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Exploring EFL Students' Perceptions on the Influence of Teacher Enthusiasm in Fostering Classroom Interaction

A B S T R A C T

This study investigates the influence of teacher enthusiasm on students' interaction in EFL classrooms at Salahaddin University, College of Basic Education/Erbil- Kurdistan Region. The main aim of the study is to explore how teachers' enthusiasm through four categories: verbal enthusiasm, non-verbal enthusiasm, building a supportive climate, and fostering motivation impacts students' willingness to participate. 137 second and third-grade students participated in a structured questionnaire to assess students' perception on teacher enthusiasm. The results show that teacher enthusiasm greatly increases students' participation and motivation, through fostering an engaging and supportive environment by applying verbal and non-verbal cues. Additionally, the research highlights the essential role of teacher enthusiasm in reducing student anxiety and increasing their self-confidence, thereby enhancing overall classroom interaction. © 2026 JTUH, College of Education for Human Sciences, Tikrit University

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استكشاف تصورات طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية حول تأثير حماس المعلم في تعزيز التفاعل داخل الصف

روا جبار حويز / جامعة صلاح الدين-أربيل / كلية التربية الأساسية
دلخشان يوسف عثمان / جامعة صلاح الدين-أربيل / كلية التربية الأساسية
الخلاصة:

تتناول هذه الدراسة تأثير حماس المعلم على تفاعل الطلاب في اجزاء اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة صلاح الدين ، كلية التربية الأساسية في إقليم كردستان - أربيل. الهدف الاساسي من الدراسة هو

استكشاف كيف يؤثر حماس المعلم على تفاعل الطلاب من خلال اربع فئات : الحماس اللفظي ، الحماس الغير لفظي ، بناء مناخ داعم ، وتعزيز التحفيز ، وتأثيره على رغبة الطلاب في المشاركة. شارك ١٣٧ طالباً من طلاب المرحلة الاولى و المرحلة الثانية والقبله في استبيان هيكلي لتقييم توقعاتهم عن حماس المعلم أظهرت النتائج ان حماس المعلم يزيد بشكل كبير من مشاركة الطلاب وتحفيزهم من خلال خلق بيئة تفاعلية وداعمة بإستخدام الإشارات اللفظية والغير لفظية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تُظهر الدراسة الدور الأساسي لحماس المعلم في تقليل قلق الطلاب وزيادة ثقتهم بأنفسهم، مما يعزز التفاعل العام داخل الفصل الدراسي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: حماس ، تصورات ، تفاعل ، دافع ، سلوكيات.

1. Introduction

Self-Determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) highlights the significance of teacher enthusiasm in enhancing students' intrinsic motivation in learning, through fulfilling students' basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness. Moreover, Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) and the Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), offer insights into how teacher behaviours impact students' emotional comfort, self-efficacy, and language learning outcomes.

Teacher enthusiasm is widely known as a key factor for encouraging students to interact in EFL classroom, research by Schunk (1991) and Frymier and Houser (2000) emphasize that enthusiastic teachers create positive environment for students to be confident enough to participate and engage. According to (Dörnyei, 2001; Keller et al., 2014) both verbal (for example, positive language, praise, and humour) and non-verbal (for example, gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact) behaviours are significantly affective in enhancing students' motivation. Furthermore, through enthusiasm teachers can

reduce students' anxiety level and enable them to be more confident in their skills to participate in the lesson activities (Mercer, 2010).

The aims of this study are to investigate the role of teacher enthusiasm in influencing students' interaction through verbal and non-verbal behaviours and how students perceive these behaviours in EFL classrooms at Salahaddin university. Since, there is a limited study based on the direct effect of teacher enthusiasm on Kurdish EFL classroom's interaction.

To achieve the mentioned aims, the following research questions have been developed:

1. What role does teacher enthusiasm play in encouraging students to interact and participate in class?
2. How do Kurdish EFL students perceive teacher enthusiasm affecting their motivation to participate in class?

This study will put up the existing literature on teacher enthusiasm and its influence in EFL context. In Kurdistan region, teacher enthusiasm may play a key role in overcoming barriers like, cultural, linguistic and institutional challenges, through fostering a positive, interactive learning environment. Teachers could get benefit from the findings as they show students perspective on different enthusiasm behaviours and offer strategies to create a more positive and engaging learning environment for EFL students to improve their outcomes.

