Motivating Discourse-Based English Structure Learning Material: Multilingual Indonesian EFL Students' Experiences

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Abstract
This study investigates the development and implementation of discourse-based English grammar materials designed to enhance motivation among Indonesian EFL university students who are multilingual in both local languages and Indonesian. Grounded in a discourse-based approach to language teaching and Keller's ARCS model of learning motivation (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction), the study aims to bridge the gap between grammatical form and communicative function through authentic, contextualized instruction. Employing a mixed-methods design, the research incorporated expert validation of the materials alongside classroom implementation involving 42 first-year undergraduate students. The instructional resources, which focused on parts of speech (nouns, pronouns, verbs), were rated highly for their structural organization and linguistic clarity, though greater alignment with established competency standards was advised. Motivation questionnaires and classroom observations revealed high student engagement across all ARCS dimensions, particularly in relevance and satisfaction. Gender differences were noted in confidence levels, suggesting the need for differentiated instructional strategies. Overall, the results demonstrate that a discourse-based approach to grammar instruction can enhance both linguistic proficiency and learner motivation, underscoring the pedagogical value of context-rich, motivationally responsive materials in EFL education.

Key words: discourse-based grammar instruction, language teaching, learner motivation, multilingual EFL

Introduction

The Indonesian secondary school curriculum emphasizes the development of students' communicative competence in English, requiring them to interact effectively across a range of contexts while considering both purpose and audience (BSKAP Kemdikbudristek, 2022). Meeting this aim goes beyond mastering grammar; it also requires discourse competence, meaning the ability to adjust language effectively and appropriately in diverse social and cultural situations (Canale & Swain, 1980). A discourse-based teaching approach supports contextualized learning by embedding language structures within real-life communicative scenarios, enabling learners to develop the pragmatic skills needed for coherent, contextually appropriate use. However, evidence shows that Indonesian students' English proficiency remains weak. Results from national exams reveal ongoing weaknesses, with average English scores in 2019 recorded at 49.13 for language stream students, compared to 53.58 and 44.78 for those in the natural science and social science (Puspendik Kemdikbud, 2019). Additional research shows that many high school graduates still struggle with communicative competence in English (Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Mustafa, 2019), and this issue persists into higher education (Rianto & Ehmke, 2021; Purwati et al., 2023). The EF English Proficiency Index (2024) confirms these concerns by ranking Indonesia 80th out of 116 countries, placing it in the "low" proficiency band. Collectively, these findings show the importance of new teaching strategies that build engagement and proficiency through discourse-oriented instructional materials.

Indonesia's linguistic environment is naturally multilingual, with more than 700 local languages existing alongside Bahasa Indonesia, the national lingua franca (Sneddon,

2003). In many cases, English is therefore not a second language but a third or even fourth, added to already complex linguistic repertoires shaped by local, national, and global communication needs. The multilingual environment shapes students' English learning in terms of both cognition and emotion. While it can present obstacles, such as transfer errors and uneven proficiency across languages, it also offers advantages, including metalinguistic benefits that support discourse awareness and pragmatic adaptability (Jessner, 2006; Cenoz & Gorter, 2015). Recognizing these dynamics is crucial when designing materials that respect students' linguistic backgrounds while supporting their English development.

In this multilingual setting, discourse-based materials can draw on learners' existing linguistic and cultural knowledge as valuable resources for creating meaning. By encouraging cross-linguistic comparisons and using familiar genres from both local and global traditions, teachers can present English grammar instruction that connects with students' real-life experiences. For example, examining the similarities and differences in how arguments are structured in Bahasa Indonesia, Javanese, or Madurese compared to English not only strengthens students' grasp of structure but also affirms their multilingual identities. This type of integrative approach aligns with translanguaging pedagogy which views multilingualism as a strength and can significantly enhance student motivation by affirming the value of their diverse linguistic backgrounds (Vogel & Garcia, 2017).

Discourse-based language teaching (DBLT) places grammar instruction within real written and spoken texts, providing a solid theoretical foundation for addressing current challenges (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). By using various genres, including news reports, personal letters, and literary texts, teachers can present grammatical structures within communicative contexts that carry meaning. For instance, analyzing a news article not only helps clarify sentence patterns but also shows how these structures function to maintain cohesion and coherence in discourse (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). This combined focus on form and function promotes procedural knowledge (Anderson, 1983), enabling students to internalize grammar while also building communicative fluency. Moreover, task-based activities like collaborative text reconstruction or peer summarization strengthen speaking skills and encourage metalinguistic awareness, thus linking theory with practical use (Ellis, 2003). These approaches are consistent with sociocultural theories of language learning, which emphasize that meaningful interaction and contextualized practice are essential for acquiring a second language (Vygotsky, 1978).

Motivation is a key factor in successful language learning, as it drives learner engagement, persistence, and overall achievement (Dörnyei, 2005). Studies in educational psychology show that motivation increases significantly when students view the material as personally meaningful (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Teaching activities that consider learners' identities, prior knowledge, and emotional states encourage deeper cognitive involvement, which in turn enhances learning outcomes (Ushioda, 2009). This study applies Keller's (1987) ARCS motivational design model to explore how discourse-based materials affect Indonesian EFL learners' engagement. The model is structured around four components: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. Together, they form a framework for examining how learning materials and tasks capture students' interest, connect to their everyday experiences, build confidence through guided support, and foster satisfaction through attainable objectives. The research seeks to create discourse-based materials for teaching English grammar and to evaluate their impact on learner motivation in the Indonesian EFL context. By embedding grammar instruction within authentic discourse, the study

aims to promote a pedagogy of engagement in which students acquire language forms through meaningful, context-rich practice. Expected outcomes include stronger grammatical and communicative competence among undergraduates, new insights into motivational strategies for EFL instruction, and a practical framework for integrating discourse-based approaches into curricula. Ultimately, this research contributes to broader discussions on motivational pedagogy in second language acquisition, offering evidence-based methods to help address Indonesia's ongoing challenges in English education.

