewhere between -.50 and +.50, it is considered a non-significant deviation from normality (Conover & Iman, 1981). This also suggests that none of the teacher survey scales could be treated as deviating minimally from normal data distribution.

Similarly, in the student survey, all its scales were shown to have non-normal data distribution. ‘Task materials’ was the scale that had especially poorly distributed data. However, the data related to the six scales of ‘task presentation’, ‘task nature’, ‘task relevance’, ‘task level’, ‘task-related feedback’, and ‘teacher behavior during task time’, according to their skewness values falling between -.50 and +.50, could be seen as not having too severely poor data distribution. However, among these six scales, ‘task level’, ‘task materials’, and ‘teacher behavior during task time’ had their kurtosis values that were all higher than their squared *sek* values and thus rendered their data distributions rather non-normal.

Given that the data were ordinal, that their distribution all deviated, whether significantly or minimally, from normality, and that the two sample sizes (96 teachers and 220 students) were not equal in number, nonparametric Mann-Whitney U tests (2-tailed) were chosen to examine the similarities and differences between the central tendencies of teacher and student perceptions of TRMS. Any statistical significant difference is determined to have a *p* value equal to or below .05. The effect size estimates (*r*) show how large the observed effects can be and are, according to Cohen (1988), small (*r* = .10), medium (*r* = .30), and large (*r* = .50) respectively. The effect sizes were calculated by dividing *z*-scores by the square root of the total observations (the total number of participants). Any negative *r* value produced did not interfere with the interpretation of the effect size. The null hypothesis was that there were no differences between teacher and student perceptions with respect to their central tendencies.

Table 17. *Comparisons Based on Conceptual Domains of TRMS*

Conceptual domain (Scale)	Teacher (*N* = 96)		Student (*N* = 220)		*U*	*z*	Sig.	*r*
	*Mdn** *(IQR)*	Mean Rank	*Mdn** *(IQR)*	Mean Rank				

Table 17 (*cont'd*)

TP	5.43 (1.10)	184.24	5.00 (1.14)	147.24	8088.500	-3.314	**.001**	**-.19**
TN	5.05 (1.07)	159.74	5.00 (1.20)	157.96	10440.500	-.160	.873	-.01
TR	5.50 (1.50)	170.19	5.25 (1.00)	153.40	9437.500	-1.509	.131	-.08
TL	5.60 (1.35)	194.25	5.00 (1.20)	142.90	7128.000	-4.606	**.000**	**-.26**
TM	5.00 (1.33)	146.14	5.17 (1.17)	163.89	9373.500	-1.591	.112	-.09
TF	5.00 (1.09)	150.87	5.00 (1.25)	161.83	9827.500	-.982	.326	- .05
TB	5.19 (1.18)	167.90	5.00 (1.37)	154.40	9658.000	-1.209	.227	-.07

Note. TP = task presentation; TN = task nature; TL = task relevance; TL = task level; TM = task materials; TF = task-related feedback; TB = teacher behavior during task time; *N* = number of participants; *Mdn* = median; *IQR* = interquartile range; *U* = Mann-Whitney U score; *z* = *z*-score; Sig. = significance level (2-tailed); *r* = effect size estimate; 7-point Likert scale (1 = *not important*, 7 = *extremely important*).

As highlighted in the table, the 'task presentation' ratings by the teachers produced the median of 5.43 (*IQR* = 1.10) versus the median of 5.00 (*IQR* = 1.14) as rated by the students. The mean ranks of their ratings were 184.24 and 147.24 respectively, meaning that the teachers basically perceived a higher level of importance of presenting tasks in a motivating manner than the students did. A Mann-Whitney U test that compared these two mean ranks indicated a statistically significant difference between these two participant groups' ratings, *U* = 8088.500, *z* = -3.314, *p* = .001, *r* = -.19. The *r* value of -.19 suggested a small to medium effect size and practical significance. This result, however, showed that teacher and student perceptions of the importance of motivational strategies related to 'task presentation' were in different directions. Thus, the null hypothesis that they did not differ at all was totally rejected.

Another conceptual domain was ‘task level’ where the median of teacher ratings (*Mdn* = 5.60, *IQR* = 1.35) was also higher than that of student ratings (*Mdn* = 5.00, *IQR* = 1.20). Results from a Mann-Whitney U test that produced their mean ranks (194.25 for teachers and 142.90 for students respectively) showed the statistical significance of the difference between their ratings, $U = 7128.000$, $z = -4.606$, $p = .000$, $r = -.26$. The *r* value suggested an effect size at a moderate level. According to these results, a significant difference existed between how teachers and students perceived the importance of motivational strategies belonging to the domain of ‘task level’; strategies involving considerations of the difficulty level of tasks were much more important in the perspectives of the teachers than in the perspective of the students. This result obviously negated the null hypothesis.

In terms of the importance of ‘task nature’, ‘task relevance’, ‘task materials’, ‘task-related feedback’, and ‘teacher behavior during task time’, the central tendencies of teacher and student perceptions were highly consistent, as suggested by their obtained *p* values ($p > .05$) and by their minimal effect sizes ($r < .10$). What these results suggested was that the participants held generally similar perceptions about the importance of the TRMS subsumed under these conceptual domains. The null hypothesis that there were no differences between their perceptions were therefore retained for the perceptual comparisons concerning these domains.

3.5.2. Comparisons Based on Specific TRMS

Although the statistical evidence did not support the standardized differences between the central tendencies of the participants’ perceptions of most of the conceptual domains, there was likelihood of their specific TRMS being significantly different. In fact, when individual strategies are collapsed into large conceptual domains, the statistical information regarding each

of them cannot be fully depicted (Bokan-Smith, 2016). Thus, specific item analyses were conducted to shed further light on the statistical behaviors of each TRMS. The null hypothesis was that teacher and student perceptions of the importance of specific TRMS did not see any statistically significant difference.

Descriptive statistics results showed that the skewness and kurtosis values of all the individual TRMS items did not flat out at zero, which suggested that their data distributions all witnessed deviations, either minimal (between -.50 and .50) or substantial (beyond the range from -.50 to .50), from normality. Plus, the number of students responded to the survey (N = 220) was also substantially greater than that of teachers (N = 96). These conditions combined established the rationale for non-parametric Mann-Whitney U tests to be used to test whether there was any statistical difference pertaining to the participants' opinions of each TRMS item.

Table 18 below gives a breakdown of the item-based comparisons between teacher and student perceptions of the importance of each individual TRMS according to Mann-Whitney U test results represented by medians, mean ranks, U values, z-scores, p values (2-tailed), and r effect sizes. There are two important considerations regarding the interpretation of these statistical coefficients. First, in such statistically based comparisons, there is every chance that a significant difference between two groups is found while they have the same median score. It is thus important to clarify here that the Mann-Whitney U test relies on mean ranks rather than on medians. This indicates that despite their same medium score, the two groups can be found to be significantly different because of their unequal mean ranks (Field, 2013). Second, when multiple comparisons are made, there is a high probability that Type I error, which rejects the null hypothesis while it is true (Field, 2013), will occur. To reduce this probability, in this study, a Bonferroni correction in which the conventional alpha value (.05) is divided by the total number

of comparisons conducted, was applied. As a result, differences between teacher and student perceptions of each TRMS were determined at the alpha value being equal to or lower than .001.

Table 18. *Comparisons between Teacher and Student Perceptions of Specific TRMS*

Item	Label	Teacher (N = 96)		Student (N = 220)		U	z	Sig.	r
		Mdn (IQR)	Mean Rank	*Mdn (IQR)*	Mean Rank				
1-TN	Task authenticity	6.00 (2)	191.27	5.00 (2)	144.20	7414.50	-4.343	**.000**	**-.24**
2-TP	Task demonstration	6.00 (2)	208.46	5.00 (2)	136.70	5763.50	-6.579	**.000**	**-.37**
3-TR	Considering students' needs	6.00 (1)	186.73	5.00 (2)	146.18	7849.50	-3.719	**.000**	**-.20**
4-TL	Task manageability	6.00 (1)	200.06	5.00 (2)	140.36	6570.00	-5.465	**.000**	**-.30**
5-TL	Task difficulty adjustment	6.00 (1)	204.82	5.00 (2)	138.29	6113.50	-6.126	**.000**	**-.34**
6-TN	Tasks requiring creativity	5.00 (2)	140.20	5.00 (2)	166.48	8803.50	-2.419	.016	-.13
7-TM	Authentic materials	5.00 (2)	133.76	6.00 (2)	169.30	8185.00	-3.265	**.001**	**-.18**
8-TF	Feedback on task performance	5.00 (2)	141.76	5.00 (2)	165.81	8952.50	-2.208	.027	-.12
9-TM	Task conditions for extramural material preparations	5.00 (2)	153.35	5.00 (2)	160.75	10066.00	-.675	.500	-.04

Table 18 (*cont'd*)

10-TM	Task materials with new language forms	5.00 (2)	145.83	5.00 (2)	164.03	9344.00	-1.665	.096	-.09
11-TF	Feedback on overall group task performance	5.50 (2)	164.95	5.00 (2)	155.68	9940.50	-.853	.394	-.05
12-TB	During-task teacher-student interaction	5.00 (2)	157.52	5.00 (2)	158.93	10465.50	-.129	.897	-.007
13-TF	Reviewing students' during-task language use	5.00 (1)	159.31	5.00 (2)	158.15	10482.50	-.107	.915	-.006
14-TR	Task providing fun	5.50 (2)	144.05	6.00 (2)	164.80	9173.00	-1.914	.056	-.10
15-TN	Game-like competitions	5.00 (2)	146.91	5.00 (2)	163.56	9447.50	-1.519	.129	-.08
16-TP	Task variety	6.00 (1)	187.52	6.00 (1)	145.84	7774.50	-3.855	**.000**	**-.21**
17-TN	Visual elements in tasks	6.00 (3)	157.77	6.00 (1)	158.82	10489.50	-.097	.922	-.005
18-TR	Considering students' interests	5.00 (2)	159.91	5.00 (2)	157.89	10425.00	-.186	.852	-.01
19-TL	Task challenge	6.00 (1)	177.84	5.00 (2)	150.06	8703.50	-2.557	.011	-.14
20-TM	Task materials with target culture elements	5.00 (2)	136.65	5.00 (3)	168.03	8462.50	-2.878	.004	-.16

Table 18 (*cont'd*)

21-TN	Task conditions for extramural collaboration	5.00 (2)	150.99	5.00 (2)	161.78	9839.00	-.983	.325	-.05
22-TP	Task purpose explanation	5.00 (2)	171.02	5.00 (2)	153.04	9358.50	-1.637	.102	-.09
23-TN	Tasks for student interactions	6.00 (2)	165.29	6.00 (2)	155.54	9908.50	-.907	.364	-.05
24-TM	Task material variety	6.00 (2)	182.78	5.00 (2)	147.91	8229.50	-3.200	**.001**	**-.18**
25-TL	Tasks within students' abilities	5.00 (2)	162.14	5.00 (2)	156.91	10210.50	-.477	.633	-.02
26-TF	Feedback on the degree of task completion	6.00 (1)	164.90	5.00 (2)	155.71	9945.50	-.844	.399	-.05
27-TM	Task materials with Vietnamese culture elements	4.00 (2)	150.64	5.00 (2)	161.93	9805.00	-1.033	.302	-.06
28-TL	Related tasks with increasing difficulty	6.00 (1)	169.79	5.00 (2)	153.57	9476.00	-1.494	.135	-.08
29-TN	Surprising, curiosity-arousing tasks	5.00 (2)	164.95	5.00 (2)	155.68	9940.50	-.850	.395	-.05
30-TP	Clarification of task contribution	5.00 (2)	156.91	5.00 (2)	159.19	10407.50	-.209	.835	-.01

Table 18 (*cont'd*)

31-TF	Immediate during-task feedback	3.00 (2)	127.17	4.00 (2)	172.17	7552.00	-4.085	**.000**	**-.23**
32-TB	Equal talk time during task time	5.00 (2)	159.92	5.00 (2)	157.88	10424.00	-.187	.852	-.01
33-TF	Feedback on individual task performance	5.00 (2)	145.69	5.00 (2)	164.09	9330.00	-1.679	.093	-.09
34-TB	Teacher's participation in tasks	4.00 (4)	151.20	4.00 (3)	161.68	9859.00	-.951	.342	-.05
35-TB	Students' expectancy of task success	5.00 (2)	150.97	5.00 (2)	161.79	9837.00	-.989	.323	-.05
36-TN	Tasks requiring use of technology	3.00 (2)	141.50	4.00 (2)	165.92	8928.00	-2.218	.027	-.12
37-TN	Task conditions for physical mobility	5.00 (3)	166.42	5.00 (3)	155.05	9800.00	-1.035	.301	-.06
38-TB	Students' attention to task content	5.00 (2)	172.13	5.00 (2)	152.55	9252.00	-1.792	.073	-.10
39-TF	Feedback on group work issues	5.00 (2)	160.51	5.00 (2)	157.63	10367.50	-.264	.792	-.01
40-TB	During-task encouragement	6.00 (2)	165.17	6.00 (2)	155.59	9920.00	-.890	.373	-.05
41-TF	Post-task feedback	6.00 (2)	175.17	6.00 (3)	151.23	8960.00	-2.212	.027	-.12

Table 18 (*cont'd*)

42-TB	Readiness to answer students' during-task questions	6.00 (2)	154.22	6.00 (2)	160.37	10149.00	-.572	.568	-.03
43-TP	Task presentation in Vietnamese	4.00 (2)	147.28	5.00 (3)	163.40	9483.00	-1.463	.144	-.08
44-TB	Teacher's facilitator role	6.00 (2)	198.11	5.00 (2)	141.21	6757.00	-5.218	**.000**	**-.29**
45-TR	Tasks interesting to students	6.00 (2)	170.77	6.00 (2)	153.15	9382.00	-1.638	.101	-.09
46:TN	Tasks requiring small group work	6.00 (2)	168.78	5.00 (2)	154.01	9573.00	-1.356	.175	-.07
47-TP	Clear task instructions	7.00 (1)	196.96	6.00 (2)	141.72	6867.50	-5.229	**.000**	**-.29**
48-TP	Students' choices about task presentation	5.00 (2)	155.82	5.00 (2)	159.67	10302.50	-.353	.724	-.02

Note. *Mdn* = median; *IQR* = interquartile range; *U* = Mann-Whitney U test value; *z* = *z*-score; Sig. (2-tailed) = obtained *p* value; *r* = effect size estimate; TP = task presentation; TN = task nature; TR = task relevance; TL = task level; TM = task materials; TF = task-related feedback; TB = teacher behavior during task time; * 7-point Likert scale (1 = *not important;* 7 = *extremely important*).

A closer look at the table reveals that out of the 48 TRMS items, teachers and students had general agreement upon the importance of as many as 37 strategies (roughly 77%), as demonstrated by the statistical insignificance of the differences ($p > .001$) between their perceptions of these items. In contrast, the *p* values being equal to or lower than .001 (in bold)

suggested that the ways teachers and students perceived the rest of 11 TRMS items were different. Three items that showed such statistically significant differences were from the conceptual domain of 'task presentation', one from 'task nature', one from 'task relevance', two from 'task level', one from 'task materials', one from 'task-related feedback', and one from 'teacher behavior during task time'.

Task Presentation. Comparing the perceptions of teachers and students showed that they, as highlighted in the table, had largely similar ratings of four TRMS from 'task presentation', although this conceptual domain was where teachers and students' perceptions had an overall statistically significant difference (p = .001). Particularly, they generally agreed on the relative importance of 22-TP '*explaining the purpose of every task*', 30-TP '*showing students how each task contributes to their English learning goals*', 43-TP '*using Vietnamese to present tasks when necessary*', and 48-TP '*giving choices to students while presenting tasks*'. Despite these similarities, the participating teachers and students differed in their ratings of the importance of the other three 'task presentation' strategies. Specifically, paiwise comparisons using the Mann-Whitney U tests indicated statistically significant differences between their perceptions of 2-TP '*demonstrating how to complete tasks*', U = 5763.500, z = -6.579, p = .000; 16-TP '*using a variety of tasks*', U = 7774.500, z = -3.855, p = .000; and 47-TP '*giving clear instructions for tasks to students*', U = 6867.500, z = -5.229, p = .000. The r coefficients for these three streategies were -.37, -.21, and -.29 respectively, indicating that these statistical differences had presumably medium effect sizes. The mean ranks for teacher and student ratings of these three TMRS were 208.46 versus 136.70, 187.52 versus 145.84, and 196.96 versus 141.72 respectively. In more general terms, what this means is that the teachers were apt to consider these TRMS more important as motivational teaching behaviors in EFL classrooms than

what the students thought. Interestingly, i16-TP and i47-TP were the two items that appeared on the top ten rank-order lists of both groups, further indicating that differences existed even among their most strongly preferred strategies.