This study is limited to second and third grade EFL students of English Department- College of Basic Education, so the findings may be limited in its ability to be generalized as they may not be applied to other educational contexts.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Teacher enthusiasm in Language Learning

Teacher enthusiasm is important for establishing an engaging learning atmosphere, especially in language education. It's defined as teacher's proactive engagement that greatly influences student participation (Schunk, 1991; Frymier & Houser, 2000). Enthusiastic teachers provide a supportive environment, reduce anxiety and improve communication by both verbal (e.g., encouragement) and non-verbal (e.g., gestures) forms of expression (Guthrie et al., 2012; Mercer, 2010).

Furthermore, the impact of both verbal and non-verbal enthusiasm on student engagement has been well-documented, with positive language and gestures significantly boosting motivation and reducing communication anxiety (Alahmed, 2023). Similarly, Khudhair (2022) found that EFL teachers' enthusiasm for using different techniques in the classroom enhances student engagement and supports better language learning.

2.2 Teacher Enthusiasm and Its Impact in EFL Classrooms

Teacher enthusiasm has been recognized as an important factor in encouraging student engagement in the classroom. Early studies by Crookes and Schmidt (1991) demonstrated that teacher enthusiasm impacts students' readiness to communicate in language learning. The importance of the role of teacher affective engagement has been highlighted in encouraging students to interact by Dörnyei (1994). Also, enthusiastic teachers increase student involvement and participation Keller (1987). Moreover, Allwright and Bailey

(1991) observed that teacher enthusiasm can enhance students' comfortability in engaging in communicative activities and decrease stress level.

2.3 Dimensions of Teacher Enthusiasm: Verbal and Non-verbal Cues

Teacher enthusiasm is demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal dimensions; both significantly contribute in shaping the emotional atmosphere in the classroom. Verbal behaviours, can include, varying tone, adjusting speech rate, and enhancing students' attention and participation through using encouraging language (Mehrabian, 1972). Non-verbal behaviours, such as, facial expressions, gestures, body language, and eye contact, also play an important role in helping to create a supportive environment (Andersen, 1999). Together, these verbal and non-verbal behaviours enhance students' engagement and classroom interaction.

In EFL classrooms, where communication has a significant impact on language learning, verbal cues are particularly important. Keller (1983) and Burleson and Samter (1990) found that creating an encouraging environment for students require enthusiastic teachers who apply positive verbal cues.

Similarly, non-verbal behaviours are essential to be considered due to the help they offer in reducing psychological distance between teacher and student and foster greater student engagement (Richmond et al., 2003). These behaviours also support an emotionally safe environment for students to be comfortable taking communicative risks, that is important for language learning (Andersen, 1999).

2.4 Authentic vs. Inauthentic Enthusiasm

Authentic enthusiasm occurs a teacher's internal emotional involvement and their external behaviours match (Rogers, 1961). Authentic enthusiasm has a great effect on students' because when teachers genuinely show their enthusiasm, in return students engage and build trust in the classroom resulting

in deeper learning. Hargreaves (1998) argued that to fulfil students' needs and for real emotional connection authentic enthusiasm is the key.

On the other hand, inauthentic enthusiasm, known as surface acting, can decrease the teacher enthusiasm impact on students. Hochschild (1983) noted that teachers disconnecting their inner feeling and external behaviours can cause lowering students' trust and willingness to engage. Similarly, Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) and Zapf (2002) observed that inauthentic enthusiasm reduces the effectiveness of teaching.

2.5 Teacher Enthusiasm and Student Motivation

Teacher enthusiasm plays a crucial role in enhancing student motivation, which is a key factor in language learning. According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985), motivation is shaped by satisfaction of three core psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness with others. For students to take charge of their own learning, be confident and have a sense of connections with their classmates and teachers, teacher enthusiasm is needed (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Research by Dörnyei (2001) and Mercer (2010) suggests that enthusiastic teachers encourage students to be more active in classroom engagements and enhance their intrinsic motivation.

Furthermore, Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) argues that students with high level of anxiety and low motivation increase the affective filter, meaning they feel not confident enough in their abilities to take risks and participate in communicative tasks, which prevents effective language learning process. To lower this filter, teachers need to be enthusiastic and create a positive atmosphere for students to freely participate without the fear of being judged (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). As noted by Horwitz, and Cope (1986), enthusiastic teachers reduce communication anxiety, which mostly results in

students to confidently speak using the required language. Also, teacher enthusiasm is important for students motivation to read, which transfers to other areas of learning with time, Guthrie, Wigfield, and You (2012).