Literature Review

This literature review examines five theoretical frameworks relevant to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction: (1) Discourse-Based EFL Instruction, (2) Discourse and Grammar, (3) Discourse and Parts of Speech, (4) Motivation in EFL Instruction, and (5) Keller's ARCS Model of Motivation. Each framework explores foundational concepts, classroom applications, and implications for EFL teaching practice. The first framework is discussed below.

Discourse-Based EFL Instruction

Discourse-Based EFL Instruction promotes a communicative approach that prioritizes authentic language use over decontextualized grammar drills or rote memorization (Khanh & Dung, 2019). Grounded in the view that language primarily serves as a tool for real-world communication, this approach promotes meaningful and contextual engagement with language. It shifts the focus from isolated linguistic elements to discourse, where meaning is shaped by context, purpose, and interaction (Khanh & Dung, 2019; Ranabhat, 2022). In practice, this model emphasizes the importance of using authentic materials. Such materials consist of texts and media designed for native speakers, including newspapers, advertisements, blogs, and speeches (Matsumoto, 2019). These materials offer exposure to genuine language, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references, helping learners build familiarity with natural language use. For instance, a classroom activity might involve analyzing a newspaper article about a current event to introduce relevant vocabulary and grammatical structures (Khanh & Dung, 2019). Students may then engage in discussions and write reflective pieces, deepening their understanding of language within real-life contexts.

Another core aspect of Discourse-Based Instruction is the integration of language skills (Khanh & Dung, 2019; Ranabhat, 2022). Rather than teaching reading, writing, speaking, and listening in isolation, this model encourages tasks that engage multiple skills simultaneously, reflecting the way language functions in daily communication. For example, a lesson on environmental issues might include reading informational texts, watching related documentaries, participating in group discussions, and writing persuasive essays. Such integrated activities promote holistic learning and reinforce students' ability to use language fluently and flexibly. Equally important is the emphasis on context. Learners should be equipped to adjust their language according to varying social contexts, audiences, and purposes. Classroom activities might include writing informal messages to peers alongside formal letters to authority figures, enabling students to explore variations in tone, register, and structure (Khanh & Dung, 2019). This awareness strengthens their pragmatic competence and prepares them for effective communication in diverse settings

Cultural awareness is also deeply embedded in this instructional approach (Khanh & Dung, 2019). Since language and culture are interdependent, understanding the cultural norms, values, and behaviors associated with language use is essential. Tasks that focus on cross-cultural communication, such as role-playing greetings or analyzing social customs, help learners develop greater cultural competence and

sensitivity (Khanh & Dung, 2019). This awareness develops both linguistic proficiency and the capacity to engage in intercultural interactions with confidence and respect. Furthermore, discourse-based teaching values collaboration, encouraging learners to engage in group tasks and peer interactions (Khanh & Dung, 2019; Zheng & Cheng, 2018). Collaborative learning supports communicative competence and creates an environment where students can experiment with language, receive feedback, and co-construct meaning. Group projects, presentations, and discussions foster engagement and critical thinking while promoting language use in authentic, cooperative contexts.

Discourse and Grammar

The theory of Discourse and Grammar emphasizes that grammatical structures are not isolated sets of rules but are deeply embedded within communicative contexts (Zhang, 2023). This theoretical perspective challenges conventional grammar instruction that treats grammar as a decontextualized and rule-based system (Rosmiaty et al., 2023; Zhang, 2023). Instead, it promotes an understanding of grammar as an essential component of discourse, shaped by and shaping communicative intent in social interaction. Through this lens, grammar is viewed as a dynamic resource that enables speakers and writers to express meaning appropriately, effectively, and coherently in various communicative settings (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014; Zhang, 2023).

A foundational influence on this theory is functional grammar, particularly the model developed by Michael Halliday, which repositions grammar as a system for making meaning rather than as a mere formal structure (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Functional grammar focuses on the roles that grammatical elements play in real communication, highlighting three core functions of language: representational, interpersonal, and textual. The representational function is concerned with conveying ideas and information about the world, often through declarative statements. The interpersonal function governs the management of social relations, influencing how speakers use language to express attitudes, negotiate roles, or elicit responses from others, such as through questions, commands, or polite requests. The textual function ensures that messages are organized cohesively and coherently, facilitating clarity and comprehension. These dimensions highlight how grammatical choices are inherently tied to context, intention, and the communicative purpose of discourse (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Cohesion and coherence are critical in understanding how grammar operates within discourse (McCarthy, 2022). The term cohesion describes the surface-level linguistic devices that provide links between elements within a text. These include conjunctions, pronouns, and lexical repetition, which guide readers or listeners in tracing how ideas are connected. Coherence, in contrast, pertains to the logical and conceptual continuity of the text as a whole, ensuring that it makes sense to the audience (McCarthy, 2022). While cohesion relies on explicit linguistic markers, coherence depends more on shared knowledge, context, and logical flow. In EFL instruction, teaching students to identify and use cohesive devices and to evaluate the coherence of spoken or written discourse promotes a more nuanced understanding of how language functions communicatively. Through such instruction, learners become more adept at producing and interpreting texts that are both structurally connected and meaningfully unified (McCarthy, 2022; Thornbury, 2005).

A context-sensitive approach to grammar teaching is central to the Discourse and Grammar framework. Rather than isolating grammatical forms from authentic use, effective instruction situates grammar within communicative contexts (Zhang, 2023).