Task Nature. Regarding 'task nature', teachers and students' responses to most of its TRMS largely converged, just as the way they perceived the importance of this conceptual domain. That is, they assigned similar levels of importance to a vast majority of strategies involving the internal characteristics of tasks such as 15-TN '*using game-like competitions in class*', 17-TN '*including visual elements in tasks*', 21-TN '*using tasks in which students need to work together outside the classroom*', 23-TN '*using tasks that allow students to interact with one another in English*', 29-TN '*raising students' curiosity by introducing surprising tasks*', 37-TN '*using tasks that offer opportunity to move around the classroom*', and 46-TN '*using tasks that require students to work in small groups*'. However, significant differences between their perceptions were found in three of the strategies. The strategy 1-TN '*using authentic tasks that prepare students for real-life applications*', which ranked fifth in the teacher-rated top ten strategies but thirteenth on the student-rated list, had a teacher mean rank of 191.27 and a student mean rank of 144.20, indicating that from teacher perspectives, the use of authentic tasks was substantially more crucial in comparison to student perspectives. The Mann-Whitney U test results for this strategy comparison provided statistical evidence (U = 7414.500, z = -4.343, p = .000) for this difference and suggested a moderate effect size (r = -.24).

Task Relevance. Of the four TRMS belonging to 'task relevance', three strategies 18-TR '*consider students' interests rather than tests while presenting tasks*', 45-TR '*using tasks that are interesting to students*', and 14-TR '*using tasks that allow students to have fun in the classroom*' experienced similar teacher and student ratings; they were all endorsed as quite

important strategies by both groups of participants. The use of interesting tasks (45-TR) ranked second and eighth among the top ten strategies by students and by teachers, and fun-providing tasks (14-TR) assumed a seventh place in the student top ten strategies list. This contributed to the similarity in their choices of TRMS that have the most powerful motivational force. Only one strategy from this conceptual domain, 3-TR '*considering students needs rather than tests while presenting tasks*', was where the views of teachers (mean rank = 186.73) and students (mean rank = 146.18) considerably diverged. The mean rank difference demonstrates that the teacher gave this strategy higher endorsement than did their students. This divergence was further evidenced by the Mann-Whitney U test results, $U = 7849.500$, $z = -3.719$, $p = .000$, with an r effect size being -.20, which was relatively modest.

Task Level. 'Task level' was another TRMS conceptual domain where overall significant difference between teacher and student perceptions were statistically evidenced ($p = .000$). Item analyses using Mann-Whitney U tests however found no significant differences regarding both groups of participants' views of two TRMS that were 25-TL '*using tasks that are within students' abilities*' and 28-TL '*using a series of tasks with increasing levels of difficulty*'. On the contrary, statistically significant differences existed on their perceptions of the other three TRMS in this domain. For instance, in rating the importance of 4-TL '*using tasks that are manageable for students*', teachers produced a mean rank of 204.82, while students produced a much lower mean rank of 138.29, indicating a higher teacher endorsement of this strategy. The Mann-Whitney U test results for this strategy ($U = 6570.000$, $z = -5.465$, $p = .000$) confirmed this significant difference with the r coefficient being -.30, a medium effect size. A similar disparity ($U = 6113.500$, $z = -6.126$, $p = .000$, $r = -.34$) between the perceptions of teachers

(mean rank = 200.06) and students (mean rank = 140.36) was found in their ratings of 5-TL '*adjusting the difficulty level of tasks to students' abilities*'.

Task Materials. In the conceptual domain of 'task materials', teachers and students displayed a shared view with respect to 9-TM '*providing task materials for students to prepare outside the classroom*', 10-TM '*using tasks materials that introduce new language forms*', and 27-TM '*using task materials that include the elements of Vietnamese culture*'. Although there was no overall significant difference in the central tendencies of teacher and student perceptions regarding 'task materials', their perceptions were at variance with each other when they rated 7-TM '*using authentic materials produced by native English speakers for real-life communicative purposes*' and 24-TM '*offering a variety of task materials*'. For 7-TM, teachers seemed to put lesser value on authentic task materials than students, as demonstrated by their mean ranks of this strategy (133.76 and 169.30 respectively), and by the Mann-Whitney U test results (U = 8185.000, z = -3.265, p = .001, r = -.18). The reverse was however true of 24-TM (U = 8229.500, z = -3.200, p = .001, r = -.18) in which task variety was more highly endorsed by teachers (mean rank = 182.78) than by students (mean rank = 147.91). The effect sizes for the differences related to 7-TM, 24-TM, and 20-TM were also moderate.

Task-related Feedback. Item analyses revealed that the importance of a majority of TRMS from the 'task-related feedback' domain was agreed upon by teachers and students. They agreed that such strategies as 11-TF '*commenting on the overall task performance of each group of students*', 13-TF '*reviewing students' language used for completing tasks*', 26-TF '*giving feedback on how well students complete tasks*', 33-TF '*commenting on the task performance of each individual student*', and 39-TF '*providing feedback on how students work in groups to do tasks*' were important motivational techniques that teachers should practice in their classroom

teaching. The only one strategy in this domain where a statistically significant difference (U = 7552, z = -4.085, p = .000, r = -.23) was discovered was 31-TF '*giving immediate feedback while students are doing tasks*'. The effect size (r = -.23) modestly supported a teacher-student difference; teachers did not advocate the delivery of immediate during-task feedback, which contrasted with their students who held this strategy in higher regard. This difference was obviously demonstrated by their mean ranks 127.17 and 171.17 respectively.

Teacher Behavior During Task Time. In the last TRMS conceptual domain, 'teacher behavior during task time', teachers and students held similar perceptions of the motivating function of seven out of eight TRMS, as indicated by the statistical significance (p > .001) found in their differences. These seven similarly rated strategies were 12-TB '*interacting with individual students during task time*', 32-TB '*encouraging students to speak during task time*', 34-TB '*participating as much as possible with students in completing tasks*', 35-TB '*encouraging students to expect success in particular tasks*', 38-TB '*drawing students' attention to task contents when they are doing tasks*', 40-TB '*encouraging students to speak during task time*', and 42-TB '*being ready to answer questions from students during task time*'. Of these strategies, 40-TB was on the list of the top ten TRMS rated by both teachers (rank order: 3) and students (rank order: 5). Only one strategy in this domain, '*acting as a facilitator as students are doing tasks*' (44-TB), saw different directions between teacher and student ratings (mean ranks: 198.11 and 141.21 respectively); teachers regarded their facilitative role in classroom teaching as a very important motivational strategy, while in students' perspectives, this strategy was less important by one level. With its r effect size of -.29, a statistical difference was confirmed by the Mann-Whitney U test results, U = 6757.000, z = -5.218, p = .000.

3.6. Perceptions of TRMS from Qualitative Journal Entries

Responses to journal writing questions from 18 participating teachers and 19 students provided further valuable insight into their opinions regarding the motivational significance of TRMS as well as the extent to which their opinions were related. The participants' impressions centered on seven categories of TRMS corresponding to seven conceptual domains included in the quantitative questionnaire: task presentation, task nature, task relevance, task level, task materials, task-related feedback, and teacher behavior during task time. Analyses focused on the themes that were subsumed under or emerged from these categories. As mentioned in Chapter 2, frequency counts of a subtheme were based on the number of individual writers mentioning but not on how many times it appeared within the same text. Since the writers produced their journals anonymously, exemplary extracts from their writing were coded by using their identification numbers. Results from the recursive analyses of the journal contents were broken down into table 19 below.

Table 19. *Summary Data of Qualitative Journal Entries*

Categories	Themes	No. of comments	
		Teacher (N = 17)	Student (N = 17)
Task presentation	a. Clear task instructions	10	5
	b. Task demonstration	5	5
	c. Explaining task purposes, goals, and contributions	7	4
	d. Task variety	3	3
	e. Connections between tasks *	1	-
	f. Teachers' sense of humor *	1	-
		27	**17**
Task nature	a. Task authenticity for real-life applications	12	7
	b. Tasks requiring group work	12	5
	c. Game-like competitions	6	11
	d. Visual elements in tasks	3	10
	e. Surprising, curiosity-arousing tasks	3	1
	f. Task conditions for extramural collaboration	2	4

Table 19 (*cont'd*)

	g. Tasks requiring creativity	-	1
	h. Task requiring use of technology	1	2
		39	**42**
Task relevance	a. Considering students' needs and interests	13	13
	b. Tasks providing fun	6	5
	c. Tasks interesting to students	3	2
		22	**20**
Task level	a. Task difficulty adjustment	13	8
	b. Task challenge	8	6
	c. Related tasks / task stages with increasing difficulty	6	5
	d. Tasks within students' abilities	1	4
	e. Tasks manageability	2	2
		30	**25**
Task materials	a. Authentic materials	3	2
	b. Material variety	2	3
	c. Visual elements in materials	2	5
	d. Materials with new language forms	1	1
	e. Materials with target culture elements	1	1
	f. Materials with old and new knowledge *	1	-
		10	**12**
Task-related feedback	a. Forms of feedback	14	6
	b. Feedback on task performance	4	7
	c. Criticism *	4	1
	d. Feedback time	4	8
	e. Feedback on language use	3	1
	f. Feedback for individuals	3	3
	g. Feedback for groups	2	2
		34	**27**
Teacher behavior during task time	a. Teacher's facilitator role	13	8
	b. Teacher's participation in tasks	6	10
	c. During-task encouragement	5	-
	d. During-task teacher-student interaction	1	1
	e. Offering rewards *	1	3
	f. Teacher personality *	1	11
		27	**33**

* Themes that emerged from the data.

3.6.1. Task Presentation

Teacher Perception. The total of EFL teacher writers produced as many as 27 comments, most of which (10) were about the importance of task instructions in terms of succinctness, clarity, and understandability, indicating their major concern about the strategy of giving effective instructions. This is in line with the quantitative questionnaire result in which they rated this strategy as the most important in motivating students. Some teachers stressed that well-delivered task instructions are a prerequisite for students' motivation to proceed with the task. They pointed out that by providing brief, clear, and easy-to-understand instructions for how tasks will be carried out, they can help relieve students' anxiety and confusion about what they are going to do next, thus potentially helping students focus their resources on how to complete tasks rather than on what to do in the tasks. The following comments exemplified key opinions expressed.

> *Example 1.* It is the instruction of the task that makes students' motivation begin in classroom, it must be clear and easy to understand. (*Teacher 01*)
>
> *Example 2.* The more they understand the task, the better they do. When they really join the task, they are actually motivated by it. (*Teacher 02*)
>
> *Example 3.* I think a clearly instructed task should be a must. If students can understand deeply what they have to do next, they will try to catch the goal of the task instead of wondering what the next step is. (*Teacher 62*)

In addition to the importance of task instructions, the teachers expressed concerns about the negative consequences of instructions that are ineffectively provided. They emphasized that unclear instructions due to teachers' deficiency of awareness would not only deleteriously affect other motivational values of a task (e.g., task interestingness) but also factor into students'

demotivation even before they do the task. Their concerns are exemplarily shown in the extract below.

> *Example 4*. The second feature of a successful task that can be considered is related to its clear instruction. In reality, some teachers have unintentionally ignored this and, as a result, failed to assign the task to students. In my view, despite how interesting the task is, if the instruction to it is not clear, students' motivation will be definitely dropped "heavily". (*Teacher 63*)

Cognizant of the impacts that task instructions make on creating students' initial task motivation, some teachers put forward some suggestions for how to instruct students to do tasks. One teacher reported using a personal technique where teachers' voice plays a role in highlighting key steps in a task-performing procedure. In particular, the teacher "always stress[es] [his] voice for the key requirements in the tasks (including mentioning the specific procedure (steps) to achieve the task objective" (*Teacher 63*). Another teacher strongly felt that it is important for teachers to "rehearse sometimes to ensure that every step can go smoothly" (*Teacher 55*). Other suggestions included using simple language and giving illustrative examples (*Teacher* 78), employing technology such as Powerpoint animations and images (*Teacher 21*), raising the volume of teacher voice (*Teacher 53*), and checking students' understanding for the modification of instructions (*Teacher 62*, *Teacher 2*).

Results showed that teachers provided five comments mentioning the necessity of demonstrating or modelling how to complete tasks. Like the importance of clear task instructions, this strategy was also placed among teachers' top-rated ones. Teachers tended to hold a belief that verbal instructions alone do not suffice in making sure students understand how to proceed with tasks and should therefore be followed by some actual demonstrations. In

demonstrating tasks, they advocated the cooperation between teachers and representative students, and this is where they considered task demonstration as "vivid" (*Teacher 8*). Some representative comments included:

> *Example 5.* First, I introduce the name and the step to do the task. Then I ask them some questions to make sure they all understand me. The last stage is modelling with them. (*Teacher 02*)
>
> *Example 6.* The teachers are the ones mastering the way how to perform the task effectively; they must demonstrate the task perfectly beforehand. From my own experience, if you can assign a student to work on the task with you in front of class, the rest (students) will take it as an example. (*Teacher 01*)

A total of seven comments concerned teachers' explanation of task purposes and goals along with clarification of contributions that tasks make to students' learning. One repeated comment was that it is essential that teachers concentrate on explaining why a task fits with the need to learn a specific linguistic form or function and how completing the task adds to students' improvement in using that form or function. Put differently, the purposes as well as contributions of the task were thought to be necessarily related to language use. However, one teacher alluded to the connection between linguistic content and non-linguistic outcomes, saying that in a context like Vietnam, where a focus on forms is still pervasive, any communicative task with an intended non-linguistic objective should involve something linguistically relevant and valuable for students to learn. Examples 7 through 9 illustrate these comments in greater detail.

> *Example 7.* In the event that my students are not motivated ones, raising their awareness of the significance of learning English would help […] It will be my responsibility to simulate a situation in which that piece of language, lexical or

> syntactic, is of prominent use. It is not until students believe in practical valuable rewards resulting from learning English that they have motives for and enjoy their journeys to the target language. (*Teacher 01*)
>
> *Example 8.* I explain to the students why they should do the task before they start doing it. For example, when they learn noun clauses, […] I need to explain to them that the activity helps them effectively use noun clauses in speaking and avoid making mistakes in using noun clauses in speech. It helps my adult learners realize that they are not going to play a silly game to kill the time, but putting theory into practice. (*Teacher 96*)
>
> *Example 9.* Since most tasks seem to focus on non-linguistic outcomes, in some context like Vietnam, teachers need to highlight how [these] non-linguistic outcomes are relevant to linguistic content they are trying to teach students in each lesson […] In this way, teachers can link a focus on meaning from the task to a focus on forms and shows learners how important it is for them to learn the language to actually perform well in communicative situations they might encounter in their real life. (*Teacher 35*)

A further theme where teachers produced three similar comments pertained to how various task types are expected to be. *Teacher 95* stressed the importance of using a diversity of tasks and suggested an array of tasks for use in the classroom: interviews, songs, presentations, and art and craft (drawing and presenting finished work). In suggesting use of these tasks, the teacher placed an emphasis on "a student-centered approach" that should drive the design and implementation of the activities. Also, varying task types should involve considerations as to which tasks are appropriate for individual work, pair work, or group work, and changing the way

they do tasks is also a way of preventing them from "feeling overload with a series of [similar] tasks in a lesson" (*Teacher 8*). An additional consideration regarding task variety is the part this strategy plays in dealing with mixed-level classes, as commented by *Teacher 35,* who argued that "varying the task types and task outcomes can support teachers in maximizing conditions for students at different levels."

Student Perception. Altogether, students made a total of 17 comments concerning strategies in terms of teachers' presentation of tasks in EFL classrooms, five of which mentioned teachers' clarity of task instructions. Although clear task instructions were placed among teachers' and students' top ten preferences, it is the strategy where their opinions differed at a statistically significant level, indicating the difference in the importance they attached to task instructions. This difference is further corroborated when comparing the amounts of comments made by the participants about the strategy (teacher comments = 10, student comments = 5). However, what is more important is their specific opinions regarding teachers' task-instructing technique. While in teachers' perspectives, task instructions were thought of as an essential initiator of student motivation and affect their pursuit of task outcomes, students were more concerned about this strategy being simply part of "a good task" that increases their engagement. Examples 10 and 11 illustrate their opinions.

> *Example 10.* A good task may not work wonders if it is not presented properly. Teachers should state clearly what to do, how to do and why to do. As soon as students get the natures of the tasks, they will carry out the tasks energetically. (*Student 214*)

> *Example 11.* A good task must be accompanied by how teachers present it in front of class. Personally, teachers must give clear instructions to let their students know for sure what they need to do. (*Student 213*)

Also different from teachers' suggestions for task instructions shown above, what students preferred about this relates to the language of instruction. Although use of L1 Vietnamese in presenting tasks was not favored by both teachers and students, as demonstrated by this strategy standing among the least rated ones on both teacher and student ranking lists, it is from students' perspectives at times necessary for them to gain a better understanding of instructions, especially in the case of "some points that [they] don't understand" (*Student 212*). Other suggestions relate to the combination of verbal instructions and body language that teachers should used simultaneously to assist their students' understanding of task requirements. This, as *Student 208* commented, can also makes tasks more interesting to them.

> *Example 12.* They [teachers] present their tasks in interesting way. They use their body language and verbal language to make sure that my friends and I understand what we are going to do. (*Student 208*)

Undesirable effects of unclear task instructions were also emphasized by some students that cautioned that such instructions can result in students' state of frustration, and more seriously, in their intention to put a halt to their learning.

> *Example 13.* Knowing what to do when received a task helps the students have a clear view about what they will have to do and accomplish, a blur view can easily make the students frustrated and give up cause they have no clues about the given tasks. Even when the teachers have sent them the pdf or word file, they rarely read it. (*Student 136*)

In addition, students expressed some concerns about task demonstration, a strategy they considered less important than their teachers. Students however commented that it is essential for teachers to present tasks in "an interactive way" (*Student 139*). That is, instead of the teachers demonstrating the tasks, they should cooperate with representative students in doing so. Besides this, *Students 208, 212, 213,* and *214* underscored the necessity of offering relevant examples as an alternative in case of teachers not acting out task instructions with students.