2.6 Cultural and Contextual Influences on Teacher Enthusiasm

Cultural and contextual factors greatly influence on how teacher enthusiasm is expressed and perceived in the classroom. In EFL settings, particularly in non-western contexts, teachers need to adapt to cultural norms to meet the institutional expectations that affects how enthusiastic a teacher can be. According to Clément (1980) and Taladngoien et al. (2020), the term of enthusiasm varies across cultures, some may prefer verbal cues, while others encourage non-verbal cues.

In Kurdish context, linguistic barriers and socio-cultural constraints are additional challenges that could face EFL teachers, for that being an enthusiastic teacher is essential to overcome such challenges. Research by Hama and Jalal (2019) suggests that teacher enthusiasm is a key factor in encouraging classroom interaction, due to Kurdish students struggling with language learning because of socio-cultural environment.

3. Methodology

This section outlines the methodology used in this study to assess students' views on teacher enthusiasm and its impact on classroom interaction in EFL settings. A structured questionnaire was employed for data collection.

3.1 Research Design

The research design employed in this study is a quantitative research method. According to (Kerlinger, 1986) quantitative research methods are valuable for examining relationships between variables clearly and statically, enabling the research to achieve conclusions from numerical data. This study specifically aims to assess students' perception on the influence of teacher enthusiasm on their participation, motivation and engagement in EFL learning environments. As findings by Dörnyei (2001) and Keller et al. (2014), emphasize that enthusiasm has greatly enhances student's confident in communicating in the language classrooms.

The questionnaire consists of 16 items using Likert-scale that assess students' perceptions of teacher enthusiasm across four key aspects: Verbal Enthusiasm, Non-verbal Enthusiasm, Student Motivation and Student Participation and Engagement in the classroom. Each section aims to capture how various behaviours or forms of an enthusiastic teacher impacts the student's interaction in the classroom. Likert-scale items, that allows the researcher to achieve the results of the degree of agreement or disagreement with specific statements, are commonly used and ideal in educational researches (Likert, 1932).

3.2 Participants

183 second and third grade students enrolled in the English Department of College of basic Education at Salahaddin University-Erbil, were the target population for this study, these two grades were specifically chosen due to their familiarity with the environment and classroom interactions. However, because of attendance constraints only 137 students were able to be part of the data collection process and participate in the questionnaire phase, which equals %74

of the total population, afterwards, three responses were excluded because they were invalid, so 134 valid and complete responses remained.

3.3 Tool construction

The study designed the questionnaire in a structured way to examine the influence of teacher enthusiasm on EFL students' interaction based on Frymier and Houser's (2000) model.

The mentioned modal categorized teacher enthusiasm into four key components:

1. Non-verbal enthusiasm: This refers to teacher enthusiasm behaviours, for example, eye contact, gestures and facial expressions, that are important in creating an engaging and positive classroom environment (Mehrabian, 1972; Richmond et al., 2003).
2. Verbal enthusiasm: This refers to teacher's verbal reinforcements and use of tone, as (Frymier & Houser, 2000) emphasize the crucial role of teacher's encouraging language in enhancing student interaction.
3. Building a supportive climate: This refers to the importance of teacher enthusiasm establishing a safe and welcoming classroom, to decrease student anxiety and increase engagement (Keller et al., 2014).
4. Fostering motivation through enthusiasm: This refers to the influence teacher enthusiasm has on the students' intrinsic motivation and their confidence to participate in learning activities (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

This modal formed the foundation for constructing the questionnaire, ensuring that it comprehensively and appropriately captures all aspects of teacher enthusiasm.

3.4 Procedure

The questionnaire was administered systematically and in a structured manner to ensure validity and reliability in data collection. The process began by informing the students about the purpose of the study and that their participation is voluntary, then, the questionnaire was distributed during a regular class session. Within 30 minutes students completed the questionnaire which is enough time for them to provide thoughtful and thorough responses. The questionnaire's structured format promoted consistency in the responses and facilitated uniformity in data collection (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996).