For instance, teaching verb tenses through a narrative passage allows learners to observe their function in conveying temporal relationships and shaping storytelling. This pedagogical strategy enables students to see grammar as a resource for achieving specific communicative goals, not merely as a set of arbitrary rules to be memorized (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). By integrating grammar into realistic discourse activities, such as storytelling, argumentation, or dialogue writing, educators can strengthen students' ability to make grammatical choices that fit the context, audience, and purpose (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014). An additional aspect of discourse-focused grammar instruction is the use of discourse markers, linguistic cues that signal relationships among ideas and contribute to textual organization. Common examples include "however," "in contrast," "therefore," and "for instance." These markers help guide readers and listeners through the logical progression of arguments or narratives, clarifying transitions, comparisons, and examples (Thornbury, 2005). Mastery of discourse markers is crucial for learners aiming to produce coherent and persuasive communication. Classroom activities that incorporate analysis and production of discourse markers can significantly enhance learners' control over text structure (Rosmiaty et al., 2023), contributing to their overall communicative competence in spoken and written forms.

Discourse and Parts of Speech: Understanding Language Functionality

The intricate relationship between discourse and parts of speech is essential to understanding how language functions as a communication tool. Parts of speech, including verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections, form the grammatical backbone of language by classifying words according to their roles within sentences (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Yet these categories take on greater significance when examined within the framework of discourse, which emphasizes language use in context. Rather than viewing these grammatical elements in isolation, understanding them as components of discourse allows for a more nuanced appreciation of how meaning is constructed and conveyed in real-life communication (Ramadhani & Ovilia, 2022). This perspective highlights grammar as a dynamic system shaped by the communicative demands of different situations, rather than a static set of rules (Ansaldo et al., 2008; Ramadhani & Ovilia, 2022).

Nouns, for instance, provide specificity and clarity by naming people, places, things, or ideas, thereby grounding discourse in identifiable subjects (Fraurud, 2001). In a discussion on environmental sustainability, nouns like *pollution*, *biodiversity*, and *ecosystem* serve as linguistic anchors that frame and define the topic (Zhang et al., 2023). These terms not only convey critical content but also guide interpretation, shaping how audiences understand and engage with the discourse (Neitzel, 2023; Fraser et al., 2015). Pronouns then function to maintain coherence by replacing these nouns, reducing redundancy, and facilitating smoother transitions. For example, "Pollution affects biodiversity" may be followed by "It poses serious challenges," where "it" refers back to "pollution," helping to maintain textual cohesion (Channell et al., 2015). Further, verbs introduce action and temporality into discourse, serving as the driving force of sentence structure. They express what subjects do, feel, or experience, thus injecting movement and emotion into communication (Smith et al., 2023). Narratives, including accounts of natural disasters or personal experiences, often use verbs such as evacuated, rescued, or rebuilt to describe actions and to elicit specific audience reactions. The use of verb tense, whether past, present, or future, further situates events in time and supports clearer interpretation. The verb choice and its grammatical form are therefore integral to meaning-making within discourse (Bose et al., 2021; Cohn, 2019).

Adjectives and adverbs enhance the descriptive quality of language by modifying nouns and verbs, adding depth and precision (Khedri et al., 2022). Adjectives qualify nouns by indicating characteristics such as size, color, or value, while adverbs function to modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs in order to express manner, time, degree, or frequency. In reviews, reports, or persuasive texts, expressions like "high-quality materials," "extremely efficient," or "rapidly improved" exemplify how these parts of speech contribute to rhetorical effectiveness (Hinkel, 2024; Khedri et al., 2022). Their careful deployment not only enriches discourse but also allows for the expression of subtle distinctions, enabling speakers and writers to tailor their messages to specific communicative goals (Hinkel, 2024). Prepositions and conjunctions play central roles in establishing relationships within discourse at both the syntactic and semantic levels. Prepositions show spatial, temporal, or logical relations, for example, "in the box", "after the meeting", or "because of the delay", and "in doing so"; they provide essential contextual information (Vandeweerd et al., 2023; Walters, 2016). Conjunctions, on the other hand, connect clauses and ideas, contributing to the cohesion and logical flow of discourse. Coordinating conjunctions *like and, but,* and *or,* as well as subordinating ones like *although* and *because,* help to signal contrast, cause, condition, or sequence, guiding the listener or reader through the structure of an argument or narrative (Yan, 2023; Trent, 2015).

Discourse markers, though not classified strictly as a single part of speech, further illustrate how lexical items function within discourse to organize and manage communication (Chengfang, 2015). Phrases like *however, moreover, on the other hand,* and *for example* signal relationships between ideas, clarify transitions, and aid coherence. They serve not only to structure discourse logically but also to reflect the speaker's stance or attitude (Sun, 2021). The strategic use of such markers enhances the intelligibility of discourse and facilitates audience engagement by making the speaker's intentions more transparent (Bell, 2022).

Motivation in EFL Instruction

Motivation is an essential component of successful language learning, especially in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Given the diverse challenges learners often face, including linguistic barriers and cultural unfamiliarity, motivation plays a significant role in determining whether they engage meaningfully with the learning process. It serves as a driving force that sustains effort, fosters perseverance, and encourages learners to take initiative in their studies (Alfares, 2024; Ilyas & Herda, 2023). For EFL educators, a thorough understanding of the motivational dynamics that influence student behavior is crucial for designing instruction that promotes active participation and long-term commitment to language learning (Alfares, 2024; Li, King, & Lee, 2024). At the core of motivational theory lies the contrast between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Li et al., 2024). Intrinsic motivation stems from internal drives, including a genuine interest in learning, the enjoyment of mastering a new language, and the satisfaction of intellectual challenge (Alfares, 2024; Li et al., 2024). Intrinsically motivated learners often demonstrate greater autonomy, deeper engagement, and more sustained attention to learning tasks. Their motivation is not dependent on external validation, allowing them to persist even when confronted with setbacks (Li et al., 2024). On the contrary, extrinsic motivation is fueled by external incentives (e.g., grades, rewards, or career advancement). While such motivators can spark initial engagement, their effects may be short-lived if not reinforced by internalized goals or interests (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Consequently, an optimal learning environment balances both forms of motivation, aligning external rewards with learners' intrinsic values to promote enduring engagement (Alfares, 2024; Li et al., 2024).