Other strategies about which students wrote four similar comments is explaining tasks' purposes and goals and clarifying task contributions. The students equated such explanations with the level of their excitement about performing a given task, with their enthusiasm in making cognitive efforts, and with their commitment to pursue the knowledge that the task has to offer. Comments illustrative of these include:

> *Example 14.* […] Besides, they also let us know what we can achieve after the tasks. Everything is clear and has purpose, so we feel excited about learning. (*Student 208*)
>
> *Example 15.* Teachers are not only give them the tasks, but also explain the purpose of those tasks. At the time, students will be more interested in thinking and planning all the answers in their mind. (*Student 207*)
>
> *Example 16.* […] Additionally, teachers should show us what knowledge we are going to achieve by doing their tasks (*Student 213*)

3.6.2. Task Nature

Teacher perception. A variety of issues were identified as regards strategies incorporating the internal characteristics of tasks mentioned by teachers (39 comments). A highly recurrent theme with 12 comments in the journals was a sense among teachers that tasks

used in the classroom should be authentic, mimicking real-world activities or events related to students' personal, academic, and professional lives and therefore being useful for them. The strategy related to task authenticity was also deemed as very important by teachers and was part of their top ten priorities. The following excerpts illustrate their key perspectives.

> *Example 17.* Secondly, the meanings from the tasks also encourage students to develop learning passion. When they find out the underlying meanings from these tasks, they would know what they can apply in the real life and use it frequently, leading to more motivation in learning and class attendance. (*Teacher 65*)
>
> *Example 18.* First, it should be authentic so that it can prepare students for real-life applications. Knowledge from textbooks is evitably useful and valued. However, it will be highly evaluated if is applied in various and suitable real-life situations. If students can recognize the perks of the required tasks in classroom, they may be willing and eager to participate in those ones. (*Teacher 62*)
>
> *Example 19.* In both designing and implementing tasks, explicitly explain or showing students how the tasks is authentic or relevant to their real-life is an important way to encourage and motivate them to participate. For instance, embedding in the task input some information that is relevant to the students' contexts, their needs or preferences might help connect the tasks with the students easily. (*Teacher 35*)

Specifically, the teachers had a general agreement that task authenticity plays a critical role in arousing and intensifying students' passion for learning, stimulating their participation in the task, or even maintaining rates of attendance. They also pointed to the compensations that authentic tasks provide for the lack of practicality of textbook knowledge that is characteristic of

textbook-reliant learning and teaching in Vietnam. In support of task authenticity, *Teacher 35* suggested making salient how applicable a task is in reality by manipulating the input provided for the task.

Another common theme amongst the teachers concerns task completion that requires students to work in small groups, with 12 comments being made in regard to the importance of collaborative work in the classroom. *Teacher 01* wrote a specific comment stating that working in groups "can help students figure out their strengths and weaknesses by comparing with other classmates", suggesting that it is a way for students to navigate their own current abilities and possibly what they need to do to reduce their weaknesses. This opinion was strongly advocated by *Teacher 58,* who also believed that organizing group work is especially a must for speaking skills classrooms. Others saw group work as where most English learning takes place in the classroom. *Teacher 53,* for instance, noted that by cooperating in groups, students learn from one another through negotiation and recast that helps repair the defects in their language use. To maximize this potential, *Teacher 95* emphasized mixing more able students with their less able peers to create conditions for their learning through mutual support. This being said, it is equally important for teachers to consider changing student groups so that they can "adapt to new environments and learn new things" (*Teacher 53*).

Game-like competitions were mentioned by 6 teachers, most of which tended to believe that such competitions contribute to a fun, energetic atmosphere where students' eagerness is fueled. One teacher wrote that "competition in the classroom is not a bad thing, and in some cases, can motivate students to try harder and work to excel", because these activities give "opportunities for students to show off their knowledge" (*Teacher 65*). Considerations as to where such competitions are appropriate were also made. *Teacher 35,* for example, maintained

that group competitions are definitely motivating, especially to young learners who are often motivated if allowed to play and learn at the same time. Regarding using games to teach specific student populations, *Teacher 55* felt that teachers should be selective in terms of which games are for young students or for adult students. Buying into this opinion, some teachers strongly resisted the use of game-like competitions that excludes considerations about students' characteristics and learning purposes, as illustrated in the excerpt below.

> *Example 19.* For example, the wish to improve their speaking skills, but teachers keep having them play games which may require some oral expressions but irrelevant to improving speaking skills, they may think the activity is childish and a waste of time. (*Teacher 96*)

There were a few comments teachers made on the inclusion of visual elements in tasks. Despite the teachers did not place much importance on using technology in task-completing procedures, one of their comments was about the use of technology to create visual effects of a task because they thought that such effects can "enliven teachers' lessons with colorful and illustrative images", contributing to the enjoyment of the learning environment (*Teacher 53*). This view was echoed by *Teacher 78*, who supposed that "the task should also be catchy with visual aids and especially interesting".

Student Perception. Task authenticity was where a statistically significant difference between teacher and student ratings was found— teachers generally saw this strategy as having more motivational strength than students did. In the journals, this strategy was commented on by only seven students, in comparison to twelve teachers who expressed related opinions. A common thread among these comments was that students took preference over tasks with a high level of practicality because they would like to use something they acquire from the tasks, not

only linguistic but also non-linguistic content, in their academic or professional realities. Besides addressing students' pragmatic purposes, this classroom-reality connection made possible through tasks can also ease students' approaching and processing how to perform the tasks. Some representative comments are presented below.

> *Example 20.* More importantly, a task that motivate me to study is realistic which is some kind of knowledge that I can use in my work. (*Student 213*)
>
> *Example 21.* I want to apply what I studied in class to reality and if I love something, I will understand the knowledge taught easily. (*Student 212*)

Regarding the strategy related to organizing small group work, students wrote five comments. While teachers paid more attention to collaborative support for learning in groups, students cared more about the appropriateness of group arrangements. Particularly, students opined that it is imperative to take into account the issue of silence and dominance in group work. They generally expressed their discomfort with cooperating with peers who tend to show off their abilities instead of helping them with their difficulty in performing tasks. What is even worse is that such dominance can potentially lead to students becoming opponents of working in groups every time they are told to do so. Dominance was also seen in the presence of authoritative personalities, which results in lack of democracy in self-expression and even developing students' hatred of group work. The comment from *Student 207* below best illustrates this concern.

> *Example 22.* Team work is not good at all. The team which have some people who have a very strong personality will not listen to the others. That makes some members who are weak at that, or sensitive, will have no chance to send their own

> ideas, it is the reason why some students have working in team and they will not enjoy that school day. (*Student 207*)

However, positive aspects of group work were also mentioned in students' journals. Some of them supposed that collaborative work is a precondition for a classroom focusing on oral English development and communication and helps save more time than individual work does (*Teacher 69*). In addition, *Teacher 89* said that group work in a speaking skills class that is organized in the forms of debates or group competitions can break the monotony of the classroom, allowing students to instead learn in an exciting environment.

In their journals, eleven students wrote about using game-like competitions. On a general level, they acknowledged that competitive tasks break the routine of the traditional classroom and thus add excitement to change the learning atmosphere often filled with academic pressure (*Students 146, 211, & 214*). Aside from its role in positivizing the learning atmosphere, some students posited that games should, in addition to playful elements, "contain something to learn or review [their] previous knowledge" (*Student 213*). In agreement with this viewpoint, *Student 102* stressed the need to embed practicality in games that refers to how games are instrumental in helping students consolidate their grammatical and lexical knowledge of the English language. However, *Student 69* took this issue with a caveat that use of a game needs to take into account its suitability for students' levels and its relevance to the linguistic and/or non-linguistic content students are learning. This comment, highlighted in the excerpt below, aligned well with what teachers thought about game-like competitions.

> *Example 23.* Besides some activities that are used efficiently, there are some kinds of games for kids that I do not really like. Although it is undeniable that playing games in class makes students fun and relax, sometimes it is too easy as well as not relevant

> to lesson. In addition, some foreign teachers use the majority of time for time-consuming games. Personally, I was not excited in almost games and felt as I learn nothing from this lesson. (*Student 69*)

The strategy about including visual elements in tasks, despite being viewed as equally important by both teachers and students, was commented on by more students (10) than teachers (3). A viewpoint that students shared was that visuality enables them to gain a clearer understanding of task requirements: "Teachers can explain tasks to learners in a form of English videos or pictures so that learners can easily imagine what they are going to do with that tasks and feel more excited about the tasks" (*Student 77*), and task contents: "An intriguing task is also a question that can help students gain new insights through realistic images or videos of the outside world that make them feel more eager to learn and get motivation in classroom. (*Student 78*). This feature, as they commented, could also enormously help them retain what they have learned during task time (*Student 213*), which is probably thanks to the effects of picture-content association. Visuality, in addition, is also a response to individual learning styles, as is illustrated in this comment: "Personally, teachers should prepare visuals or power point because I myself absorb new things better when I see a picture" (*Student 146*).

3.6.3. Task Relevance

Teacher Perception. In their survey responses, teachers perceived considering students' needs as very important and considering students' interests as quite important. The 13 comments they made cast further light on their beliefs of the motivational force of these strategies. Altogether, teachers provided a diversity of reasons why tasks classroom should be in tandem with students' personal needs and interests. One repeated comment is related to the positive

connection between task relevance and the levels of students' zeal for working towards task objectives. This is extremely important, especially in EFL contexts where many students often display negative attitude towards compulsory English learning, as illustrated by *Teacher* 39's comment below.

> *Example 24.* It is important to make tasks relevant to students' personal needs and interests as many of my students just study English as a compulsory subject at school and some of them even think that they do not need to study a foreign language and studying a language is like a must, so if the tasks are relevant to their needs and interests, they would definitely have more motivation to study and gradually have interest in learning the language. (*Teacher 39*)

Teachers also opined that what they need to do for task relevance is to consider students' individual differences. *Teacher 78* called attention to this consideration because of the need for "balancing their personal needs and interests with the requirements of the tasks". This suggests that the design of tasks for a classroom should align task formats and contents with a range of students' personal profiles to cater to diverse their needs and interests.

Another noteworthy function of task relevance teachers mentioned is that relevant tasks play a facilitative role in the process of task completion first because their curiosity increases their attention to task content (*Teacher 65 & 01*) and second because their schematic knowledge of and familiarity with task content gained through their similar experiences in real life can help them allocate their attentional resources elsewhere (*Teachers 62 & 58*).

On the other hand, teachers warned that "tasks which are too distant from students' background knowledge or life experience might create confusion or discourage students to get involved" (*Teacher 35*). More seriously, teachers pointed out that task irrelevance, apart from

discouraging students, also exerts a domino effect on teacher motivation. Illustrating this effect, *Teacher 08* stressed that "it is vitally important to ensure the relevance of the task to learners' personal needs and interests. This could be because most of the students may feel bored and demotivated when they are required to do tasks which are irrelevant to their needs and interests. As a result, teachers also become discouraged when their learners do not focus on the tasks and are easily distracted from the lesson."

Student Perception. In comparison with teacher comments, students produced an equal number of comments about task relevance to students' needs and interests. Similar to teachers, students reported that their excitement changes according to the extent to which tasks are relevant to their needs and interests. This is reflected most clearly in *Student* 102's comment that goes, "it's very essential for tasks to be relevant to my personal needs and interest. When the tasks could respond and relate to my hobbies, it will give me a big inspiration and spirit to keep learning and loving English.

Students also clarified reasons for why they support the importance of task relevance. They specifically thought that relevant tasks (make) help them "feel like studying and wait to see how the newly-studied knowledge works in reality" (*Student 213*), "understand the knowledge taught easily (*Student 212*), "get involved in those tasks and develop" thanks to their "foundation knowledge" of the tasks (*Student 146*), and pragmatically, "have some skills about language to apply for life and job (*Student 89*). These momentous functions of task relevance were similarly mentioned in teacher comments. Despite these benefits, *Student 210* cautioned that task relevance "has their own bad effect when it comes to personal stuff", indicating that teachers should, in integrating their students' personal preferences into tasks, be careful enough to avoid sensitive matters that the students do not wish to be addressed.

In contrast to their advantages, irrelevant tasks, as students also suggested, may give rise to increasing demotivation and deleteriously affect retention of the knowledge being imparted. *Student 208* exemplified this comment by stating that "if the tasks seem too irrelevant to my expectation, I may get bored and do not want to learn more, it is futile, and if I try to study the thing that I do not like, I will not remember it for so long".

Interestingly enough, statistical analyses showed a significant difference in which teachers assigned greater importance to considering students' needs than students, while no difference was detected between their perception of considering students' interests. Although it can be seen from teacher and student comments that they both thought highly of tasks addressing students' needs and interests, the students put lower value on the strategy of considering their needs. This could be because what they think they do not need to study in class may be necessary for them in their future real-world encounters, and because they are aware of teachers' difficulty in being responsive to a wide diversity of needs in their classrooms. Illustrative of these reasons are the comments below:

> *Example 25.* Needs and interests are the key factors to boost students' mood in classroom […] On the other hand, focusing too much on passion is not good, we also need to learn new thing around the world to extend our horizon and maybe those new sorts of knowledge can also be our new interests. (*Student 75*)
>
> *Example 26.* Having a task that relevant to a student's personal life or their interest is a great way to get the students to involve in the task, but it can sometimes be not fair to some students for one simple reason: not all students can relate to the topic which they are given. (*Student 136*)

3.6.4. Task Level

Teacher Perception. There were 22 teacher comments related to different aspects of task level. A general agreement shown in these comments was that the levels of tasks, to a large extent, affect students' investment in the tasks. Thus, teachers gave several suggestions about how to put the effects of task difficulty under control. Of all the comments, 13 gave explanations to why it is essential to adjust the difficulty of tasks to suite students' abilities. First of all, teachers noted that proper task level "helps students enhance their understanding about the lesson in class" (*Teacher 02*); otherwise, inappropriate task difficulty can hinder students' uptake of the knowledge being imparted to them. Second, teachers attributed the difficulty of a task to the level of language required to fulfill it, saying that in case of too high a requirement, students "cannot use appropriate language to deal with it" (*Teacher 01*). Third, some teachers pointed to the consequences of the excessive ease or difficulty of tasks: Tasks that are too far below students' current abilities make students feel boredom and terminate the allocation of their attention to the tasks (*Teacher 07*) because they think that their abilities are underestimated (*Teacher 96*). Conversely, when doing excessively difficult tasks, students may develop negative feelings such as helplessness and pessimism (*Teacher 07*) tend to doubt themselves and their placement in the class (*Teacher 96*), as well as experience a fear of doing subsequent tasks (*Teacher 08*). Wrapping up this issue, *Teacher 53* said that students do not have to "live up to high expectations" but in the classroom, they should be given a sense of being able to achieve something in the tasks they are doing. One of the factors that may determine their achievement is teacher support in the forms of "encouragement, vocabulary, explanation, and examples" (*Teacher 78*)

About task challenge, eight teachers expressed their opinions. All of them acknowledged the that tasks can stimulate students' learning when they are just above students' existing levels. The teachers referred to the formula *i + 1* as a way of making a task suitably challenging. They also suggested mixing previously taught knowledge and new knowledge to that end. However, when doing these, teachers should pay special heed to students' proficiency profiles to make challenges in the task a positive contribution to the students' task engagement. The examples that follow represent their points of view.

> *Example 27.* The task difficulty surely affects students' motivation to learn. The given task should not always be challenging, but it'd better fit or a bit difficult to inspire students. (*Teacher 55*).
>
> *Example 28.* I assume that the difficult level is just like the formula "+1". By this I mean sometimes teachers can design the task like this to stimulate the students in challenging themselves and discover more new things. (*Teacher 65*)
>
> *Example 29.* For improving the difficulty of a task, I often try to immerse the learnt grammar and new grammar in the task and just 10%-20% of new vocabulary so that the difficulty level is not a big challenge to my students. (*Teacher 39*)
>
> *Example 30.* The challenges a task poses to learners will depend on various factors including the task characteristics, the learners' experience (whether they have encountered the tasks before) and teachers' supports (how much scaffolding is provided from the teachers). Neither too easy nor too challenging tasks will provide the best learning conditions for learners. To address this, teachers' understanding of the general proficiency levels of the students when designing tasks is important. (*Teacher 35*)

A further strategy that teachers focused their six comments on was in regard to the progression of task difficulty. There were two approaches that they proposed: first, teachers should include both easy and challenging parts in a task, or second, teachers can use a list of related tasks with increasing difficulty. They believe that by doing these, they can, prevent students from feeling shocked by task difficulty (*Teacher 58*), motivate both weak and strong students because every single student can do at least one part of the task well enough (*Teacher 62*), and importantly, create a connection between the stages of the task and between different tasks used in a class (*Teacher 44*)

Student Perception. Twenty comments were obtained from students who discussed issues about task level. Of these comments, eight were about adjusting task difficulty, six about task challenge, and five about related tasks or task stages with increasing difficulty. Task difficulty adjustment was a strategy where teachers and students significantly differed in their opinions. Students saw this strategy as less important than their teachers did not because of the low motivational value of the strategy but because they are often at the receiving end of instruction and cannot therefore decide task difficulty levels. Some students complained that when teachers do not adjust task difficulty according to their levels, they tend to think that their own knowledge is inferior to task requirements (*Student* 146) and feel disappointed when comparing themselves with others who can do the task well (*Student* 89) and may therefore lose motivation. They accordingly expected teacher support with which they can somehow deal with difficult tasks:

> *Example 31.* I would like my teachers to explain more, demonstrate more for us to understand what to do. If all these things do not work, the teachers may downgrade

the difficulty level of the given task by cutting down on some output requirements. (*Student 214*)

Example 32. I sometimes face some too easy or too hard tasks, and I always want my teacher to adjust it a bit. They should explain more, give example, and even model so that I can know what to do in an effective way with the tasks (*Student 208*)

Besides, survey results showed that students differed from their teachers with respect to their ratings of task challenge, deeming this strategy as less important than what the teachers thought. Despite this, five students seemed to have positive attitudes toward challenging tasks and appreciated some benefits of being challenged. Specifically, students commented that by seeing each other work hard toward the goal of a challenging task, students can be motivated to contribute to their group's concerted effort (*Student 136*). Second, being challenged allows students to be realize what they can do well and what they cannot so that they can make proper efforts to bridge the gap (*Students 211 & 77*). A final advantage that students mentioned is that challenging tasks is a way of training their brains (*Students 210 & 139*).