Additionally, to verify content validity, the questionnaire was emailed to a group of six experts specialized in applied linguistics and education from universities of Kurdistan and Iraq, in order to review it and ensure the validity and relevancy (Haynes et al., 1995).

Furthermore, 61 students participated in the pilot test to evaluate questionnaires internal consistency, resulting in a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.810 which is considered good reliability and show that the questionnaire assess the students' perceptions of teacher enthusiasm reliably (DeVellis, 1991).

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Rating Scale

Table 2: Reliability Statistics for the Pilot Questionnaire

4. Results and findings

Cronbach's Alpha	Internal Consistency
> 0.9	Excellent
0.8 – 0.9	Good
0.7 – 0.8	Acceptable
0.6 – 0.7	Questionable
0.5 – 0.6	Poor
< 0.5	Unacceptable

Measure	Value
Cronbach's Alpha	0.810
Number of Items	16
Number of Participants	61

Question	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Uncertain (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q1: The teacher uses expressive gestures and facial expressions to show interest in the subject.	6 (4.48%)	15 (11.19%)	55 (41.04%)	43 (32.09%)	15 (11.19%)	3.34	0.97
Q2: The teacher maintains eye contact with me and my classmates during lessons.	7 (5.22%)	16 (11.94%)	58 (43.28%)	39 (29.1%)	14 (10.45%)	3.28	0.98
Q3: The teacher moves around the classroom, which makes the class feel more interactive.	7 (5.22%)	20 (14.93%)	62 (46.27%)	31 (23.13%)	14 (10.45%)	3.19	0.99
Q4: The teacher smiles and has positive facial expressions that make me feel welcomed.	10 (7.46%)	14 (10.45%)	44 (32.84%)	48 (35.82%)	18 (13.43%)	3.37	1.08

This section presents the results achieved from the questionnaire, which are organized around the four categories mentioned in 3.3, each of which corresponding to the research questions regarding the influence of teacher enthusiasm on student participation and interaction. The results are analysed, and followed by the findings being interpreted. The discussion demonstrates the identified results and findings and to what degree they align with the previous studies, providing insights into the influence of teacher enthusiasm in educational settings.

Table (3) presents the descriptive statistics for the first four statements, that emphasize on non-verbal enthusiasm. These questions explore the effect of the teachers' physical movements, eye contact, gestures, and facial expressions on the student's engagement. The mean scores for the non-verbal enthusiasm questions range from 3.19 to 3.37, indicating moderate agreement with the statements. This shows that students notice the non-verbal enthusiasm behaviours and they indeed are positively affecting student's activeness in classroom. The standard deviations across the items range from 1.36 to 1.45, indicating some variability in the responses. Even though majority

agrees with the statement, still diversity is noticed that indicates individual differences and preferences.

The first statement refers to the teacher's use of gestures and facial expressions, with a mean score of 3.34, showing that students view this impactful for their engagement.

The second statement looks at the teacher considering eye contact during lessons, with a mean score of 3.28, indicating that eye contact is an important factor for interaction.

The third statement examines teacher's physical movement around the classroom, with the mean of 3.19, suggesting that its seen as moderately effective.

The fourth statement focuses on teacher's smile and positive facial expressions, with a mean score of 3.37, implying that students view this positively for creating a welcoming learning atmosphere.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Non-verbal Enthusiasm

Table (4) presents the descriptive statistics for statement five to question eight, focusing on verbal enthusiasm. These questions evaluate the effect of teachers' humour, positive language and encouraging words on students' engagement. The mean score for these items ranges from 2.99 to 3.69, indicating agreement with the statements. The standard deviations range from 1.07 to 1.45, showing that most students agree with the statements but still there are a few different perceptions about the effect they have on their engagement.

Statement five looks at the teachers' use of students' names, having mean score of 3.37, suggesting that it's seen as an effective way to acknowledge students and attract their attention.

Statement six addresses the use of encouraging words, with a mean score of 3.13, indicating that encouraging words can enhance students' confidence and enable them to participate.

Statement seven focuses on the variation of questioning techniques, with a mean score of 3.08 showing that the teachers' use of different ways to ask questions is impactful to keep students' engagement.