Several interrelated factors shape EFL learners' motivation, and effective instruction hinges on educators' ability to respond to these variables. One significant factor is the perceived relevance of learning materials. When instructional content connects to learners' personal experiences, cultural backgrounds, or future aspirations, it becomes more meaningful and engaging (Ilyas & Herda, 2023; Alfares, 2024). For instance, integrating contemporary themes, authentic materials, or culturally responsive pedagogy allows learners to see the applicability of English in their own lives (Alfares, 2024). Another critical element is learners' self-efficacy, which represents their confidence in their capacity to achieve specific academic goals (Li et al., 2024; Ilyas & Herda, 2023). High self-efficacy correlates with increased motivation, as students who trust in their abilities are more likely to take on challenges and persist in the face of difficulties (Li et al., 2024). Educators can foster self-efficacy by designing scaffolded tasks that offer achievable success, progressively building learners' confidence and competence (Alfares, 2024). Then, the classroom social climate further exerts a strong influence on student motivation (Khan & Mehmood, 2021). An inclusive and supportive learning setting that fosters respect, encouragement, and connection among students contributes to both their emotional well-being and academic engagement (Khan & Mehmood, 2021; Alfares, 2024). Peer collaboration, positive teacher-student relationships, and constructive feedback all contribute to a motivating classroom culture (Alfares, 2024). Students are more willing to take academic risks and participate actively in class activities when they feel a sense of belonging and mutual respect. Conversely, a classroom atmosphere marked by competition or criticism can hinder motivation and discourage learners from fully engaging (Ilyas & Herda, 2023).

To promote motivation in EFL instruction, educators can adopt a range of evidence-based strategies (Alfares, 2024; Li et al., 2024). Goal setting is particularly effective, as it provides learners with direction and purpose (Li et al., 2024). Encouraging students to articulate their language learning goals, whether these involve conversational fluency, exam preparation, or professional advancement, can strengthen motivation by making learning outcomes more tangible and personalized (Alfares, 2024). Similarly, offering learners choices in their assignments or learning activities fosters autonomy and ownership (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Alfares, 2024). When students are empowered to make decisions about their learning, they become more invested and self-directed. Furthermore, acknowledging their achievements through praise, constructive feedback, or awards can reinforce positive learning behaviors and help sustain motivation. Providing timely, specific, and constructive recognition validates learners' efforts and fosters their continued progress (Khan & Mehmood, 2021; Alfares, 2024).

Keller's ARCS Model of Motivation

Keller's ARCS Model of Motivation offers a structured framework for enhancing and understanding learner motivation in educational settings. Developed through research in instructional design and educational psychology, this model conceptualizes motivation as a dynamic construct that can be cultivated through four interrelated dimensions: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction (Keller, 1987). Its theoretical foundation draws from expectancy-value theories, positing that learners engage more deeply when instruction captures their interest, aligns with personal goals, supports self-efficacy, and offers meaningful rewards (Keller, 2008).

This framework is particularly valuable in language education, where sustained motivation is essential for overcoming the long-term challenges of second language acquisition (Javed et al., 2019). The attention component addresses the need to stimulate and maintain engagement. Research in cognitive psychology and language

education shows that varied and stimulating materials, such as multimedia, authentic videos, or inquiry-based tasks, enhance attention and activate deeper cognitive processing (Putra, 2021). For instance, authentic video clips that reflect target-language culture or linguistic puzzles can generate curiosity and promote deeper learning (Othman & Abd Rahman, 2023).

Relevance, the second component, suggests that learners invest more effort when they perceive content as meaningful to their lives. Situated learning theory holds that contextualizing instruction enhances learner motivation and memory (Keller, 2008). In EFL contexts, this can be achieved by connecting language tasks to students' academic or professional goals, such as designing projects tied to career communication or analyzing media from students' cultural backgrounds (Khan & Zulfiquar, 2022). Such practices help learners see English as personally valuable, fostering stronger motivational investment.

Confidence pertains to learners' beliefs in their ability to succeed. Rooted in Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, this aspect of the ARCS model emphasizes scaffolding learning to provide consistent success experiences. Research suggests that clear learning progressions, supportive feedback, and peer interaction increase self-efficacy and reduce anxiety (Putra, 2021; Javed et al., 2019). In EFL instruction, confidence can be built through structured speaking tasks, self-assessment tools, and scaffolded grammar exercises that highlight growth.

Satisfaction involves the emotional outcomes of the learning experience. While extrinsic rewards (like grades) may motivate initially, long-term engagement stems from meaningful, intrinsically rewarding experiences (Keller, 1987; Keller, 2008). Activities like collaborative storytelling, intercultural exchange, or performance-based tasks can offer students opportunities to apply what they've learned in fulfilling ways (Othman & Abd Rahman, 2023). These strategies are aligned with the principles of positive psychology and flow theory, both of which underscore the importance of challenge, feedback, and intrinsic enjoyment in sustaining motivation.

The integrative power of the ARCS model makes it well-suited to the complex motivational demands of language classrooms. When aligned with differentiated instruction and principles of universal design for learning, it allows for adaptive, learner-centered teaching (Javed et al., 2019; Khan & Zulfiquar, 2022). In EFL contexts, the ARCS framework supports the transformation of language learning from a passive academic obligation into a motivating, communicative journey (Putra, 2021). Effective implementation requires diagnostic assessment, iterative refinement, and ongoing evaluation to tailor instruction to learners' evolving motivational needs. The ARCS model offers educators a robust toolkit for designing motivationally rich EFL environments that foster not only language proficiency but also autonomy and long-term engagement by systematically addressing attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction.

Methods

This study applied a mixed-methods research approach to systematically investigate both the development of discourse-based structure learning materials and their impact on student motivation in an EFL context. The research methodology was designed to address two primary research questions: first, to examine the quality and characteristics of the developed discourse-based materials; and second, to assess students' motivational responses to these materials when implemented in classroom settings. The methodological framework incorporated elements of design-based

research for material development, quasi-experimental implementation, and comprehensive data analysis techniques to yield robust findings.