Increasing difficulty in tasks was also mentioned by five students. In general, they tended to think that when tasks that involve easy and challenging elements provide them with a sense of learning. *Student 207* clearly illustrates this point in his comment:

Example 33. I feel like in the beginning, we should start with something easy to warm up. Next we can move the harder levels, that makes me feel more challenging. Don't try to give students the tough problems for the first part, they absolutely feel tired though they haven't do anything yet because they will feel like they come to the class to be challenged, not to absorb. (*Student 207*)

3.6.5. Task Materials

Teacher Perception. In comparison with other domains of task-related motivational strategies, the domain of task materials had only ten comments in total. In their journals, three teachers thought highly of the value of authentic materials. They contended that using materials made by native speakers for real-life communicative purposes (e.g., newspapers, videos, television programs) is beneficial for students to learn the new language that is native-like and natural. Plus, authentic materials are a good choice for teachers to integrate contents related to the target culture into teaching. *Teacher 62* outlined in detailed what she did in class when using authentic materials:

> *Example 34.* Depending on the topic of each unit, I sometimes opt materials that introduce new English language forms and are produced by native speakers of English for real-life communicative purposes. For instance, one of the units I have taught is about Etiquette and one of the tasks I want my students to complete is playing roles. First, I let them enjoy some clips about polite requests and complaint in America. From these ones, they could learn how to make requests and complaint in polite ways as well as the intonation in specific situations. Then they had to work in small groups and each would be responsible for one situation. Finally, all of them joined a TV show about good and bad manners with an American guest, performed their roles and compared with American manners. Sometimes they have to read some articles in English to get ideas before presenting in class. (*Teacher 62*)

Although aware of the benefits of authentic materials, some teachers did not downplay self-made materials, saying that when they create or manipulate materials, they can make materials be responsive to their specific student populations. *Teacher 96* reported that she always

talks to her students, listens to their learning problems, and observes them in class in order that she can design materials that best address their problems and learning needs. *Teacher 08* added that materials should be designed in accordance with the types of tasks students prefer to do and should include as many visual aids as possible (e.g., diagrams, layouts, mind-maps, and graphics). Another point to consider when creating materials is how materials connect students' prior knowledge and the knowledge they are going to gain from their tasks:

> *Example 35.* They [materials] should also cover most of what they have already learnt and some of what they haven't known so that the tasks also could stimulate their curiosity to learn and know about that. The tasks also should be relevant and updated to what are going on in the youth or community. (*Teacher 39*)

Student Perception. Not many students commented on the motivational features of task materials (12 comments). As shown by survey results, a significant difference was detected between teachers and students' perceptions of authentic tasks; students assigned more importance to the authenticity of materials than their teachers. They held a high opinion of authentic materials because they felt discontented with the too academic materials (often textbooks) they are often presented with. Therefore, they prefer materials that contain a balance between academic knowledge and interesting real-life elements. These elements are characteristic of authentic materials but not of textbooks often used in their classrooms. *Student 139* suggested that:

> *Example 36.* Task materials should be designed with elements of academic and life knowledge. Students may feel bored and tired if they have to do too much academic exercises. In contrast, tasks whose contents consist of both academic materials and real-life experiences not only attract students but also provide them with new and interesting information apart from English knowledge. (*Student 139*)

Apart from this feature, students expected that task materials could arouse their curiosity. The more curious they are about the content of the materials they are studying, there more attentional resources they invest in exploring the materials. This is best illustrated by this comment:

> *Example 37.* In my opinion, tasks contain mysterious materials could easily hook attention. So if teachers introduce things that we did not know about, we will focus on the lessons more than things that we already known (*Student 210*)

Similar to teachers, besides valuing authentic materials, students did not underestimate teacher-created materials. They brought up some issues of which teachers should be aware when compiling materials. *Student 179* and *Student 89* maintained that a large enough number of examples related to the linguistic content of a task should be included in task materials because such examples can (1) aid students' understanding and (2) raise their awareness of the content, which results in noticing and learning. *Student 146* was concerned about the relevance of task materials to students' personal interests, saying that relevant materials are a huge source of stimulus. The last comment related to this issue was from *Student 211,* who underscored the flexibility of teacher-compiled materials in responding to diverse levels of students in a classroom.

3.6.6. Task-Related Feedback

Teacher Perception. A collection of 34 comments teachers made pertained to feedback given to students when they participate in tasks. The area of task-related feedback that was commented on the most was forms of feedback (14 comments). For the most part, teachers reported frequent use of a range of feedback-providing methods such as such peer-correction, self-correction, whole-class correction, teacher-student conferences, and direct and indirect feedback. They are inclined to use a specific method for a specific type of students, and what

they often focus on in their feedback is students' language use that is "relevant to the task requirements (fluency, coherence, grammatical structures, lexical resources…)" (*Teacher 07*), and importantly, how well they perform and complete their tasks (four comments). *Teacher 44*, for example, discussed when to use direct or indirect feedback on students' performance:

> *Example 38.* Depending on the levels of students, I will use different type of feedbacks. For example, for low English level students (e.g. primary or pre-intermediate) I often use direct feedback which focuses on certain grammatical points or some relevant theory about the content (e.g. writing the topic sentence) […] For higher level students, I use indirect feedback which is usually some symbols to highlight the mistake and students correct themselves. If they do not recognize the problems they can bring the paper to me and I will explain or we will have teacher-student conference when we have time in class or I put it as after-class activities. (*Teacher 44*)

Supporting the belief that different feedback has different functions, *Teacher 58* proposed a procedure for offering feedback that involves a combination of self-correction, group correction, and teacher correction:

> *Example 39.* I supposed that giving feedback should be implemented along with self-assessment and group assessment. In the first phase, members in a group self-assessed their performance by comparing it with other group's works. After that, students, themselves, can write down their strong and weak points, and proposed list of things that they think could be done to improve their performance. Lastly, the teacher will be the one to give the feedback on students' self-assessment and suggest the most effective thing students could do. (*Teacher 58*).

Regarding this issue, *Teacher 62* illustrated in her comment how incorporating different ways of organizing feedback-giving sessions in class is facilitative of classroom management.

> *Example 40.* Sometimes, I comment on the task performance of each individual student but I often mix this stage with the previous while I go around and observe their group-work. However, I cannot give personal feedback to all of my students because of the oversized-classes with more than 40 students. Therefore, I often give feedback to each group or in general focusing on how well they complete tasks at the post stage of the unit. (*Teacher 62*)

As far as when to deliver feedback in a task process is concerned, four teachers showed their disposition to offer feedback at the time of task completion rather than during the task process. They gave some reasons why this is a sound pedagogical practice. For one thing, post-task feedback allows teachers to observe and make an overview of all students' performance to determine if "the language focus is employed, the instructions are understood correctly, and the target language is properly utilized and so on." *(Teacher 07*). For another thing, when giving feedback after the task has already been completed, teachers can make sure that all students can be attentive to the feedback (*Teacher 78*).

Equally important is perhaps the benefits of feedback for students' learning. Most teachers accepted that feedback on task performance plays an indispensable role in students' learning. Feedback, according to *Teacher 55*, is an effective way to help students "not to repeat mistakes again next time", thus directing their use of language to accuracy. For students struggling with classwork, *Teacher 65* argued that feedback provides them with the opportunity to "learn exactly where they went wrong and how they can improve next time". *Teacher 35* provided a clear explanation about how important awareness-raising feedback is in sensitizing

students to what they have done well and what they have not and how it may orient students to draw up a plan for self-improvement.

> *Example 41.* Feedback needs to be provided in a well-structured manner that not only provides students with an idea about how well they have performed the tasks but also facilitate their learning of the content; for instance, by showing them what they have not performed well and how to further improve it if they redo the tasks. Feedback also needs to facilitate the development of students' self-awareness about their own performance in using language and in their learning language process, from which they can take better control of their learning and performance. (*Teacher 35*)

Teachers were also cognizant of the impacts that feedback makes on students' psychology. The teachers pointed out that feedback that focuses excessively on students' deficits may result in them feeling dispirited and potentially developing a negative attitude towards subsequent feedback. Hence, they suggested that teacher comments on students' good performance be given prior to those on their areas of improvement. Comments from *Teachers 08*, *39*, and *02* are illustrative of this issue:

> *Example 41.* Giving feedback is really a big problem since most students may feel hurt when they hear their mistakes […] I often give constructive feedback first by acknowledging their efforts and perseverance so that they feel respected. Subsequently, I show them what mistakes they made and how they can avoid these mistakes to improve their writing skills. This may help them recognize their weakness and encourage them to learn better. (*Teacher 08*)

Example 42. Normally students would be given good points first and then the bad points that need changing and improving in that way, students would feel that their work is, in one way, appreciated and in another way, it needs modifying to be better. (*Teacher 39*)

Example 43. I also give my students feedback to help them improve their studying. I may present them their mistake or suggest something that they can do to be better […] In my point of view, showing the mistake then guiding them to correct is better than correcting the mistake for them. Additionally, I do not want to make my students lose their face because of their mistake, so I just give them advise to help them develop their task performance and never criticize them in the class. (*Teacher 02*)

Student Perception. Six out of 27 feedback-related comments were from students who discussed forms of feedback. In general, students were in agreement with their teachers about the types of feedback they preferred: peer-correction, whole-class correction, and direct and indirect feedback. What differed between them was their opinions about what feedback should be given on their task performance. Such a difference was also found in the statistical analysis of their opinions. It seems that teachers cared more about the functions of specific feedback forms in their instruction and classroom management, while students were concerned about the imbalance between what they referred to as positive feedback and negative feedback. Students expressed their strong disapproval of feedback that centers on overly on their poor performance, viewing such feedback as a strong demotivator, especially when they are not given in an anonymous way. Key opinions were expressed in the comments from *Student 210* and *Student 208*:

> *Example 43.* One of my old teachers had an annoying way to give feedbacks for students: she always complains about weakness, about things we did bad and says none about what we done well. It makes us feel horrible about ourselves and lose all motivations. I recently joined in a presentation class and had a wonderful teacher who gives feedbacks with both advantages and disadvantages of our performance. (*Student 210*)
>
> *Example 44.* I sometimes feel upset with my teachers' feedback on my performance […] I feel down and nervous […] I want to know my strengths and weaknesses to improve. (*Student 208*)

That said, students cautioned that positive feedback does not mean that teachers should only compliment them on their performance in a general way. What they need is instead specific areas of their strengths and weaknesses along with teacher suggestions for how they could get improved. However, interestingly, students explicitly stated that teachers should pay close attention to the attitudes they show when they deliver feedback. They argued that improper teacher attitudes are a hindrance to their receipt and acceptance of teacher feedback. Typical exemplars are from the extracts from *Student 75* and *Student 139*:

> *Example 44.* There are many negative circumstances which I and my friends have experienced like the teachers just listened, and just said "good", "ok", "you need to practice harder" with a question mark in students' brains or they did give feedback for poor students with angry or uncomfortable expressions. I think is a big drawback since we can feel pressure, disappointed and lose the interest in learning English. (*Student 75*)

> *Example 45.* Teacher should evaluate both students' strengths and weaknesses in detail in order to encourage students and give them awareness of their blind spot as well. Furthermore, teachers should point out students' weaknesses sensitively and compliment then whenever they make progress. (*Student 139*)

With respect to when teachers are supposed to deliver feedback, while some students agreed with their teachers that feedback sessions are supposed to immediately follow task performance not to interpret their task completion, many students preferred immediate feedback even during the task process. This also an area where their opinions were significantly different from their teachers'; they found immediate during-task feedback more important. They held an assumption that immediate feedback is appropriate when it is given to individual students not their whole groups. Doing this would allow feedback to be personalized and thus relevant to each student's own area of improvement. The comments of *Student 102* and *Student 212* are representative of this assumption.

> *Example 45.* I think in order to give feedback to their students, teachers should tell them directly especially at the time students make mistakes. Because that's the best way helping them realize their weakness and they may try to improve for the next time. (*Student 102*)

> *Example 46.* I know for sure that I come to English class to study and I learn from my mistakes, so I love to be given feedback on my performance directly and immediately. (*Student 212*)

3.6.7. Teacher Behavior During Task Time

Teacher Perception. For issues pertaining to teacher behavior, teachers made 27 comments, about half of which (13 comments) dealt with teachers' role during task time.

Teachers held a common belief that they should play the role of a facilitator instead of a controller in the classroom. As facilitators, they assumed several responsibilities during task time. For instance, almost all of them revealed that they always move around the classroom to provide students with such support as idea generation, vocabulary choice, additional clarification of how to complete tasks, and any other obstacles students encounter during task time, and to interact with individual students. They believed that when they do these, their students would feel that they always receive teacher care and attention and that their teachers are devoted to teaching them. Teacher dedication is, in their opinion, a huge contributor to students' motivation intensity. Key opinions are shown in the examples below:

> *Example 47.* Teachers can go around classroom and recommend some general ideas for students. If the task is carried out in groups, teachers should engage in the task and students, in the role of supporters, so they can feel attention and support from the teacher and motivated to do better. (*Teacher 58*)
>
> *Example 49.* I often walk around and take a look at their being done work and intervene or explain what they haven't understood correctly in applying in their task doing. (*Teacher 39*)
>
> *Example 50.* While they are doing the tasks, I tend to go around and help them with any difficulties arise during the time they do the tasks (*Teacher 21*)
>
> *Example 51.* During the conducting process, I often go around the class, interact with individual students and act as a facilitator to help students when needed. I also make sure that the task can encourage students to speak during task time. (*Teacher 62*)

Being a facilitator also means that teachers should participate as much as possible with students to help them complete tasks. Six teachers viewed their participation with students as a

motivational gesture. Illustrating this view, *Teacher 01* wrote, "While the students are doing their task, I don't think it is good to just sit down and look around the class. I join them instead. I play a role as a stimulator, and get involved in almost every group to help them with many things […] The more I work with them, the more motivated they feel". In addition, *Teacher 55* thought that when participating with students, teachers can identify who struggling students are among their group members and offer them timely assistance. This act can, the teacher believed, prevent such students' motivation from being drained due to falling behind their peers. A further advantage was mentioned by *Teacher 54*, who wrote, "Teachers can be a guide to give hints for students or an impartial judge in case they argue too aggressively". The teacher supposed that teacher participation can mediate group discussions that sometimes are too intense.

Student Perception. Of the total of 33 comments students wrote about during-task teacher behavior, eight expressed their agreement with teachers acting as facilitator during task time as a motivational strategy. What students suggested that their teachers do was similar to what the teachers thought they should do: helping students with task difficulty, clarifying task instructions, responding to students' questions, and offering ideas when necessary. Interestingly, in terms of linguistic support, students revealed that they are motivated by teachers who are "walking dictionaries", having an extensive vocabulary.

> *Example 52.* During the task-doing time, teachers is the golden key to the students: solving the student's problem, answering their blind spots, helping them to have a clear view about the task, providing ideas and experiences is the things that a teacher can do to help improving the students' task performance. (*Student 136*)
>
> *Example 53* They can act as a walking dictionary, language facilitator at any time we are in need. (*Student 212*)

> *Example 54.* My ideal teachers are the ones who can act as a walking dictionary, a supporter, and a facilitator in class. (*Student 214*)

However, students rated the teacher-as-facilitator strategy as much less important than the teachers did. A reason could be that they do not receive as much facilitation as they expect due to this strategy being underused in the classroom. This could also be because many of them still experience traditional teacher-fronted classes where teachers are not facilitators but controllers of classroom activities.