Statement eight examines the use of humor, with a mean score of 3.19, reflecting that humor can make the class more enjoyable and keep the interaction high.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Non-verbal Enthusiasm

Question	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Uncertain (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q5: The teacher often calls me by my name, making me feel acknowledged.	25 (18.66%)	30 (22.39%)	22 (16.42%)	31 (23.13%)	26 (19.40%)	3.02	1.41
Q6: The teacher uses encouraging words that make me feel more	24 (17.91%)	22 (16.42%)	32 (23.88%)	24 (17.91%)	32 (23.88%)	3.13	1.42

confident to participate.							
Q7: The teacher uses different ways of asking questions.	22 (16.42%)	26 (19.40%)	31 (23.13%)	29 (21.64%)	26 (19.40%)	3.08	1.36
Q8: The teacher uses humor appropriately, making the class more enjoyable.	20 (14.93%)	26 (19.40%)	26 (19.40%)	33 (24.63%)	29 (21.64%)	3.19	1.37

Table (5) presents descriptive statistics for statement nine to twelve, that pay attention to creating a supportive classroom atmosphere. These questions examine the teacher's supportive behaviours, for example, listening attentively, considering individual preferences and encouraging open discussion, and how they affect the classroom environment in a positive way. The mean scores for these items range from 3.49 to 3.69, showing agreement and suggesting that supportive behaviours positively impact the classroom atmosphere and students' participation. The standard deviation ranges from 1.09 to 1.17, indicating that most students show agreement but some variability is seen showing individual preferences and differences.

Statement nine asks about the effect of teachers' feedback on students' motivation to improve, with mean score of 3.55 reflecting the effectiveness of teachers' feedback.

Statement ten explores the role of teacher in students being encouraged to ask questions, with mean score of 3.55, indicating that encouraging questioning is viewed as an important factor for creating a supporting learning atmosphere.

Statement eleven addresses the impact of teachers' positive language as praises on students' motivation to engage, with mean score of 3.62, showing that praises and recognitions can enable students to interact more.

Statement twelve examines if the teacher listens to students attentively, with mean score of 3.62, indicating that students perceive the teachers listening to them and responses effective for their engagement.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for Building a Supportive Climate

Question	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Uncertain (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q9: The teacher's enthusiasm during group activities encourages me to participate more actively.	23 (17.16%)	31 (23.13%)	22 (16.42%)	25 (18.66%)	33 (24.63%)	3.10	1.45
Q10: The teacher provides feedback in a way that motivates me to improve.	0 (0.00%)	25 (18.66%)	30 (22.39%)	22 (16.42%)	31 (23.13%)	3.55	1.14
Q11: The teacher encourages me to ask questions when I don't understand something.	0 (0.00%)	24 (17.91%)	22 (16.42%)	32 (23.88%)	24 (17.91%)	3.55	1.10
Q12: The teacher's use of praise and recognition motivates me to do my best.	0 (0.00%)	22 (16.42%)	26 (19.40%)	31 (23.13%)	29 (21.64%)	3.62	1.09

Table (6) demonstrates the descriptive statistics for the last four statements, which pay attention to fostering motivation through enthusiasm. These questions evaluate the influence of teacher's enthusiasm and excitement for teaching on students' motivation to participate and engage in classroom. The mean scores for these items range from 3.49 to 3.69, showing agreement with the statements and viewing teacher enthusiasm as an important factor for students' interaction in classroom activities. The standard deviations for these items range from 1.07 to 1.17, indicating that while most students agree, some students have different opinions about the matter.

Statement thirteen evaluates the role of teacher's genuine interest for the subject on students' interest to learn. With mean score of 3.49, showing that its indeed influential.

Statement fourteen assesses the effect of the teacher's enthusiasm for teaching on students' participation. With mean score of 3.65, indicating the positive role teacher's excitement for teaching has on students.

Statement fifteen examines the teacher's deep passion for the subject in making the lesson engaging. With score 3.53, showing that it plays a great role in making students more active in participating and engaging.