The initial phase of material development followed rigorous design principles to create discourse-based instructional content focusing on three key parts of speech: verbs, nouns, and pronouns. The materials were specifically designed to present grammatical structures within authentic discourse contexts rather than as isolated linguistic forms. Following initial development, the materials underwent expert validation by a highly qualified linguistics professor with extensive experience in structure course instruction. The validation process utilized a structured assessment instrument evaluating multiple dimensions of material quality, including structural organization, content presentation, and linguistic accuracy. This validation stage provided both quantitative ratings of material quality and qualitative feedback for refinement, ensuring the pedagogical soundness of the developed resources before classroom implementation.

For the implementation and evaluation phase, the study involved 42 undergraduate EFL students enrolled in an English Structure course, with a gender composition of 32 female and 10 male participants. A motivation questionnaire, designed according to Keller's ARCS model, was employed to measure four central aspects of learner motivation: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. To capture students' views and experiences of the new materials, the instrument made use of a 5-point Likert scale. Complementing the quantitative data, classroom observations were conducted to capture behavioral indicators of engagement and qualitative aspects of the learning experience. By employing a multi-faceted data collection strategy, the study was able to analyze the cognitive as well as the affective dimensions of learning in depth. Further, data analysis incorporated both statistical and interpretive methods to provide a complete understanding of the research findings. Quantitative analysis of motivation scores employed descriptive statistics to determine overall levels of student motivation across the four ARCS dimensions, with additional analysis examining potential gender differences in motivational responses. Thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data from expert reviews and classroom observations to identify patterns and insights that support the interpretation of quantitative findings. This methodological triangulation strengthened the validity of the conclusions by incorporating multiple perspectives and data sources.

The research design incorporated several important methodological considerations to ensure rigor and validity. The expert validation process provided a professional assessment of material quality before implementation, while the mixed-methods approach ensured a comprehensive evaluation of both the materials themselves and their classroom impact. The inclusion of both self-report measures (questionnaires) and observational data helped mitigate potential biases inherent in any single data collection method. Ethical considerations were upheld by obtaining participants' consent and maintaining confidentiality in the reporting of findings. This carefully structured methodology enabled the study to produce meaningful insights into both the development of effective discourse-based materials and their motivational effects on EFL learners. Then, the methodological approach was particularly well-suited to address the study's dual focus on material development and motivational outcomes. By combining expert evaluation with classroom implementation and assessment, the research examined both the theoretical soundness of the materials and their practical effectiveness in real learning contexts. The use of Keller's ARCS model as an analytical framework provided a theoretically grounded structure for understanding motivational impacts, while the mixed-methods design ensured that the learning experience was examined from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. This

comprehensive methodological strategy supported the generation of findings that are both academically rigorous and practically relevant for EFL instruction.

Results

Research question 1: "How is the discourse-based Structure course material?"

The expert validation results revealed several key strengths and areas for improvement in the developed discourse-based learning materials. As shown in Table 3, the materials received "*Very Good*" ratings across nearly all evaluation criteria, including the structure of learning material (organization of presentation, display, and consistent linkages among units), organization of material writing (coverage and clarity of material), and language use (grammatical accuracy and communicative clarity). However, one notable exception was the "*Good*" rating for the accuracy of the materials with respect to competency standards, indicating that while the materials were well-designed pedagogically, they could benefit from more explicit alignment with predefined learning outcomes. The expert's qualitative feedback further reinforced these findings, praising the materials' discourse-based approach for enhancing student comprehension while recommending clearer articulation of competency standards and more robust introductory explanations of parts of speech. These suggestions point to the need for materials to be not only well-structured and engaging but also closely aligned with measurable learning objectives to enhance their educational impact.

Table 1 *Results of expert validation*

Indicator of Evaluation	Category
Structure of Learning Material	
Organization of presentation in general	Very Good
Display in general	Very Good
Consistent linkages among the units	Very Good
Organization of Learning Material Writing	
Coverage of learning material	Very Good
Clarity and sequence of learning material	Very Good
Accuracy of the material with the competency standard	Good
	Very Good
Language	
Using grammatical sentences	Very Good
Using communicative language	Very Good

The validator provided constructive feedback for improving the prototype learning materials, specifically recommending the addition of a general introduction to parts of speech and the explicit inclusion of competency standards to clarify expected learning outcomes. In their evaluation, the validator positively assessed the materials, noting "The learning materials show strong relevance to the Structure I syllabus, thoroughly covering parts of speech including nouns, verbs, and pronouns... The discourse-based presentation format facilitates student comprehension." Classroom implementation observations revealed that students demonstrated particular enthusiasm when engaging with the parts of speech content using these materials, suggesting successful learner engagement with the discourse-based approach. The materials' effectiveness was evidenced by both the expert validation and the positive student response during actual classroom use.

Research question 2: "How is the students' motivation when the developed prototype of course material is implemented in the classroom?"

The present study sought to evaluate student motivation levels following the implementation of a newly developed discourse-based structure learning material in classroom settings. As demonstrated in Table 4, the comprehensive analysis revealed consistently high levels of motivation across all measured dimensions, with an overall mean score of 3.1749 on a 4-point Likert scale where 1 indicated very low motivation and 4 represented very high motivation. This positive outcome suggests that the discourse-based pedagogical approach was generally successful in engaging learners and fostering favorable attitudes toward the instructional material. The high mean scores across attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction provide clear evidence of this teaching method's effectiveness in creating a stimulating, student-centered learning environment.