In terms of teacher participation, ten students expressed their high expectation that teachers join them in working on tasks. However, while teachers commented on what they can help students with when they participate with them, students appeared to care more about teachers' personality, producing as many as 11 comments about this issue. What they expect from teachers is friendliness, politeness, easy-goingness, and devotedness. The following extracts highlight their expectations:

> *Example 55.* The biggest thing which I expect from my teachers to motivate me is that they will pay attention to me. I do not need lots of attention from them, but I hope that they can give me a little bit of it in order to realize my problems soon and help me to correct it. I think teachers should have a fair will all of their students in the classroom instead of only focus on the good or bad students. In addition, teachers should be easy-going and friendly as much as they can to make students feel comfortable and enjoyable while receiving knowledge from their teachers. (*Student 102*)

> *Example 56.* I would like my teacher to join, then I find that my teacher is like a friend and I can ask my teachers more about what I am doing. It's also a good way to

be corrected directly, and I love it. If teachers just keep sitting and looking around, it is no good because they cannot understand some obstacles that we students face during the time implementing their tasks. (*Student 208*)

Example 57. The students always look forward to the friendly of teacher. If the teacher want to present effectively with their student, they need to create a good impression, it is too easy to do that because the teacher just smile with their student and please do not angry with them. Bad attitudes can lead to negative effect with students. (*Student 78*)

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of this mixed-methods inquiry into the perceived importance of task-related motivational strategies (TRMS) revealed a close correspondence between Vietnamese teachers and students' perceptions and theoretical perspectives of L2 motivation as well as previous empirical studies on motivational teaching practice. In what follows, a holistic critical assessment of the findings is offered, focusing not only on the strategies strongly represented in teachers' and students' perceptions but also on those largely underrepresented. Equally important is an in-depth discussion of where teacher and student perspectives were in agreement as well as where they were not. Their perceptual mismatches provide implications for EFL motivational teaching practice.

4.1. RQ1: Teacher Perceptions of TRMS

The study set out with the aim of assessing the importance of task-related motivational strategies as perceived by EFL practitioners in the Vietnamese EFL context. Two aspects of their perceptions were examined: first, their central tendency (perceptions of the broad domains of TRMS) and second, their perceptions of each of the 48 TRMS.

Analyses of the central tendency of teacher perceptions revealed that they most strongly endorsed strategies related to the levels of tasks. The descriptive statistics for this TRMS domain (M = 5.47) indicated that it achieved a very important position in teachers' belief about motivational teaching practice. In their journals, teachers also believed that task difficulty exerts a direct, strong effect on students' experience with tasks. These results suggested that Vietnamese EFL teachers pay utmost attention to their students' English proficiency when they prepare a task for classroom teaching. This reflects their approval of what Bandura (1997)

termed as *self-efficacy*, which is concerned with the impacts of the immediate learning experience, including task difficulty, on students' perception of how well they can do the task according to their actual skills and knowledge. Students' judgement of their abilities is generally accepted in educational psychology to significantly influence their proclivity to devote their effort to completing their assigned tasks (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007).

The ranking order of specific TRMS rated by teachers also supported their central tendency toward appreciating the importance of 'task level' strategies. In the list, the strategy of adjusting the difficulty level of a task to students' abilities (M = 6.04) ranked second out of the 48 strategies surveyed and was considered a very important motivator. They further showed their very strong agreement with the motivational power of this strategy in their journals, reporting that they avoided using both excessively difficult and easy tasks to generate a 'can-do' spirit in students. Vietnamese teachers' high endorsement of task difficulty adjustment largely coincided with the belief of Hungarian teachers in Dörnyei and Csizér (1988) and of Taiwanese teachers in Cheng and Dörnyei (2007), suggesting the cross-cultural transferability of this pedagogical practice. In the teachers' perception, when task difficulty is appropriately regulated in response to students' different degrees of self-efficacy, teachers can ensure that they can comprehend task content and complete the task at an acceptable level. One strategy for working towards this endeavor is, as teachers suggested, to use a series of tasks with increasing difficulty levels (M = 5.47) so that both students with high efficacy and those with low efficacy can feel confident to complete at least some tasks in the series with their existing abilities. In contrast, as Dörnyei (2001) put it, "if students have basic doubts about themselves, they will not be able to "bloom" as learners" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 87). Thus, it is clear that the appropriacy of task difficulty can

protect learners' self-confidence in their abilities to perform their assigned tasks, which is necessary for maintaining their motivation during task time.

Although being aware of task difficulty, teachers did not downplay the motivational strength of difficult elements in tasks. They considered the 'task level' strategies related to task manageability (M = 5.53) and task challenge (M = 5.49) equally important motivators. This suggests teachers' shared perspective that even though a task needs to be adequately challenging to trigger students' vigorous attempt, the challenge it poses should remain at a level where students can still manage to do it well enough not to feel incompetent. These results were consistent with what the teachers discussed in their journals in which they reported their use of the i + 1 formula in building tasks. What they meant could be that the language (e.g., vocabulary and grammar) provided for students to use for task completion should slightly surpass their existing proficiency so that they feel eager to learn it to reach a higher level. This belief in the value of the linguistic challenge of tasks aligns with what Krashen (1994) suggested in his input hypothesis. The i + 1 formula they mentioned could also refer to the challenging goal of a task in which students "need to solve problems, discover something, overcome obstacles, avoid traps, find hidden information" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 76) in order to achieve the goal. This sense of i + 1 is similar to what Yücel (2003) found about Turkish teachers' perspectives of task challenge. The teachers felt that when oriented to such a challenging goal, students often tend to exert a larger amount of effort to realize and find ways to go beyond their limits. These benefits of appropriately challenging tasks could explain why teachers assigned much lower importance to the strategy of using tasks within students' abilities (M = 4.86).

The domains of 'task relevance' (M = 5.50) and 'task presentation' (M = 5.43) received similar ratings, suggesting that they were perceived to have relatively equal importance in

motivating learners. The mean score of task relevance indicated that teachers considered it to be very important motivator, suggesting their relatively strong acceptance of this TRMS domain. This perception of the teachers resembles that of the *relatedness* component of Deci and Ryan's (1985) *self-determination theory*, which underscores the connection between the relevance of an activity and how intrinsically motivated students are in doing it. The more related the activity is, the greater students' level of internal pleasure becomes, and the more they dedicate themselves to complete the activity in pursuit of that pleasure.

In arousing students' motivation to seek internal enjoyment from classroom tasks, teachers showed their tendency to appreciate the significant usefulness of making tasks interesting (M = 5.80) and using tasks that provide students with fun moments (M = 5.17). This belief was in alignment with Yücel's (2003) finding that his teacher participants also thought that fun tasks can trigger students' enjoyment and laughter. Repeated use of tasks with fun, interesting elements can therefore sustain students' motivation to participate dynamically in the tasks because they are enticed into reexperiencing the time that has held fascination for them. However, although to teachers, it is essential to add interestingness to tasks, they found it less important to include fun elements. It might be that in an education still influenced by Confucian ethics in Vietnam, teachers tend to regard learning as a serious endeavor and thus equate fun and enjoyment with a bad reputation (Raffini, 1996). This Confucian influence on teacher beliefs was also the case in other Asian educations such as Taiwan (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007) and Korea (Guilloteaux, 2012).

Interestingly, teachers showed their relatively strong agreement with the strategy of considering students' needs (M = 5.49), while they agreed less with considering students' interests (M = 5.11) in task design. Teachers' high opinion of addressing students' needs

indicates that they are more concerned about the pragmatic contributions their tasks make to students' academic and professional ambitions. In fact, the purposes of most students in Vietnam choosing to learn English is first, to fulfill the academic requirements of their schools, second, to seek opportunity for further study in English-speaking countries, and finally, to advance themselves in their chosen professions where a good English command offers incentives. Probably because of being highly aware of the fact that addressing students' practical needs in the classroom to help them thrive in their prospective academic and professional lives is more important than trying to help them fulfil their personal interests, Vietnamese EFL teachers tend to take what students need into more consideration. Their lower endorsement of addressing students' interests bears resemblance to what Guilloteaux (2012) discovered about her Korean teachers, who also put lower value on this strategy as compared to other strategies. Guilloteax, while citing Pintrich and Schunk (2002), explained that it might be difficult for teachers to consistently align their task design with an unpredictable diversity of students' interests. This being said, it does not mean that Vietnamese teachers exclude students' personal likes and dislikes from their task construction. In their journal entries, they reported that this strategy is highly instrumental in (1) preventing the formation of students' negative attitude to compulsory English courses where their interests are often disregarded, and (2) in arousing students' attention to task content and supporting their task completion thanks to their familiarity with the content.

Teachers' acceptance of 'task presentation' strategies as effective motivators reflects such previous studies as Bokan-Smith (2016), Cheng and Dörnyei (2007), Dörnyei and Csizér (1998), He (2009), which similarly found that the way teachers present tasks in the classroom is a strong stimulus for student involvement. Of the strategies from this domain, giving clear task

instructions (M = 6.42) was considered to have the extremely important motivational value. Vietnamese teachers held a strong belief that the clarity of task guidance can (1) free students from any anxiety and confusion that seriously affects their willingness to involve with the tasks (He, 2009) and (2) prevent the decreases in their pre-task and during-task demotivation. In addition to giving verbal instructions for tasks, teachers were highly conscious of the need to demonstrate how to proceed with tasks (M = 5.80). They were especially in favor of cooperating with some representative students to model tasks for the whole class. The need for task modelling is especially essential for student populations whose low proficiency is a hindrance to their understanding of task requirements and accordingly a hindrance to their task involvement. Offering a conclusion on the centrality of task instructions, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) strongly stated, "no matter how capable a teacher is, it is unreasonable to anticipate that student motivation will be aroused if the teaching lacks instructional clarity" (p. 162)

Varying task types (M = 5.96) is also a very important strategy that teachers endorsed in their top-ten list of strategies, which is in accordance with Taşpınar's (2004) result that this strategy topped the list of teacher preferences. Teachers realized two benefits of task variety: first, use of different tasks can break the monotony of their classes induced by repeated procedures, and second, it can help them respond to mixed-level classes where different tasks offer different conditions for students to learn. Dörnyei (2001) acknowledged the importance of varying task types; however, he also cautioned that "not even the richest variety will motivate if the content of the tasks is not attractive to the students— that is, if the task is boring" (p. 75).

Other ways of presenting tasks motivationally which teachers viewed as quite important strategies are to make clear task goals and purposes (M = 5.11). Teachers' agreement with task goal clarification was similar to Cheng and Dörnyei's (2007) Taiwanese teachers who endorsed

this strategy as an "essential ingredient of a motivating teaching practice" (p. 162). The perspectives of Vietnamese teachers and their Taiwanese counterparts regarding task goals are consistent with Locke and Latham's (1990, 1994) *goal setting theory* and Ames' (1992) *goal orientation theory*, which commonly refers to the vital role of clear goals in human involvement in an activity.

What tasks contribute to students' learning (M = 4.97) was also a quite important practice in teachers' perspectives. In their journal responses, teachers tended to associate task contributions with the novel, useful language that students might be able to learn after they finish their tasks. Even for a communicative task with a non-linguistic outcome, teachers said that they also need to show the linguistic and non-linguistic connection of its components. This makes as much sense as it would in the EFL context of Vietnam, where the success of teaching practice is often linked to how well students can use the English language competently. Thus, teachers who are motivating are supposed to effectively support them on their way to such linguistic achievement, which is truly a reflection of the *expectancy-value theory* (Brophy, 1999; Eccles & Wigfield, 1995) and the *achievement motivation theory* (Atkinson & Raynor, 1974) that argue that as long as students long for success and appreciate the value of that success, their motivation is intensified.

The teachers surveyed reported their central tendency that appeared to equal the motivational potentials of the four TRMS domains: 'teacher behavior during task time' (M = 5.13), 'task nature' (M = 4.96), task-related feedback' (M = 4.89), and 'task materials" (M = 4.84). The mean scores of these domains indicated their position as quite important motivators. Although perceived to have less importance in comparison to 'task level', 'task relevance', and

'task presentation' discussed above, these four domains contributed individual items to the list of strategies highly endorsed by teachers.

Two individual strategies subsumed under the 'teacher behavior during task time' domain appeared in teachers' top-ranked strategies. The first one is encouraging students to speak during task time (M = 5.84), although teachers did not mention this strategy in their journals. The high ranking of this strategy showed the existence of a consensus between Vietnamese teachers and their counterparts in Taiwan (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007), Saudi-Arabia (Alrabai, 2011), and South Korea (Guilloteaux, 2012) that teacher behaviors such as promoting learners' self-confidence were among their top-rated strategies. Teachers, as Guilloteax (2012) suggested, believe that all students can make efforts beyond their limits and gain benefits from it. Therefore, in order to make them try harder to perform their tasks, teacher encouragement is a catalyst. This catalyst is even indispensable for encouraging Vietnamese students who often show signs of silence and non-participation due to their proficiency-related uncertainties.

The second strategy related to during-task teacher behavior is acting as a facilitator as students are doing tasks. With a mean of 5.80, this strategy stood among teachers' high priorities for motivational teaching practice. What teachers wrote in their journals further revealed their agreement with the importance of this strategy and why they agreed. Particularly, they felt responsible as a supporter for providing students with both linguistic and non-linguistic difficulties they encountered during task time and as a mediator for intervening to regulate student interactions. This is an important practice especially in a communicatively oriented classroom where interaction impacts language development, and thus, teacher facilitation should, as van den Branden (2016) put it, "enhance the language learning potential of task-based work by raising the quantity and quality of interaction that occurs" (p. 170). They also reported

participating with different groups to provide support, though they considered their participation (M = 4.20) less important than their facilitative role. This could be because Vietnamese teachers often teach large-sized classes where it is hard for them to participate as much as they expect with individual groups or students. Instead, what they do is travel around their classrooms to offer instant help.

The domain of 'task nature' contributed two strategies to teachers' top-ten strategy list. The first one is using authentic tasks (M = 5.84). The notion of task authenticity, as mentioned throughout, refers directly to how classroom tasks mimic students' real-life activities. The reasons why teachers accentuated the importance of this strategy include its contribution to helping students realize the realistic value of tasks, thus intensifying their task involvement, and its compensation for the lack of real-life relevance in most EFL textbooks in Vietnam. That teachers agreed on these very important functions of this strategy coincided with what Fryer (2012) found among Japanese teachers. Specifically, Japanese teachers assumed that real-world communicative tasks are a way to regain students' intrinsic motivation that is often drained in the context of learning for grammar-based high-stakes tests in Japan. This is precisely the case in the Vietnamese EFL context that oftentimes sees the drainage of students' motivation due to the negative effects of high-stakes testing.

Another 'task nature' strategy ranked among teachers' top ten is using tasks creating conditions for student interactions in English (M = 5.78). This is in line with the Yücel (2003) study in the Turkish EFL context in which teachers felt that interactive tasks build up the vibrant atmosphere of a student-centered classroom and facilitate peer learning and practice. Interactive tasks, as also documented by William and Burden (1997), Brophy (1998), Dörnyei (2001), not

only function in galvanizing students into learning when they find themselves using the target language to function in life-like environments but also allow students to learn from their peers.

One strategy from the 'task-related feedback' domain appeared in the top ten list of strategies teachers rated is giving feedback after students have completed tasks (M = 5.73). Teachers opined in their journal entries that post-task feedback allows them first to incorporate all of their observations about students' during-task performance in commenting on many aspects of their task completion (e.g., language use, finished product), and second to appeal to all students' attention. This choice of feedback-delivering time reflects a common sense in teaching that post-task feedback does not interrupt students' task process. It is also important to note that teachers were aware that feedback should be given right after task completion but not after any period of time. Promptly given feedback is far more effective than delayed feedback because it is when the student still "has an online awareness of his/her progress" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 124).

Most of what teachers said they preferred to include in their feedback relates to student performance (M = 5.32), that is, their strengths and weaknesses, the degree of their task completion (M = 5.28) and language use (M = 5.21). Their perspective reflects the alignment of their motivational feedback-giving practice with well-established motivational theories. When praise is offered for students' strong points, their learning spirit can be lifted to new heights. This is because according to the *self-worth* theory, they can have a sense of their own worth being recognized (Covington, 1992). Motivational feedback should also focus on encouraging students to give thought to areas of their improvement and finds ways to increase the effectiveness of their learning (Dörnyei, 2001; Raffini, 1993). Nevertheless, Vietnamese teachers revealed in their journals that they paid attention to the psychological impacts of feedback on students, saying that too much feedback on students' weaknesses is counterproductive because it gradually

increases their negative attitude toward feedback. In this case, it is recommended in the *attribution* theory (Weiner, 1992) that teachers know how to orient students to attribute their performance in the way that motivates them. Weiner suggested that feedback relating less to a student's ability (internal) but more to the amount of effort (external) he/she expends is a constructive attribution because it tells students that they need to work harder and harder to improve themselves.

'Task materials', despite being viewed as important, was the domain that did not receive much teacher attention (M = 4.84). The only strategy of this domain that teachers highly rated is using various task materials (M = 5.57). Despite the fact that EFL classroom instruction is prescribed by textbook-based curriculum and thus teacher's choice of materials is constrained, they still reported their preference for using a wide variety of materials. This shows their tendency to create a flexible mix of textbooks with other types of materials out of their syllabi. This is precisely what teachers said in their journals that they did to add diversity to their material use. Besides the availability of textbooks, teachers admitted the incentives offered by authentic materials—cultural products in spoken or written forms produced by native speakers of English for purposes other than teaching (Tomlinson, 2012)—and those teachers create by themselves. Such a combination of authentic materials and teacher-compiled or teacher-adapted materials was also a very common practice Henry et al. (2017) found among Swedish EFL teachers. This similarity suggests EFL teachers believe that the reduction of their dependence on prescribed textbooks and their growing use of outside materials contribute largely to their motivational teaching performance.