The last statement, statement sixteen focuses on the effect of the teacher's energetic attitude on students' participation and questioning. With score of 3.49, suggesting the effectiveness of teacher's energy on students' engagement during lessons.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for Fostering Motivation through Enthusiasm

Question	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Uncertain (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q13: The teacher's enthusiasm for the subject makes me more interested in learning.	0 (0.00%)	28 (20.90%)	23 (17.16%)	32 (23.88%)	24 (17.91%)	3.49	1.11
Q14: The teacher's excitement about teaching motivates me to participate more actively.	0 (0.00%)	27 (20.15%)	20 (14.93%)	28 (20.90%)	35 (26.12%)	3.65	1.17
Q15: The teacher's passion for the subject helps make the lessons more engaging.	0 (0.00%)	21 (15.67%)	32 (23.88%)	27 (20.15%)	28 (20.90%)	3.53	1.07
Q16: The teacher's energy and enthusiasm encourage me to ask questions and participate.	0 (0.00%)	23 (17.16%)	31 (23.13%)	22 (16.42%)	25 (18.66%)	3.49	1.10

5.Discussion

In this section, to get a deeper understanding on the influence of teacher enthusiasm on student interaction in EFL classrooms at Salahaddin University, the findings are analysed and interpreted then related to the study's research questions and existing literature. The findings confirm the positive effect of teacher enthusiasm through both verbal and non-verbal behaviours on students' interaction in class activities.

Verbal enthusiasm (through questioning techniques, using students' names and encouraging language) was found to have a great impact on students' participation. These findings align with Frymier and Houser (2000), that mention the role of positive language on students' engagement. However, most students agreed on that but still there was variety in student's responses because of their learning preferences. Calling students by name had the highest score between the verbal behaviours showing that students admired personalized verbal engagement, while humour had the lowest score suggesting it had lower impact. The variability of responses indicates that there is a need to adapt teaching strategies that are personalized to fulfil the individual needs, as Schunk (1991) emphasizes the significance of considering individualized reinforcement.

Similarly, non-verbal enthusiasm, for example, gestures, eye contact and facial expressions, had a key role in creating an interactive classroom environment, as Mehrabian (1972) and Richmond et al. (2003), indicate that non-verbal behaviours are a crucial factor in increasing student engagement. The positive facial expressions had the highest score indicating that students highly value it, while teacher movement had the lowest score, becoming less effective comparing to other non-verbal behaviours in fostering engagement. Even though, non-verbal cues are recognized universally beneficial, still not all students prefer it, due to students' cultural backgrounds and personal preferences.

Establishing a supportive classroom atmosphere through feedback, praise and encouragement, was another factor in supporting students to be more interactive. These findings are aligning with Keller et al. (2014), who emphasized that a supportive classroom can decrease students' anxiety and increase engagement. Praise had the highest score for motivating students and creating a supportive classroom environment, while teacher's enthusiasm during group activities had the lowest score suggesting it was less impactful among the other behaviours. As it was noted that some students may not feel comfortable with the feedbacks or praises so the teacher needs to adjust the techniques of praising and giving feedback to the diverse need of students, as argued in the Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Finally, through fulfilling psychological needs as competence, autonomy and relatedness, students' intrinsic motivation enhances Ryan and Deci's (2000). That was a matter obviously seen in the category of fostering motivation through enthusiasm, where students perceived enthusiastic teachers effective to

feel more comfortable and confident to participate in the lesson activities. Teacher's excitement about teaching had the highest score and students perceived it as it's highly motivating them to be active and participate, while teacher's enthusiasm for the subject had lowest score for being less influential. This shows that some students prefer high-energy and enthusiastic environments, on the other hand, some prefer more soft style.

Overall, despite the variety in responses, the findings show that teacher enthusiasm in all different forms is influential and effective to enhance students' interaction in EFL classrooms. The individual differences and preferences suggest the need for flexible and adaptive teaching strategies to fulfil the variability, as teachers should be mindful of students needs and adjust their enthusiasm to establish a motivation learning environment (Frymier & Houser, 2000).

6. Conclusion

This study assessed the influence of teacher enthusiasm in fostering classroom interaction in EFL classrooms at Salahaddin University. Findings emphasize that teacher enthusiasm has a great role in creating an engaging and welcoming learning environment, resulting in enhancement in students learning level. Facial expressions, gestures, and positive language from verbal and non-verbal cues, were perceived by students as the most effective behaviours. Also, establishing a supportive learning atmosphere and motivate students to practice through praise, feedback, and encouragement, play a crucial role in students' interaction and their activeness in learning activities. However, variation in student's responses showed individual differences and preferences, which require teachers to adapt strategies to adjust with different learning preferences. Finally, the paper underlines the significance of teachers being enthusiastic and at the same time concern the variations of students' preferences, suggesting that personalized approaches are needed for establishing an interactive and motivating learning environment.

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