Table 2 *Students' motivation for the developed Discourse-Based Structure learning material*

Indicator	Number of respondents		Mean Score			Category
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female & Male	
Attention	32	10	3.1198	2.9167	3.0714	High
Relevance	32	10	3.3229	3.1667	3.2857	High
Confidence	32	10	3.1670	2.8667	3.0952	High
Satisfaction	32	10	3.4063	3.4333	3.4127	High
Total Mean			**3.2539**	**3.0958**	**3.1749**	**High**

A closer examination of gender differences revealed that while female students (Mean = 3.2539) demonstrated slightly higher overall motivation compared to their male counterparts (Mean = 3.0958), both groups remained firmly within the high motivation category. This finding is particularly noteworthy as it indicates that the discourse-based approach was effective across gender lines, though the modest disparity may warrant further investigation into potential gender-specific factors influencing engagement with the material. The consistency in high motivation levels between genders supports the robustness of the instructional design, while the slight variation points to possible areas for refinement to ensure optimal engagement for all student demographics.

Attention Dimension Analysis

The attention dimension, with a composite mean score of 3.0714, indicated that students were generally engaged with and focused on the learning material. As shown in the detailed item analysis in Table 5, female students (Mean = 3.1198) reported marginally higher attention levels than male students (Mean = 2.9167). This difference, while statistically modest, may reflect subtle variations in how different genders engage with instructional materials. Particularly noteworthy were items relating to the material's ability to stimulate curiosity and maintain interest through varied content, which received consistently high ratings across both genders. The item "*The material has things that stimulated my curiosity*" received particularly strong ratings (F = 3.31, M = 3.20), suggesting that the inclusion of thought-provoking elements was successful in capturing student interest. Similarly, the positive responses to "*The variety of reading passages, exercises, etc., helped keep my attention*" (F =

3.22, M = 2.90) indicate that the material's structural diversity contributed significantly to sustained engagement.

Table 3 *Attention Indicator – Item-Level Analysis*

Questionnaire Item	Female Mean	Male Mean	Female Category	Male Category
Stimulated curiosity	3.31	3.20	High	High
Variety maintained attention	3.22	2.90	High	High

Relevance Dimension Analysis

The relevance dimension emerged as the strongest motivational component, achieving the highest mean score of 3.2857. This robust performance suggests that students perceived clear connections between the instructional material and their existing knowledge, personal interests, and future utility. The particularly high ratings for "*Completing the discourse Structure Material successfully was important to me*" (F = 3.69, M = 3.50) indicate that students recognized the intrinsic value of mastering the material, a crucial factor in fostering deep, meaningful learning. Similarly, the strong agreement with "*The content of the material will be useful to me*" (F = 3.66, M = 3.40) suggests that students could readily envision practical applications of their learning, which is known to significantly enhance motivation and knowledge retention. These findings underscore the importance of establishing clear relevance in instructional design, as students appear more motivated when they can perceive direct connections between course material and their academic or personal goals.

Confidence Dimension Analysis

The confidence dimension yielded a composite mean of 3.0952, indicating that students generally felt capable of mastering the material. However, this dimension revealed the most pronounced gender difference, with female students (Mean = 3.1670) expressing somewhat greater confidence than male students (Mean = 2.8667). This discrepancy was particularly evident in responses to "*I could really understand the material*," where male students' ratings (2.40) fell into the low category, contrasting with female students' high rating (2.78). This finding may suggest that certain aspects of the material's presentation or content organization were more accessible to female students, potentially pointing to areas for instructional refinement. Nevertheless, the overall high confidence levels, particularly for items like "*As I worked on the material, I was confident that I could learn the content*" (F = 3.44, M = 3.20), indicate that the material was generally successful in fostering a sense of self-efficacy among learners.

Satisfaction Dimension Analysis

The satisfaction dimension achieved the highest overall mean score (3.4127), suggesting that students derived considerable enjoyment and fulfillment from engaging with the material. Both genders reported very high levels of satisfaction with items such as "*It felt good to complete the material*" (F = 3.78, M = 3.90) and "*It was a pleasure to work on such a well-designed material*" (F = 3.69, M = 3.60). These exceptionally positive evaluations indicate that the material not only served its instructional purpose but also created an enjoyable learning experience. The high satisfaction levels are particularly significant, as they suggest that students are likely to be motivated to engage with similar materials in the future —an important consideration for curriculum development and instructional design.

Discussion

The findings of the present study provide rich theoretical insights when examined through the five interrelated frameworks of EFL instruction. These results contribute substantially to ongoing scholarly conversations about effective language pedagogy while simultaneously revealing important complexities that merit careful consideration.

Discourse-Based EFL Instruction: Strengths and Limitations

The expert validation results provide strong empirical support for the theoretical foundations of Discourse-Based EFL Instruction, reinforcing claims made by Khanh and Dung (2019) and Ranabhat (2022) that authentic, context-rich materials promote meaningful language learning. High ratings across multiple criteria indicate that the materials successfully implement the core principle that language is best acquired through communication situated in real-world discourse. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory and Lantolf and Thorne's (2006) concept of "mediated learning spaces," where learners engage with language in socially meaningful contexts. As highlighted in the literature review, tasks that integrate skills and use culturally relevant texts, such as analyzing media or composing context-specific messages, enable learners to develop both linguistic competence and pragmatic awareness. The high quality of organization and presentation observed in the validation further demonstrates the materials' potential to create cognitively and socially engaging experiences, consistent with the collaborative and holistic learning promoted by discourse-based pedagogy (Zheng & Cheng, 2018).

However, the identified gap in alignment with institutional competency standards reveals a critical tension between authentic communication and formal curriculum requirements. This reflects Bernstein's (1996) distinction between "horizontal discourse" (contextual, everyday communication) and "vertical discourse" (systematic, academic knowledge), suggesting that while discourse-based instruction fosters meaningful engagement, it must also ensure coverage of targeted learning outcomes. The validator's feedback underscores the importance of clearly mapping communicative tasks to competency frameworks, ensuring that language learning remains both engaging and accountable. As emphasized in the literature, effective discourse-based instruction must strike a balance between fluency and accuracy (Zhang, 2023), integrating opportunities for authentic interaction with structured progression toward learning goals. Ultimately, the findings suggest that bridging communicative and institutional demands is not only feasible but essential for maximizing the pedagogical impact of discourse-based materials in EFL classrooms.