Aside from the TRMS that Vietnamese teachers highly endorsed, equally interesting is perhaps the strategies to which Vietnamese teachers gave low endorsement. The low ranking of

these strategies offers a relatively accurate picture of current classroom teaching practice in the Vietnamese context. First of all, Vietnamese EFL teachers often go through pedagogical training where stopping students to correct their errors is considered an anti-pedagogical practice. Their lowest opinion of during-task feedback (M = 3.15) thus explains why they strongly accept post-task feedback as a much more motivational instrument.

Second, characteristic of most Vietnamese classrooms is the limited use of technological tools to support learning, which could have resulted partly in teachers perceiving their use of technology as not highly motivating. This technological deficiency could be ascribed to two factors: the unavailability of technology for English teaching and teachers' limited ability to make use of technology. This could somehow explain why they perceived the use of tasks involving technological assistance as a weak motivator (M = 3.52).

Third, although sharing the same first language with students, teachers are often encouraged not to use Vietnamese in the English classroom. Despite the roles of teacher code-switching plays in explaining complicated language rules, clarifying instructions, and building the teacher-student relationship (Shay, 2015), it may result in negative transfer of first language and undermine a pure foreign language environment (Lightbown, 2001) or even negative judgements of teacher proficiency. Probably because of these issues, Vietnamese teachers did not support the presentation of tasks in Vietnamese (M = 4.17).

Fourth, as mentioned earlier in this part, teachers considered their participation with students in completing tasks as part of their role as classroom facilitators, but they perceived this strategy (M = 4.20) as not having significant motivational benefits. This however does not mean that they do not wish to participate with their students. Rather, their rather low perception of this strategy may be due to the fact that EFL classes in Vietnam are often large, thus denying teachers

a favorable condition to engage as much as they wish with their individual students during the task process.

The last strategy teachers placed among the low important motivators was using task materials with Vietnamese cultural elements (M = 4.49). This low endorsement is a reflection of their awareness of *integrative motivation* (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner, 1985) in motivational teaching. Perhaps, the fact that the target language students are learning is English motivated them to exclude the Vietnamese culture. They might think that the presence of such elements would have a negative impact on the formation and development of students' relationship with English-speaking cultures which is indeed a strong motivational orientation.

4.2. RQ2: Student Perceptions of Task-related Motivational Strategies

The second research question asked how Vietnamese EFL students perceived the importance of TRMS in motivating them to learn English in the instructed context. Exploring their central tendency showed that among the seven TRMS domains, they gave the highest endorsement to 'task relevance' (M = 5.30), considering this domain to be quite important motivator. Their perception finds an echo in the importance their teachers assigned to this domain. In general, this suggests that in motivational teaching practice, both teachers and students held relevant tasks in high regard. That students felt most concern about 'task relevance'—whether classroom tasks correspond to their personal needs and interests—indicates that the strategies under this domain can effectively evoke their intrinsic motivation (e.g., the desire to seek enjoyment and pleasure). This predisposition confirms the cogency of Ryan and Deci's (2000) claim that intrinsic motivation such as the curiosity about the unknown or the desire to seek enjoyment and pleasure is the strongest driving force for the emergence and continuity of motivated behaviors.

Similar to teachers' ratings, students rated the use of interesting tasks (M = 5.66) and fun-providing tasks (M = 5.51) very highly, positioning them among their most favorable strategies. These results show quite good congruence with He (2009), Hsu (2016), and Kassing (2011), whose student participants expressed their predilection for stimulating tasks and a pleasant classroom atmosphere. Interestingness and fun are also characteristic of a motivating task that Julkunen (1989, 1990) described as one that students do enjoyably rather than feel forced to do. The need to have pleasure in the classroom is perhaps ubiquitous, especially in the EFL context such as Vietnam, where students often come to the EFL classroom after a long day at school or at work. Plus, EFL classrooms in Vietnam are often where students experience the pressure of intensive training for standardized tests and the monotony of activities dictated by these tests' contents and formats. Thus, it makes sense that they are in need of some fascinating tasks that can lift up their learning spirit.

Interestingly enough, students' ratings showed that they care more about their interests (M = 5.14) than about their needs (M = 4.92). An implication of this result is that Vietnamese students tend to be strongly motivated by the immediate pleasurable learning experience classroom tasks offer them rather than by what pragmatic benefits (e.g., academic and professional purposes) the tasks bring them in the longer term. In their journals, students also commented that tasks that address their hobbies or interests are inspiring to them and raise their learning spirits. Thus, teachers' use of tasks that are linked to their leisure pursuits would have a very potential motivational effect. This corroborates the idea of Dörnyei (2001), who pointed out that personalizing task content by adapting it to students' natural interests can make the tasks more appealing and that this technique can be applied to transform textbook tasks. This finding however does not match what Taşpınar (2004) discovered about Turkish students' perceptions;

they put their needs before their interests. Such a difference indicates the cultural and contextual dependence of these strategies.

In students' perceptions, relatively equal importance was assigned to the TRMS domains of 'task-related feedback', 'teacher behavior during task time', 'task presentation', 'task materials, 'task level', and 'task nature', with their mean scores being just above or below 5.00. The discussions that follow will have its focus on the strategies from these domains students deemed as the most important as well as the least important.

From the 'task-related feedback' domain, providing feedback after task completion (M = 5.45) was one of the strategies that students considered to motivate them the most. This perception was congruent with their teachers' perception that feedback should be offered immediately after the completion of tasks. It can be inferred from this similarity that this strategy could be a common effective teaching practice that they regularly experience in their classroom and thus consider as important. Further, because post-task feedback sessions are where teachers reported in their journals they concentrate on students' strengths and weaknesses, it suggests students' confidence that these sessions are where their successes are recognized and also where they would be shown what they should do to enhance their learning. In their journals, students expressed their need to be complimented on what they and/or their groups have done well as well as what they need to improve on (e.g., the level of task completion, the accuracy and appropriateness of language use). Their perception exemplifies the notion of Dörnyei (2001) that motivational feedback should not only have a gratifying function (e.g., offering praise to increase student satisfaction) but it should also encourage students to make constructive reflections on their performance and to take informed measures to augment the effectiveness of their learning. However, students stated in their journals that in pointing out their areas of improvement,

teachers should be sensitive because bringing up too many aspects of their unsuccessful performance may hurt their self-worth and discourage their learning spirits as a consequence.

Two strategies encapsulated in the 'teacher behavior during task time' domain appeared in students' highly ranked strategy list. Students viewed teachers' readiness to answer their during-task questions (M = 5.77) as a very important motivational technique. Teachers' mental and physical availability to provide support during task time creates a real-time impression about teacher commitment to student learning, which is precisely a motivational teacher behavior according to Dörnyei (2001). There are two possible explanation for why students highly rated this strategy. First, in the Vietnamese EFL classroom, it is at times the case that students lack knowledge of the subject content of a given task, which raises their need to consult teachers about their uncertainties. Second, in their journals, students expressed their admiration for teachers functioning as "walking dictionaries", indicating their high opinion of those teachers who can provide them with answers related to the language they need to perform their assigned tasks. These assumptions are in accord with the Tran (2015) study that found that Vietnamese EFL students perceived teachers' English competence and knowledge of subject content areas to be important teacher qualities for enhancing their English learning.

Another teacher behavior on students' top-ten list was related to teachers' during-task encouragement (M = 5.61), which was also one of the teachers' top-rated strategies. Again, this coincidence may suggest that this strategy is frequently practiced in the classroom and thus creates a strong impression on students that it is motivating to them. The fact that this strategy ranked high in students' perception does in fact make sense in the Vietnamese EFL classroom context, which often witnesses students' culturally induced avoidance of communication. Their communication reluctance could, as Vo (2014) suggested, be attributed to their fear of breaking

norms (e.g., making arguments equals challenging others) and fear of disappointing others and losing face due to making mistakes. Probably because of these fears, students wish to seek teacher encouragement that could give them the courage to conquer their fear and anxiety and express themselves in their classroom community. This can thus explain why they needs to be encouraged by their teachers during task time.

Interestingly, the journal data showed that students expect teachers to display some motivational teacher qualities such as care, friendliness, politeness, easy-going, and devotedness. These personal attributes of teachers contribute not only to building an amicable teacher-student relationship but also to create a comfortable classroom atmosphere where students' fear of communication can be alleviated. Although the issue as to teacher qualities was not originally a focus in this study, that students mentioned it in their journals calls attention back to the Tran (2015) study, which found a similar perception among Vietnamese students that such teacher qualities are facilitative of their English learning.

Resembling teachers' perception of 'task presentation', students perceived teachers' clear task instructions (M = 5.65) as a very important stimulus for their learning. They further revealed their acceptance of this strategy in their journals, saying that instructional clarity is necessarily part of "a good task". What they meant could be that the delivery of clear task instructions has a direct influence on their learning because lack of clarity can lead the task to become chaotic or fail completely (Sowell, 2017), thus factoring into the decrease of their motivation to proceed with the task. In fact, students made clear in their journals that poorly delivered instructions are very likely to result in their feeling of frustration and even their decision to opt out of the task without hesitation. This finding broadly supports the argument of previous research that the

ability to explain things in learner perspectives is one of the most crucial qualities of a successful language teacher (Ur, 1996; Wragg & Wood, 1984).

Using a variety of tasks is another strategy where students agreed on its motivational advantage, viewing it as quite important (M = 5.37). This finding is, however, contrary to the perception of Taşpınar's (2004) students who put low value on task variety. This dissimilarity suggests that Vietnamese students are motivated more than their Turkish counterparts if they experience strategies that can break the classroom monotony, which is inversely proportional to task variety. Dörnyei (2001) argued that repeated use of similar classroom activities may make both teachers and students "easily settle into routines" (p. 73). When students experience routines, they are likely to lose interest in and curiosity about the activities they are being asked to do because it is lacking in exotic, unusual features.

The 'task materials' domain added one strategy to students' top-rated strategy list: using authentic materials (M = 5.52). This means that Vietnamese students are interested in learning from cultural products native speakers of English create for non-teaching intentions (Gilmore, 2013). That students find the authenticity of task materials motivating is in line with previous studies that also valued the roles of such materials in language teaching. For example, Little and Singleton (1991) claimed that authentic materials are far more attractive than contrived materials because of their focus on conveying a message rather than on teaching a linguistic feature. Further, authentic materials can, in the perspective of Mishan (2005), fix the flaw of textbooks that do not cater to students' specific needs and interests. Given these advantages, Gilmore (2013) added that using authentic materials in teaching is influential in generating and maintaining students' intrinsically motivated behaviors.

Despite not standing amongst top-ranked strategies, using task materials involving target culture features was highly regarded by Vietnamese students (M = 5.29). Their interest in exploring such elements indicates that this strategy is useful in arousing their integrative motivation—the tendency to identify with L2-speaking communities (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). This finding is quite interesting because it is the opposite of previous research results that found that integrative motivation is less important in EFL contexts where learners have limited contact with the target speech community (Au, 1988; Crystal, 2003; Csizér & Dörnyei, 1990, 2005; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). A possible explanation for this might be that today's growth in communication technology, social media, and international travel allows Vietnamese students to get constant exposure to native speakers of English and their culture and customs, thus creating in them an integrative tendency.

Notwithstanding the fact that students did not place any strategy from the 'task level' domain among their top ten, they considered teachers' use of related tasks with increasing levels of difficulty a quite important motivational strategy (M = 5.26). Their rating of this strategy was clarified in their journals in which they agreed that it gives them "a sense of learning". What they meant is that they can see themselves being improved from one level to another when they do increasingly difficult tasks. Being improved through their performance in difficult tasks can stimulate their intrinsic motivation when they attribute their success in completing the tasks to their improved competence. This confirms the soundness of previous perspectives on motivation in educational studies that the amount of effort students put forth in their process of achieving competence is intrinsically fulfilling, catalyzing their prospective motivated behaviors (Stipek & Maclver, 1989).

However, the increase in task difficulty does not at all mean that at some point teachers should present students with overly easy or difficult tasks. In fact, Vietnamese students viewed the adaptation of task difficulty to their existing competence as quite motivating (M = 5.17). Although they attached less importance to this strategy than did their teachers, students show their opposition to inappropriately difficult tasks. They stressed that such tasks result in them a feeling of inferiority when seeing a large gap between their abilities and task goals as well as when comparing themselves with others who can perform the tasks better than they do. This inferior feeling is also very likely to bring about students' decision to discontinue expending effort because of their lack of competence. Such perception of task difficulty corroborates the idea of Scasserra (2008), who claimed that "a task that is too easy results in competence without effort, and a task that is too hard may be more likely to result in effort without competence" (p. 9). Scasserra added that neither of these tasks is intrinsically motivating, and therefore, should be avoided in classrooms where the aim is to motivate students.

In terms of the 'task nature' domain, students highly rated teachers' use of tasks that create conditions for them to interact in English (M = 5.66), positioning it among their top ten strategies. In the EFL context of Indonesia, Kassing (2011) also found that her students' agreement on the importance of abundant interactions in the English classroom. It seems a common sense that most students come to the English classroom to seek opportunity to communicate in English, and in an EFL context where such an opportunity is scarce outside of the classroom, the need for in-class communication is even more compelling. The more students interact in English, the more likely it is for them to sharpen their English productive skills such as speaking. This need of Vietnamese students can be associated with the research on the effects of interaction on second language development (Ellis, 2003; Mackey, 2007; Long, 2015) that

suggests that a substantial part of learning occurs in interactions where learners negotiate for meaning and benefit greatly from peer feedback (e.g., recasts, elaborations, explicit corrections).

Another 'task nature' strategy students highly endorsed as one of their top ten is related to the inclusion of visual elements in tasks (M = 5.46). They expressed their interest in learning through the support of visual devices (e.g., pictures, videos, Powerpoint slides, or just colorful teacher-created handouts) because these devices help them gain a clearer understanding of task requirements and task content and prolong their memory of learned knowledge though image-content association. Their interest in visually supported tasks accords with a great deal of research that has documented the effectiveness of visual aids and students' positive perception of such aids used in the classroom. Cuban (2001), for instance, claimed that 83 percent of what is learned is through the sense of sight, suggesting that visual aids are effective devices for supporting students' learning. This idea also lends support to the work of Burrow (1986), who found that visual assistance accounts for as much as 80 percent of students' retention of learned knowledge. These possibilities are realistic because visual elements can stimulate students' thinking and contribute to the development of active learning (Kishore, 2003), which results in better learning experience as well as learning gains.

In addition to the TRMS to which students gave high endorsement, it is also interesting to take a look at what strategies they found are less motivating to them. In general, students attached little importance to such strategies as (1) using tasks requiring use of technology (M = 3.93); (2) giving immediate during-task feedback (M = 3.99); (3) using tasks that offer opportunity to move around the classroom (M = 3.44); (4) presenting tasks in Vietnamese (M = 4.45); and (5) teachers' participation in task completion (M = 4.46). These strategies, except the one about physical movement in the classroom, are precisely those that teachers also considered

as very weak motivators, suggesting a fundamental agreement between teachers and students about what does not contribute much to motivational teaching practice.

There are some considerations regarding their perception of these strategies. First of all, The reason why they rated the strategy of using tasks involving technology as the least important might be that they do not experience teachers' frequent use of technology in the classroom, as discussed earlier in the discussion about teacher perception. In addition, Vietnamese students have been accustomed to learning in traditional classrooms without much technology, and therefore whether teachers employ technology in teaching might not significantly affect their learning experience. Still, the fact that students did not much value the use of technology does not necessarily follow that technological support has no motivational role. In fact, they reported in their journals that they highly valued the inclusion of visual support such as pictures, videos, or Powerpoint slides that are technologically inherent. This might indicate that using technological aids in teaching, despite certain constraints, is a welcomed teaching practice.

Second, although students did not much appreciate feedback given during their task process probably because like their teachers they are aware of its interruptive impact, some of them mentioned in their journals that they at times need such feedback. They however made clear that while-task feedback should be given to individual students rather than to their whole groups. They also associated such feedback with the language-related mistakes they make when working on their tasks. One implication from these comments is that during-task feedback is a way for students to save their face because addressing their own mistakes is personalized. This face-saving behavior is typical of Vietnamese students whose cultural belief involves avoidance of mistakes (Vo, 2014). Hence, personalized feedback on individual students' areas of

improvement during task time might prevent them from feeling a loss of their personal value and worth (c.f. Covington's (1998) self-worth theory).

Third, that Vietnamese students did not perceived physical movement as an effective technique for motivating them is indicative of the impact of the teaching culture in Vietnamese EFL classrooms. Vo (2014) pointed out that EFL teaching in Vietnam is "largely didactic and text-bound with little time allowed for discussion" (p. 69) because the common fundamental purpose is to prepare students for high-stakes paper-and-pen tests and exams. To serve this purpose, teachers tend to take a teacher-fronted approach to teaching and devote a large portion of class time to paper-based exercises rather than communicative activities or games in which students need to physically move around. In fact, achieving high scores on standardized English tests is a compelling need among Vietnamese students. Thus, even when doing grammar-based tasks without physical movement, they do not feel discouraged. Their perception about in-class movement is contrary to a number of theoretical and empirical perspectives that view movement in the classroom as an sound, effective practice because it can (1) prevent students' physical and mental fatigue (Cranz,1998); (2) help students exercise their brains to enhance their learning and increase their concentration and attentiveness (Jensen, 2000); and (3) reduce academically induced stress (Braniff, 2011; Marzano et.al., 2001).

Fourth, students' low perception of using Vietnamese to present tasks indicates their desire to get immersed in English-only environments where constant exposure aids their learning (probably incidental learning). This perception lends support to some perspectives that the English-only approach creates in students an impression that the English language is not merely an academic subject they need to excel in but more importantly, a mode of communication (Gardner & Gardner, 2000; Salaberri; 1995). Therefore, students prefer English as the main

medium for delivering task instructions instead of their native language. However, in their journals, some students revealed that task instructions in Vietnamese are occasionally necessary for smoothening their task process as well as for clarity reasons, which is also what Sowell (2017) recommended. Sowell however cautioned that overuse of this technique can be counterproductive, especially in the case of high-level students who generally have no problem understanding instructions in the target language.

Finally, the fact that Vietnamese students chose teachers' participation in tasks as a weak motivator does not truly reflect the ineffectiveness of this strategy in motivational teaching. In fact, many students wrote in their journals that they expect their teachers to join them in doing tasks. They however mentioned that they care about teacher personalities such as friendliness, politeness, easy-going, and devotedness when they work with their teachers. What this indicates could be that if not experiencing such teacher attributes, students would not feel comfortable with teacher presence in their groups. There is a culturally related explanation for this phenomenon. In an education deeply rooted in Confucian norms such as authoritarianism and filial piety (Stote & De Vos, 1998), students often "feel uncomfortable confronting or disagreeing with the instructors who are normally regarded as authorities or experts" (Vo, 2014, p.68). Thus, in order to motivate Vietnamese students as their interactional partner, teachers should some personal qualities the students desire.

4.3. RQ3: Perceptual Convergences and Divergences

Research Question 3 of this study concerns itself with the important issue as to the extent to which teachers and students converged or diverged in the way they perceived the importance of task-related motivational strategies. Both their central tendencies and their perception of specific strategies were probed by using the results obtained from the Man-Whitney U test, a

non-parametric statistical test which compared the mean ranks of teacher and student ratings. In what follows, a focus is on discussing what the similarities and differences in their perception imply in the context of EFL classroom instruction in Vietnam.

4.3.1. Convergences

An obvious observation to emerge from the statistical comparison of their central tendencies was that Vietnamese EFL teachers and students were in substantial agreement in terms of the motivational roles of five TRMS conceptual domains: 'task nature', 'task relevance', 'task materials', 'task-related feedback', and 'teacher behavior during task time'. The mean scores of these domains were all above the cut-off point of 3.58 for the Likert scale of seven importance levels, showing that they were all important sources of motivation. Specific item analysis also showed that teachers and students agreed on the importance of 77% of the strategies studied. Such a strong agreement indicates that both teachers and students in this study considered teachers' use of motivational teaching strategies as significant in motivating students in the classroom context. Although the link between how teachers actually practiced task-related motivational strategies and the actual intensity of students' motivational was beyond the scope of this study, students' strong belief in these domains is indicative of the motivational potentials of the strategies nested under them. This assumption is plausible given that many studies have documented the positive correlation between teachers' motivational teaching practice and observable increases in students' motivational state (Bernaus and Gardner (2008); Guillautaux and Dörnyei, 2008; Moskovsky et al., 2013). This potential suggests that if used in classroom teaching, these strategies are highly likely to play a remarkable role as learning stimulators.

Another area where obvious similarities between teacher and student perceptions were observed was in their top-ten lists of TRMS. A glance at these two lists reveals that teachers and students positioned six identical strategies among their highest preferences: (1) clear task instructions; (2) task variety; (3) teacher encouragement; (4) task interestingness; (5) interactive tasks; and (6) post-task feedback. The fact that these strategies were perceived by both groups of the participants to be very robust motivators supports Madrid's (2012) claim that use of strategies of mutual preference in the classroom would result in increases in students' interest, attention, and satisfaction.

In terms of the strategies that were given low endorsement, the ranking orders made by teachers and students showed that their perceptions largely coincided. They both put little or no belief in the strategies related to (1) delivery of immediate during-task feedback; (2) use of technology; (3) presenting tasks in Vietnamese; and (4) teachers' participation in tasks. This means that whether these strategies are utilized in classroom instruction does not add to the robustness of teachers' motivational teaching practice, nor does it interfere with students' active engagement in performing their given tasks. However, it is important to note here that the participants might have associated the low motivational value of some of these four strategies with the difficulties in implementation, leading to the underuse of the strategies. For instance, facilitative teaching technology is not always equipped in EFL classrooms in Vietnam, as well as it is not always realistic for teachers to partner themselves with students during task time where they have to conform to prescribed syllabi and time constraints or where they have to teach oversized classes.

4.3.2. Divergences: Implications for Pedagogical Practice

Regardless of a considerable amount of convergences in teachers' and students' perception related to TRMS, on closer inspection of the data, major differences in their beliefs occurred. The cross-comparison of their top-ten lists showed differences in the strategies to which they gave highest endorsement; some strategies appeared in either of the list. These strategies seem to have different functions. Specifically, teachers highly regarded the strategies related to task difficulty adjustment, task authenticity, teachers' facilitative role, and task demonstration. This appear to suggest that teachers acknowledge the importance of the TRMS that tend to have a direct influence on students' task or academic outcomes. Whether it is adjusting task difficulty, using tasks approximating real-world activities, facilitating students' task-completing process, or demonstrating how to do tasks, one common purpose is seemingly to help students complete their tasks as well as possible and learn something useful for their future. On the other hand, the student-endorsed strategies such as teachers' readiness to answer questions, authentic materials, use of fun-providing tasks, and use of visual elements seem to contribute more to positivizing their learning experiences than to bettering their learning outcomes. This observation appears to be in line with some perspectives (e.g., Dörnyei, 2009; Ushitoda, 1996, 2001) that in several cases, student motivation originates from their immediate learning experiences rather than from any other internal or external sources.

Inferential statistical tests conducted on the seven TRMS conceptual domains and the 48 items of TRMS found that statistically significant differences existed between teacher and student perceptions of the 'task presentation' and 'task level' domains as well as of eleven individual strategies. Although these differences account for just about a quarter of all the strategies investigated, it suggests that there are important perceptual mismatches that need to be

taken into consideration when it comes to the motivational teaching practice. Of these eleven strategies, teachers gave greater importance to nine than did their students. The fact that teachers overestimated the importance of these strategies in comparison to their students' perceptions gives some indications. First of all, this mismatch indicates that teachers might have found it highly efficient to use these strategies in their classrooms, thus holding a positive attitude to the motivational effectiveness of their strategy use (Taşpınar, 2004). Second, D'Elisa (2015) pointed out that when teachers are trying to look for the causes of their students' lack of motivation, they tend to endorse several motivational strategies. This assumption might also be the case in the context of Vietnamese EFL classrooms where teachers often see signs of students' low motivation in the classroom due to compulsory English learning, prescribed instruction, and several other subjective and objective reasons, and are therefore concerned about what they can do to improve the situation. Another indication is that on the part of students, they put lower value on these strategies probably because that in the classroom, their teachers do not practice the strategies sufficiently or effectively enough, while they expect more than what they have experienced. This is reflected in the view of Nunan (1995), who argued that students brought their own agendas and mindsets to the classroom that are always different than assumed by their teachers.

Results showed that Vietnamese EFL teachers agreed more than their students did on the importance of the 'task presentation' domain and three related strategies: (1) giving clear task instructions for students, (2) demonstrating how to complete tasks, and (3) using a variety of tasks. These first two strategies are closely related to teachers' pedagogical competence, one of the essential qualities of being a good teacher in the eyes of Vietnamese students (Tran, 2015). Tran found that in the Vietnamese EFL context, the ability to deliver a "more logical and

smoother lesson" (p. 11) represents a teacher attribute that students desire. In lots of EFL teaching institutions in Vietnam, especially commercial English language centers (CELCs), students' ratings of teacher performance decide the continuity of the teacher's service. In this scenario, the need to win students' heart with effective delivery of instruction might explain why teachers attached enormous importance to how to present and demonstrate tasks in a clear, motivating way. As for task variety, although both teachers and students agreed that various task types are important in diversifying students' learning experience and maximizing conditions for students at different levels in a classroom, students considered this strategy as much less important. This might be due to the fact that EFL learning in the Vietnamese context is still largely dependent on published textbooks whose activities are rather formally homogenous. When textbook activities are regularly used as a principal mode of learning, there is every chance that students become gradually accustomed to this mode. Consequently, they do not have a burning need for task variety, although their teachers try to diversify their tasks.

'Task level' is also where teachers' endorsement was higher than students' in terms of both the broad domain and two related strategies: (1) adjusting the difficulty of tasks to suit students' abilities and (2) using tasks that are manageable for students. Again, this perception is reflective of teachers' sound pedagogical practice. While they believe in the function of optimal challenge (the $i + 1$ formula mentioned earlier) in motivating students, they accepted that adjusting the level of linguistic challenge prevents students from losing motivation due to their negative attribution to their lack of English abilities (cf. the attribution theory of Weiner, 1992, 1979). Despite the fact that students also perceived these strategies as motivational, they put lower value on them than their teachers did probably because they are often at the receiving end and cannot therefore determine task difficulty as much as they would like to. Additionally, in

their journals, while teachers link task difficulty with linguistic burdens and try to regulate the tasks linguistically, students tend to compare task difficulty with their self-perceived abilities. Research has shown that regular perceptions of excessive task difficulty results in lower self-perceptions of competence and lower levels of motivation (Eccles, 1983; Li, Lee, & Solmon 2007). However, from a cognitive perspective, use of cognitively undemanding tasks in teaching cognitively competent students may undermine their engagement with the tasks (Borg, 2008). Therefore, when teachers make too much adjustment to task difficulty, they may underestimate their students' cognitive abilities to process and perform the tasks.

Another significant difference was found in teacher and student perceptions of one strategy under the 'task relevance' domain: considering students' needs. Teachers saw this strategy as having more motivational power than did their students. In contrast, students took preference over teachers' consideration of their interests instead of their needs. This contrasts with the Turkish students in Taşpınar (2004), who cared more about their needs than about their interests. It is important to clarify here what it takes to be a need or an interest. A need refers to students' demands for improvement in their English communicative competence or for success in their future academic and professional lives where English has a crucial function. It is different from an interest that simply refers to students' personal leisure pursuits. This distinction indicates that whereas Vietnamese EFL teachers are concerned about how to relate their tasks to their students' need to achieve prospective academic or professional success, what concerns the students is whether the tasks make a reality of their personal satisfaction. This partially replicates the finding of Alshehri (2013), who discovered that EFL students in Saudi Arabia favor the social than the academic aspect of motivational strategies. Indeed, in EFL environments where students often show a somewhat negative attitude to English as a compulsory subject or to

traditionally grammar-oriented classroom teaching, teaching strategies that offer rewarding moments are more likely to be well received.

For the 'task nature' domain, teachers endorsed the strategy of using authentic tasks that prepare students for real-life applications more highly than did their students. This suggests the teachers' tendency to blend communicatively driven tasks in the sense of task-based language teaching (Bygate, Norris & Van den Branden, 2015; Ellis, 2003; Long, 1985) into their classroom instruction. The teachers believed that the more they concretize the connection between their tasks and their students' real-world activities, the more engaged in the tasks the students become because they equate the classroom with their own real lives. However, the students, as they wrote in their journals, opined that besides the practicality of relevant tasks, the more relevant the tasks are, the more familiar they become with the tasks and the easier it is for them to proceed. Thus, it is clear that the larger purpose of authentic tasks, that is, its function in motivating students instrumentally (cf. Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert, 1972), is teachers' major concern, yet students tend to associate task authenticity with task familiarity that aids their existing efficacy (cf. Bandura, 1997). In addition, one other reason why students held this strategy in lower regard could be that it is underutilized in the classroom although their teachers find it important. In fact, the pressure of conforming to prescribed syllabi and textbooks as well as of preparing students for standardized exams is a huge obstacle for teachers to frequently implement authentic tasks.

Comparing teacher and student perceptions of the 'teacher behavior during task time' strategies showed that teachers thought more highly of their role in acting as a facilitator during task time than did their students. Although in their journals, students agreed with their teachers in terms of the functions of teachers' facilitative role: offering linguistic (e.g, grammar and

vocabulary) as well as non-linguistic (e.g., clarification on task procedures, ideas) support, interestingly, several of them expressed their higher expectation for teachers to be "walking dictionaries". This means that what they need the most during task time is probably teachers' prompt response to their need for task-related vocabulary, and thus they liken teachers' lexical competence to their function as a facilitator. Tran (2015) study also found that Vietnamese students ranked their teachers' English abilities as the most inspiring teacher qualities. However, it has been documented that EFL teachers' proficiency levels in many EFL contexts including Vietnam are in general insufficient for them to provide students with rich input (Nunan, 2003). Probably, the reason why students perceived this strategy to be less important might be that they have experienced that their teachers, due to their limited linguistic competence, are unable to be as facilitative as an excellent "walking dictionaries". Further, as Hu (2005) pointed out, in Asian conceptions, pedagogy is all about the process of transmitting and receiving knowledge. This long-rooted belief could be the reason for the still prevalent teacher-fronted orientations in Vietnamese EFL classrooms, and it is also why students might experience less of teachers' acting as a facilitator in student-centered communication.

With respect to the 'task materials' domain, students gave higher endorsement to the use of authentic materials as a motivator than their teachers. This endorsement is indicative of their somewhat opposition to total dependence on EFL textbooks as a main source of learning materials. In their journals, students stressed that textbooks are excessively academic and using them can thus result in tedium and boredom. They expressed their opinion that there should be a balanced mix of textbook and authentic content, which allows them to learn without feeling academically fatigued. Despite identifying with students' opinion of authentic materials, teachers might have considered this less important than their students for some reasons. The fact that they

used words such as “sometimes” or “occasionally” in their journal description of indicates their difficulty in integrating authentic materials into teaching frequently. This makes as much sense as it would in Vietnamese EFL classrooms where learning and teaching are affected by a rigorous test-driven orientation and excessive workload (Dang, 2010). What is more, teachers’ limited access to authentic materials and their ability to modify the materials may account for their underuse of the related strategy.

In terms of the ‘task-related feedback’ domain, although the practice of giving immediate during-task feedback was not favored by both teachers and students, results showed a statistically significant difference between their perceptions. The reason why students put slightly higher value on this strategy than their teachers did can be that they at times need such feedback to be personalized. Feedback given to them during task time can somehow assist them in overcome the difficulty they are facing in their tasks. It can also prevent the mistakes they are making in using English from being known by their classmates, which preserves their face. However, the fact that students perceived this strategy as one of the weakest motivator suggests that only certain individual students prefer during-task feedback.

Overall, the broad congruence between Vietnamese teachers and students about different aspects of TRMS suggests that by and large, teachers have effectively responded to their students’ motivational needs by creating and conducting tasks in a motivating way, their divergences in the TRMS aspects discussed above present the need for teachers to reconsider the importance of some of the strategies in the light of their students’ perceptions. The students expressed their stronger preferences for authentic task materials and immediate during-task feedback than the teachers, which provides some food for thought about motivational teaching practice. Perhaps, what teachers need to do is reduce their dependence on textbook content while

increasingly using authentic materials in their teaching. Teachers should also pay close attention to individual students' preference in order to make decisions about whether to provide feedback during task time. In addition, the fact that students gave lower endorsement to some strategies does not mean that the strategies are less effective in motivating them. Instead, consideration needs to be taken about whether teachers have sufficiently utilized the strategies in their teaching or whether they have practiced the strategies in an effective way. After all, in order for the use of tasks to positively influence students' learning motivation, it is vitally important to maintain the harmony between teacher and student perceptions because any mismatch in their expectations about classroom activities will inevitably bring about a direct, negative impact not only on students' learning (Nunan, 1987) but also on their satisfaction and confidence in their teachers (Peacock, 2007).

4.4. A Model for Task-Related Motivational Teaching Practice

In existing literature on L2 motivation, there is an impressive range of conceptual frameworks for motivational teaching practice that accommodate many different categories of motivational strategies. As reviewed in Chapter 1, these include such established models as the triadic motivational framework (Dörnyei, 1994), the intrinsic-extrinsic dichotomy (Williams & Burden, 1997), the process-oriented approach to L2 motivation (Dörnyei, 2005), and the motivational teaching practice framework (Dörnyei, 2001). These frameworks are home to a wealth of categories of motivational strategies involving various aspects of classroom teaching and learning. While the Dörnyei (1994) and Williams and Burden (1997) frameworks describe categories of L2 motivation as separate orientations, the models of Dörnyei (2005; 2001) group different components of motivational teaching practice into successive stages of a process.