Discourse and Grammar: Reconciling Form and Function

The findings strongly support the theoretical framework of discourse-based grammar instruction, showing that grammatical understanding deepens when taught within meaningful contexts. High learner motivation, particularly in the relevance dimension, aligns with Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) view of grammar as a meaning-making resource rather than a set of isolated rules. This reinforces the value of integrating parts of speech into discourse, as suggested by Celce-Murcia et al. (2014) and Zhang (2023), making grammar more accessible and communicatively functional. Learners' engagement with discourse tasks, such as narrative writing or authentic text analysis, supports prior research showing that grammar instruction is most effective when it is connected to real-life language use (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; McCarthy, 2022). However, the confidence gap observed among male participants suggests that not all learners respond equally to implicit methods. This finding resonates with Schmidt's (1990) noticing hypothesis and supports Ellis's (2005) view that learners benefit from both incidental exposure and deliberate focus on linguistic form. While

discourse contexts foster motivation and fluency, learners also need structured opportunities to reflect on grammar use. The literature highlights that a balanced approach, which combines authentic discourse with form-focused instruction, strengthens both accuracy and confidence (Thornbury, 2005; Rosmiaty et al., 2023). These results underscore the need for adaptable teaching strategies that meet diverse learner needs while maintaining communicative authenticity.

Discourse and Parts of Speech: Beyond Traditional Categories

The study's focus on teaching parts of speech through discourse affirms the literature's claim that grammatical forms acquire deeper significance when presented in context. As Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) and Ramadhani and Ovilia (2022) argue, grammar should not be viewed as isolated rules but as a dynamic system shaped by communicative needs. The high level of student engagement observed in this study supports the idea that contextualized exposure, through authentic texts, narratives, and discourse tasks, enables learners to understand both the form and the function of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and other parts of speech. This finding is consistent with usage-based perspectives (Ansaldo et al., 2008), emphasizing that learners internalize grammar more effectively when it reflects real-life communication patterns. The use of discourse tasks, as shown in the literature, encourages learners to interact meaningfully with grammar, from identifying key nouns and their referents to understanding how conjunctions and adverbs structure argumentation and cohesion (Khedri et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023). However, the observed gender gap in confidence suggests that while discourse-based grammar instruction enhances engagement, it may not equally meet all learners' cognitive needs. As Skehan (1998) suggests, individual differences in language analytic ability may influence how students notice and abstract grammatical patterns from discourse. Some learners, particularly those with less developed metalinguistic awareness, may benefit from additional support such as explicit explanations or guided practice. This resonates with the literature's view that grammar instruction must balance contextual immersion with opportunities for form-focused reflection (Hinkel, 2024; Thornbury, 2005). Ultimately, as Huseynova (2019) notes, grammar is foundational for clear, purposeful communication; therefore, instruction must be both meaningful and inclusive. These results highlight the value of combining discourse-based instruction with differentiated support to foster both linguistic proficiency and learner confidence.

Motivation in EFL Instruction: A Complex Landscape

The study's motivation findings reinforce the central claims in the literature regarding the pivotal role of intrinsic motivation in successful EFL learning. High levels of motivation across the four dimensions provide empirical backing for Deci and Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory, which underscores the role of autonomy and meaningful involvement in promoting deeper learning. The strong scores in perceived relevance mirror literature findings that when instructional content connects to students' lived experiences and future goals, it significantly boosts engagement (Alfares, 2024; Ilyas & Herda, 2023). This aligns with the "ideal L2 self" construct proposed by Dörnyei (2005), where learners' personal aspirations become internalized motivational drivers. Moreover, the high satisfaction levels in this study validate Mercer's (2018) emphasis on the power of "positive learning experiences" to sustain long-term motivation, echoing the importance of supportive classroom climates and student-centered instruction noted by Khan and Mehmood (2021). However, the gender-based differences in motivation complicate uniform applications of these theories and support calls for more differentiated and socially-aware motivational models. As highlighted in the literature, factors such as identity, social dynamics, and self-efficacy play a critical role in shaping motivation (Li et al., 2024; Alfares, 2024).

Norton's (2000) theory of investment is particularly relevant here, suggesting that learners' engagement is mediated by how they see themselves and their perceived opportunities within the learning context. This finding suggests that motivational strategies cannot be one-size-fits-all; they must consider how individual learners experience autonomy, relevance, and belonging differently. Overall, these results strengthen the literature's argument for motivational approaches that are not only pedagogically sound but also responsive to learners' diverse identities and evolving goals.

Keller's ARCS Model: Validation and Extension

The findings of this study offer robust empirical evidence in support of Keller's (1987) ARCS Model, confirming its relevance and practical applicability within EFL instruction. The clear alignment between the data and the ARCS components (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction) confirms the model's usefulness in diagnosing and enhancing learner motivation, as highlighted in the literature (Keller, 2008; Javed et al., 2019). The high attention scores support earlier claims that varied, engaging, and authentic materials, such as discourse-based tasks, help sustain interest and promote deeper cognitive engagement (Putra, 2021; Othman & Abd Rahman, 2023). Likewise, the strong relevance ratings support situated learning theory, demonstrating that when language learning is personally meaningful, motivation increases (Khan & Zulfiquar, 2022). These findings reflect the literature's emphasis on designing instruction that connects to learners' goals, interests, and cultural identities to promote stronger investment in the learning process.

Despite these strengths, the results also highlight areas where the ARCS model could be expanded, particularly concerning confidence and individual learner differences. Although the model accounts for confidence-building through scaffolding and feedback (Bandura, 1997; Putra, 2021), this study found that some learners still lacked self-belief despite engaging with content and high satisfaction. This suggests that integrating concepts from self-efficacy theory (Zhou & Zhang, 2025) may strengthen the model's ability to address learners' internal doubts. Moreover, the model's limitations in addressing gender-based motivational differences highlight the need for a more nuanced framework that integrates social and psychological variables, as suggested by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011). Recent literature further supports the value of developing multidimensional models that integrate instructional design and individual learner characteristics (Lemeshchenko-Lagoda & Kryvonos, 2020). Thus, this study not only validates the ARCS model's foundational principles but also contributes to theoretical development by proposing ways to enhance its adaptability and responsiveness to learner diversity.

Synthesis and Theoretical Implications

Collectively, these findings advocate for an integrated theoretical perspective that reconciles several traditionally separate strands of language teaching theory. The study demonstrates that discourse-based approaches can effectively unite communicative and grammatical objectives, supporting emerging theoretical models that view language learning as a complex, multi-layered process requiring balanced attention to form, meaning, and learner psychology (Batstone, 2010). The results have important implications for theoretical understandings of materials development. They suggest that effective materials need to: 1) maintain discourse authenticity while ensuring systematic coverage; 2) balance implicit exposure with strategic focus on form; 3) accommodate diverse learner needs and preferences; and 4) incorporate both cognitive and affective considerations. Then, the study ultimately argues for a more synthesized theoretical perspective that combines the strengths of discourse methodologies with careful attention to explicit learning outcomes and differentiated

instruction. As a result, the study suggests that language teachers should embrace theoretical flexibility, tailoring tactics to specific learners and settings rather than sticking strictly to any single theoretical position (Nor & Rashid, 2018). Such adaptability will improve learning outcomes and facilitate more inclusive and flexible educational methods (Anderson, 2020). These insights contribute significantly to ongoing theoretical conversations about optimal approaches to grammar instruction, motivational design, and materials development in EFL contexts. Future research should build on these findings to further develop integrated theoretical models that can guide the creation of effective, adaptable instructional materials for diverse learner populations.

Conclusion

This study findings provide compelling evidence for the efficacy of discourse-based approaches in EFL grammar instruction while simultaneously revealing important nuances that warrant careful consideration. The validation results demonstrate that well-designed discourse-based materials can successfully integrate grammatical structures within meaningful communicative contexts, thereby addressing one of the persistent challenges in language pedagogy - the dichotomy between form-focused and meaning-focused instruction. This achievement aligns with contemporary sociocultural perspectives that emphasize the importance of situated learning and the social mediation of grammatical knowledge. However, the observed need for stronger competency alignment suggests that while discourse-based approaches excel in creating engaging learning experiences, they must also ensure systematic coverage of prescribed learning outcomes to meet institutional assessment requirements.

From a motivational perspective, the study's findings provide robust support for Keller's ARCS model, demonstrating how discourse-based materials can effectively address all four components of motivational design. The high levels of student engagement and satisfaction suggest that situating grammar instruction within authentic discourse contexts successfully enhances the perceived relevance and intrinsic value of learning grammatical structures. This finding has significant implications for EFL pedagogy, as it suggests that the traditional perception of grammar instruction as dry or tedious can be overcome through careful materials design. However, the observed variations in confidence levels, particularly across gender lines, indicate that motivational responses to discourse-based approaches are not uniform and may be mediated by individual learner characteristics. This insight calls for a more differentiated approach to materials development that acknowledges and accommodates learner diversity.

The theoretical implications of these findings are particularly noteworthy. The success of discourse-based materials in fostering engagement while promoting grammatical understanding suggests a potential resolution to the persistent debate between implicit and explicit approaches to grammar instruction. Findings indicate that grammatical competence may be cultivated through meaningful interaction with discourse, lending support to emergentist and usage-based perspectives on language acquisition. However, the confidence gaps observed among some learners suggest that purely implicit approaches may not be equally effective for all students, reinforcing the need for balanced instructional strategies that incorporate both implicit exposure and explicit guidance. This finding is consistent with recent research in cognitive linguistics and skill acquisition theory that emphasizes the importance of both input processing and structured practice in language development.

Pedagogically, the study highlights several important considerations for EFL practitioners. First, it demonstrates that grammar instruction need not be limited to decontextualized rule presentation and mechanical practice, but can instead be embedded within rich, meaningful discourse contexts. Second, it indicates that the motivational advantages of communicative language teaching may also be applied to grammar instruction when materials are thoughtfully designed. Third, it emphasizes the need for differentiated instruction that recognizes and responds to individual learner differences in cognitive style, learning preferences, and motivational orientation. These findings carry significant implications for classroom practice and teacher training, indicating that EFL educators need the knowledge and skills to apply discourse-based approaches effectively.

The study also raises important questions for future research. While the findings demonstrate the short-term motivational benefits of discourse-based grammar instruction, future longitudinal studies should examine how it influences grammatical accuracy and communicative competence over time. Moreover, further research is necessary to investigate the most effective ways to implement discourse-based approaches across various cultural and institutional contexts, as well as how they can be tailored to accommodate diverse learner populations. The observed gender differences in motivational responses suggest that future research should pay particular attention to how individual learner characteristics mediate responses to different instructional approaches.

In conclusion, this study makes a meaningful contribution to our understanding of grammar instruction in EFL contexts by demonstrating the potential of discourse-based approaches to enhance both learning outcomes and student motivation. The findings suggest that discourse-based materials represent a promising alternative to traditional grammar instruction, offering a way to integrate form-focused and meaning-focused learning in a manner that is both pedagogically sound and motivationally effective. However, the study also highlights the significance of careful materials design and implementation, emphasizing the need to balance communicative authenticity with systematic coverage of grammatical structures, and to accommodate individual learner differences in both cognitive and affective dimensions. As such, the study points the way toward a more integrated approach to EFL grammar instruction that recognizes the complex interplay between linguistic form, communicative function, and learner motivation.

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