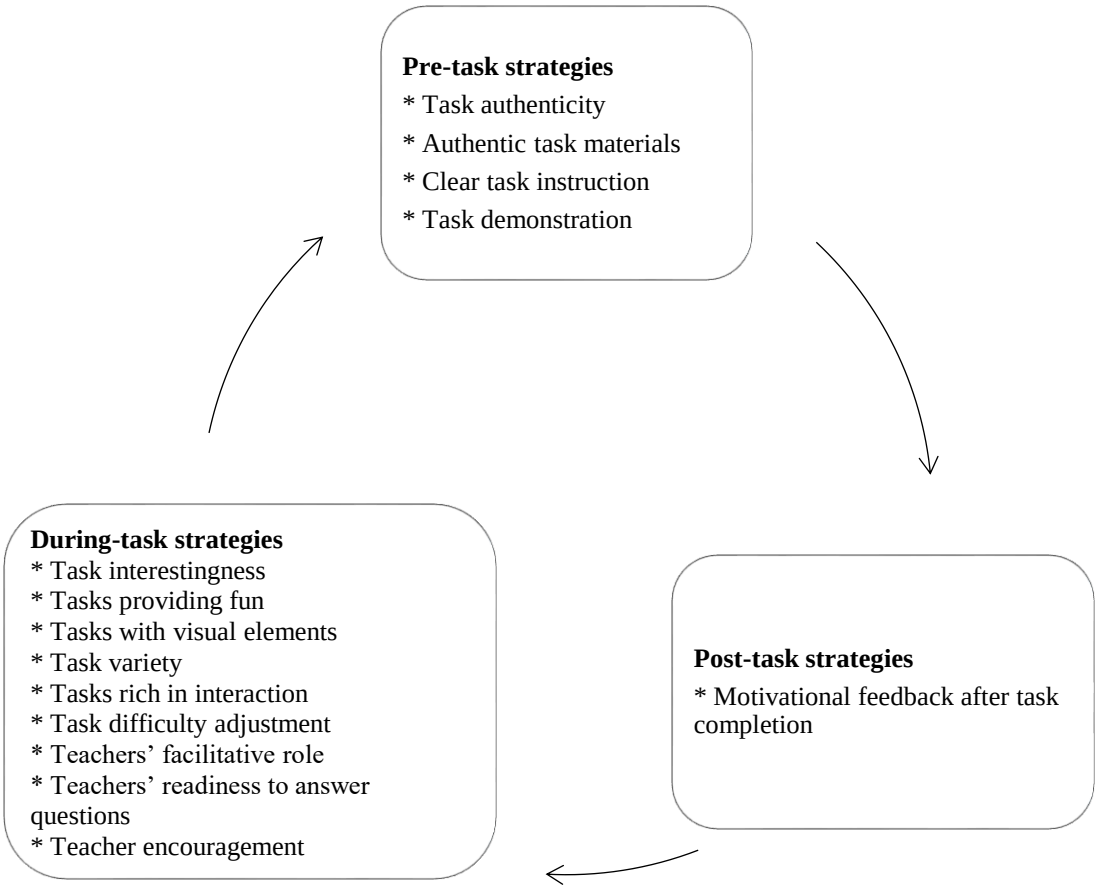
Given that classroom tasks involve a process of different stages (pre-task, during-task, and post-task), certain task-related motivational strategies can fit into each of these stages to perform their motivational roles. The Dörnyei (2001) framework encapsulates four stages of motivational teaching practice that correspond to the stages of classroom tasks (see Dörnyei, 2001, p. 29, for further details about the framework). On the basis of this framework, a three-stage model for task-related motivational strategies can be established, based on the work of this thesis. Informed by the results of this study, the first two stages of Dörnyei (2001)—creating initial conditions for motivation and generating motivation—were collapsed into the pre-task stage. The third stage of maintaining and protecting motivation turned into the during-task stage. The fourth stage of encouraging retrospective evaluation became the post-task stage. Figure 1 below presents the three-stage model involving the strategies highly endorsed by Vietnamese EFL teachers and students in this study.

Pre-task Strategies. Motivational strategies in the pre-task stage are responsible for generating initial motivation. Without these initiators and generators, there would be little or even no force that drives students to proceed with a given task.

- Task authenticity (the similarity between a task and real-world activities related to students' academic and professional prospects) is useful for arousing students' instrumental motivation. The fact that doing a task would enhance their knowledge and skills necessary for them to succeed in the future is a catalyst for them to take action.
- Use of authentic task materials can be effective in increasing students' integrative motivation. Cultural artifacts created by native speakers of English certainly encapsulate elements closely related to English-speaking cultures. Thus, frequent contact with these

materials means frequent contact with the community of people with whom students wish to establish a relationship of some kind.

Figure 1. *A Model for TRMS in EFL Classroom Instruction*



Note. This model is a revision of the four-stage model by Dörnyei (2001), as explained in the text. This model fits the data collected for this study.

- Giving clear task instructions and demonstrating for how tasks can be done are effective motivation generators. When learners gain a complete understanding of a task, its purposes and realistic contributions to students' learning or their own lives, they will be

poised to throw their efforts into completing the task. These strategies also represent the teacher's sound pedagogical practice.

During-task Strategies. The strategies that teachers use in this stage can maintain and protect students' motivation. Because students' motivation, as documented in L2 motivation literature, is not static but dynamic, using strategies to prevent the over-time decrease in their motivation is all-important.

- Task interestingness, fun, visuality, and variety are the very good conditions for making learning enjoyable and stimulating. Classroom learning, especially in contexts where there is a strong focus on standardized test preparations, is often a tedious process of absorbing knowledge and can therefore give rise to student fatigue and their feeling of boredom that potentially deter their investment in learning. This can be addressed to some extent if teachers introduce appealing tasks to break routineness and monotony, while still making the tasks remain connected to intended content.
- Tasks that create as many favorable conditions for students to communicate and interact in English as possible is a motivational pedagogical choice. Students' first and foremost purpose of going to an English class is to reinforce their ability to use the language for meaningful real-life communication. Therefore, any task that offers them the opportunity to work toward this end is inherently motivating to them. What is more, the amount of interaction that the task bring about adds to the atmosphere of an active classroom where students' motivation is free from the impacts of monotony and dullness.
- Adjusting the difficulty of a task is instrumental in regulating students' beliefs. Appropriate task difficulty gives students a sense of their self-efficacy and self-esteem.

When they believe in their ability to tackle some difficulty level of the task, they do so with self-confidence. Plus, when trying to get through a certain task level, students at the same time expect their success in dealing with that level. Thus, they would continue with the task without the intention to relinquish their efforts.

- Teachers' acting as a facilitator during the process of task completion plays a crucial role in an interactive class. When working on tasks in groups, students cannot avoid facing difficulties associated with the language they are expected to use, with the content of the tasks, and with issues of cooperation. These difficulties are where teachers' facilitative role functions. Being facilitators also means that teachers loosen their control over class work as much as possible; as a result, students have more freedom to actively take charge of their tasks.
- Teachers' readiness to answer students' questions is part of their role as a facilitator. The extent to which teachers are available to offer assistance is linked to the smoothness of students' task-completing process. Teachers' physical and mental availability also gives the impression that they are committed to teaching, which can result in students trying not to betray such commitment. In addition, students often associate teachers' ability to respond promptly to their inquiries with teacher competence. The more they experience teacher competence, the more they see that competence as a goal toward which they work.
- Encouragement that teachers give during task time, besides increasing classroom interaction, is especially indispensable for motivating students in EFL contexts who often display communication reluctance induced by the impact of Confucian conventions in education.

Post-task Strategies. The strategies used in this stage are fundamentally related to feedback that teachers provide about how well students do their tasks. Feedback is extremely necessary because without it, students would feel confused about their learning and lose motivation to do subsequent tasks.

- Feedback given after task completion has some functions. First, it does not interrupt students when they are performing the task. Second, it allows teachers to provide detailed comments about students' task performance (e.g., the degree of task completion, language use, and group cooperation and collaboration). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, post-task feedback paints a more accurate picture of students' strengths and weaknesses. Appraising students' accomplishments in the task can develop in them a sense of self-worth, that is, a recognition of their capabilities. Addressing students' areas of improvement in a motivating way would encourage them to judge their own performance in a positive light and expend more energy to reduce or remove their deficiencies. Both appraisal and constructive evaluation motivate students to take their future task performance to new heights.

On a final note, it is necessary to note that the task-related motivational teaching practice model presented above is not a linear yet cyclical process. This means that using task-related motivational strategies in one stage affects the effectiveness of the strategies in another stage in motivating students. If teachers fail to use necessary strategies to generate students' initial task motivation, any attempt that follows to motivate them in the during-task stage may risk producing little or even no motivational effect. Students' motivational state formed and

developed in one stage is linked to their motivational intensity in another, and the creation of this link depends largely on how well and harmoniously teachers use strategies.

Also important to note is that the task-related strategies presented in this model are derived from Vietnamese EFL teachers and students' perception. Many strategies in this model were also investigated in other cultures and contexts where their importance was perceived differently. This difference suggests that motivational strategies in general and task-related motivational strategies in particular have some level of cultural and contextual sensitivity, as Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) and many subsequent studies have shown thus far. It is thus for teachers to heighten their own awareness of their specific student populations and of their teaching culture when they choose which strategies to practice in their classrooms.

CHAPTER 5: CONTRIBUTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1. Contributions

Although a great deal of research has been devoted to examining motivational strategies, the present study has been the first endeavor to do so in the EFL context of Vietnam and is believed to make certain contributions. A particular strength of this study is that it was conducted in the context of increasing awareness of communicative language teaching in general and task-based language teaching in particular as a result of the implementation of Vietnam's National Foreign Language Project 2008-2020, whose core objective is to improve international communication skills on the national level. This gradual switch from traditional forms-focused instruction to more communicatively-focused instruction definitely requires the increasing employment of meaningful tasks in the EFL classroom. Since *task* in this study was used to refer to classroom activities in general terms, the motivational strategies related to it could by all means be widely applicable both where the grammar-focused teaching of English is dominant and where task-based instruction has become a major part of teaching practice. Thus, EFL classroom practitioners can take the information that this study provided for reference when they are sketching out and carrying out tasks for their own classrooms.

What is more, the results of this study showed that it is essentially crucial that tasks meet the needs and interests of students in order to motivate them to learn English in an instructional environment. Although this was just what a single task-related motivational strategy tells, it necessarily sensitizes EFL professionals to the compelling need to conduct needs-based analyses before commencing a course. What they could do is to adopt the strategies used in this study as the means for them to achieve prior knowledge of their students' needs and interests with which their task design and implementation are informed. Doing this would allow them to find ways to

align their instructional practices with motivational variations among their students for one thing and to nurture the students' motivation for better learning outcomes for another.

Given that it was the very first endeavor to address the issue of task-related motivational strategies in Vietnam, this study has laid a foundation for any further attempts to conduct similar projects. In this respect, the study is noteworthy in that it considered both teachers' and students' perceptions, which provided a fuller picture of what classroom stakeholders think about motivational teaching. The sample sizes of this study were from two different institutional settings (tertiary education and the private teaching sector) and were believed to be relatively large, thus helping its results to be generalized, albeit with caution and to a proper extent, to teaching and learning English across the two settings.

Regarding the choice of methodological approach for the study, triangulating both quantitative and qualitative data was a sound practice, offering a wide window into the issue whose inherent nature is perceptual. For the qualitative part alone, the use of journal entries could be considered for research into perceptions because it is where participants deeply process the topic being studied for an extended period of time and express their opinions in greater detail.

5.2. Limitations and Suggestions

For several reasons, this study is not free from limitations. First of all, the study had its primary focus on the perceived importance of task-related motivational strategies while ruling out the question as to how frequently the strategies are actually practiced in EFL classrooms in Vietnam. As noted in related literature, that certain motivational strategies are considered as important does not necessarily follow that they are used on a frequent basis (e.g., Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). Therefore, future research that explores task-related motivational strategies could provide a further understanding of the issue by investigating both the importance and

frequency of use of the strategies. Investigating whether the strategies are used frequently or underused would provide more insight into the gap between teachers' motivational teaching practice and their students' perception as well as motivational intensity.

Second, the scope of this study was restricted to the exploration of which task-related motivational strategies were preferred by teachers and students and to the extent to which their preferences coincided. What was not considered, although critical, is how motivated the students were in the presence of task-related motivational strategies. This limitation provides an important avenue for additional research that involves the correlation between the reported importance and/or use of certain strategies and students' perceived motivational state. This, if done, could in a way shed light on what specific roles these strategies play in the motivational levels of students. Perhaps, some experimental studies in which these strategies are practiced over an EFL course could be conducted to produce more convincing empirical evidence as to their motivational value.

Third, when considering the population samples recruited for the study, one further limitation must be acknowledged. The study used a snowball sampling technique to collect quantitative and qualitative responses, which did not control strictly for the profile characteristics of students (e.g., proficiency levels, years of English learning, and institutions) and of teachers (e.g., qualifications, years of teaching experience, and institutions). There is, however, every chance that participants with different academic and professional characteristics would have different preferences for specific task-related motivational strategies. To fix this flaw, it is critical that future studies on this topic will create conditions for profile analyses to investigate specific populations' preferences.

Finally, it would be interesting to look at how reported or observed use of task-related motivational strategies is associated with students' learning gains, which is beyond the scope of the present study. Indeed, a few previous studies that focused their investigations on multifarious domains of motivational strategies have found the positive interaction of linguistic and motivational variables in second language task performance (Dörnyei & Kormos, 2000; Dörnyei, 2002; Kormos & Dörnyei, 2004). In this light, more studies are warranted to explore whether the practice of task-related motivational strategies alone can result in better task performance and learning achievement, especially in classes of productive English language skills such as speaking and writing.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Qualtrics-hosted Survey

Below are the motivational teaching strategies involving *tasks* (communicative activities used in the classroom to facilitate students' learning and promote their motivation to learn) that teachers can use to motivate students to learn English in the classroom. Click on ONE value in the range from 1-7 to indicate the importance level of each strategy.

1 = Not important
2 = Slightly important
3 = Somewhat important
4 = Important
5 = Quite important
6 = Very important
7 = Extremely important

No.	Strategies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	To motivate students to learn with tasks, Vietnamese teachers of English should:							
	Task presentation							
2	Demonstrate how to complete tasks. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48	Give choices to students while presenting tasks. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Use a variety of tasks in class. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47	Give clear instructions for tasks to students. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	Explain the purpose of every task. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	Show students how each task contributes to their language learning goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43	Use Vietnamese to present tasks when necessary.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Task nature							
1	Use authentic tasks that prepare students for real-life applications. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	Raise students' curiosity by introducing surprising tasks. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	Use game-like competitions in class. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	Use tasks that allow students to interact with one another in English. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Include visual elements in tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46	Use tasks that require students to work together in groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	Use tasks in which students need to work together outside the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36	Use tasks that students need to use technology (i.e. computer) to complete.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Use tasks that need students to use their creativity to complete.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37	Use tasks that offer opportunity to move around in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Tasks' relevance to students' needs and interests							
3	Consider students' needs rather than tests while presenting tasks. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

18	Consider students' interests rather than tests while presenting tasks. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45	Use tasks that are interesting to students. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Use tasks that allow students to have fun in the classroom. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Task difficulty							
5	Adjust the difficulty level of tasks to students' abilities. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	Make tasks challenging enough for students. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	Use tasks that are within students' competence. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Use tasks that are manageable for students. *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	Use a series of tasks with increasing levels of difficulty.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Task materials							
24	Offer a variety of task materials.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	Use task materials that introduce the cultures of English-speaking countries.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	Use task materials that include the elements of the Vietnamese culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Use authentic materials produced by native English speakers for real-life communicative purposes such as a newspaper article.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Use task materials that introduce new language forms.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Provide task materials for students to prepare outside the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Feedback on task performance							
8	Organize peer feedback about task performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26	Give feedback on students' task performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	Review students' language used for completing tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39	Provide feedback on students' group work for task completion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	Give immediate feedback while students are doing tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41	Give feedback after students have completed tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Comment on the overall task performance of each group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	Comment on the task performance of each individual student.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	During-task teacher behavior							
44	Act as a facilitator as students are doing tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42	Be ready to answer questions from students during task time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34	Participate as much as possible with students in completing tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Interact with individual students during task time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40	Encourage students to speak during task time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32	Mediate the talking time among students when they are doing tasks together.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38	Draw students' attention to task contents.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35	Encourage students' expectancy of success in particular tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Note. * Items adapted from Taşpınar (2004).

Appendix 2: Instruction for Reflective Journal Writing (Teacher)

Reflect on your experience, write a journal (a maximum of 2 pages) expressing your opinion about the motivational strategies involving tasks (classroom activities) that you as a teacher may use to motivate your students to learn English in the classroom. You can use the questions below to guide your writing, but you can add any new ideas that you think are relevant.

1. What are the characteristics of a task that can motivate your students to learn in the classroom?
2. Is it important to make tasks relevant to your students' personal needs and interests? Why?
3. Does the difficulty level of a task affect your students' motivation to learn? If yes, how should you address this issue?
4. How should you design task materials that are motivating to your students?
5. How should you present tasks in order to motivate your students to learn?
6. How should you organize and provide feedback about your students' task performance in the way that is motivating to them?
7. While your students are doing tasks in the classroom, what do you think you should do to motivate them?

Appendix 3: Instruction for Reflective Journal Writing (Student)

Reflect on your experience, write a journal (a maximum of 2 pages) expressing your opinion about the motivational strategies involving tasks (classroom activities) that your teacher may use to motivate you to learn English in the classroom. You can use the questions below to guide your writing, but you can also add any new ideas that you think are relevant.

1. What are the characteristics of a task that can motivate you to learn in the classroom?
2. Is it important for tasks to be relevant to your personal needs and interests? Why?
3. Does the difficulty of tasks used in the classroom affect your motivation to learn? If yes, what do you expect your teacher to do about this?
4. How should your teachers design task materials that are motivating to you?
5. How should your teachers present tasks in order to motivate you to learn?
6. How should your teachers organize and provide feedback about your task performance in the way that is motivating to you?
7. While you are doing tasks in the classroom, what do you expect your teachers to do to motivate you?

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