

Teachers' and Students' Perspectives on Jigsaw in EFL Classrooms: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract. Cooperative learning has been widely recognized as an effective approach to supporting language learning; however, its contribution to students' motivation and social interaction remains underexplored in many EFL contexts. This study investigates how the Jigsaw method shapes English language learning beyond academic achievement by examining teachers' and students' perspectives. The study was conducted at an Islamic junior secondary school in Indonesia and involved 56 eighth-grade students and three English teachers who had previously implemented the Jigsaw method in teaching descriptive texts. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed, with data collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations. The findings indicate that the Jigsaw method created a more engaging learning environment by encouraging active participation, peer collaboration, and shared responsibility among learners. Students reported increased confidence and willingness to communicate, while teachers observed stronger classroom interaction and greater learner involvement. In addition, the method was perceived to contribute positively to students' academic performance through collaborative knowledge construction. These findings suggest that the Jigsaw method supports meaningful EFL learning by fostering motivation and social interaction, highlighting its value as a learner-centered instructional approach in secondary school English classrooms.

Keywords: Jigsaw method; EFL learning, Motivation, Social interaction, Teachers' and students' Perspectives

1. INTRODUCTION

English plays a crucial role in global communication, education, and access to information. Consequently, developing students' English proficiency has become a major objective of language education worldwide. However, learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) remains challenging, particularly in contexts where students have limited exposure to English beyond classroom instruction. In many Indonesian junior secondary schools, students often experience difficulties in expressing ideas, participating actively in classroom discussions, and sustaining motivation throughout the learning process. These challenges frequently result in passive learning behaviors and reduce opportunities for meaningful interaction, both of which are fundamental for effective language learning. Martela emphasized that students are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation when learning environments satisfy their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, while the meaningful interaction is essential for successful EFL learning because language develops through active participation rather than passive reception of knowledge [1], [2].

To address these challenges, educators have increasingly adopted student-centered instructional approaches that encourage active participation and collaboration [3]-[5]. Among these approaches, the Jigsaw method has attracted considerable attention as a cooperative learning strategy that enables students to learn through peer interaction and shared responsibility. In a Jigsaw classroom, each student becomes responsible for mastering part of the learning material and subsequently teaching it to other group members. This structure encourages communication, mutual dependence, and active engagement, creating meaningful learning experiences that are particularly valuable in EFL classrooms where language acquisition depends heavily on interaction and collaborative practice [6]. Millis explained that cooperative learning structures such as Jigsaw promote positive interdependence and individual accountability, whereas Cochon Drouet et al. and Dzemidzic Kristiansen et al. highlighted that collaborative learning enables

students to construct knowledge through interaction with peers, making learning more meaningful and engaging [7]-[9].

Previous studies have consistently reported positive educational outcomes associated with the Jigsaw method. For example, Chopra et al. found that the Jigsaw method significantly improved students' classroom participation and collaborative engagement. Similarly, Jeppu et al. reported improvements in students' reading comprehension and academic achievement, while Larsari et al. demonstrated that cooperative learning fostered greater learner confidence and supported language development through peer interaction. Research indicates that Jigsaw learning improves students' reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, classroom participation, and academic achievement while simultaneously promoting engagement, collaboration, and positive classroom relationships [8], [10]-[12]. Furthermore, Cochon Drouet et al. through their systematic review, concluded that cooperative learning through the Jigsaw method consistently contributes to positive educational outcomes across various learning contexts. Taken together, these findings suggest that the Jigsaw method supports not only academic achievement but also meaningful collaborative learning experiences [8], [13].

Despite these encouraging findings, existing research has primarily focused on measurable academic outcomes, such as examination scores and learning achievement, while comparatively less attention has been devoted to students' motivational experiences and social interactions during the learning process. Moreover, studies simultaneously examining both teachers' and students' perspectives remain limited. Since teachers and students may experience the implementation of instructional strategies differently, investigating both perspectives can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Jigsaw supports meaningful learning beyond academic performance alone [14]-[16]. Chopra et al. primarily examined the effectiveness of the Jigsaw method in improving learning outcomes, whereas Bächtold et al. emphasized the importance of understanding students' social learning experiences. Building upon these studies, the present research seeks to explain not only whether the Jigsaw method is effective but also how it influences students' motivation and social interaction from the perspectives of both teachers and students [11], [17].

Another important consideration is the limited evidence regarding the implementation of the Jigsaw method in Indonesian Islamic junior secondary schools. The unique educational environment of Islamic schools, characterized by distinct institutional values, classroom cultures, and patterns of teacher-student interaction, may influence how collaborative learning is experienced. Therefore, further investigation is needed to understand how the Jigsaw method facilitates meaningful English learning within this educational context. Examining this context is important because the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies may vary according to students' educational backgrounds, institutional cultures, and classroom interaction patterns. Moreover, while previous studies have predominantly measured the effectiveness of the Jigsaw method through students' academic outcomes, relatively few have explored how collaborative learning is experienced simultaneously by teachers and students within this specific educational context. As a result, the processes through which Jigsaw supports students' motivation, social interaction, and personal development remain insufficiently understood.

This study seeks to address these gaps by exploring both teachers' and students' perspectives on the implementation of the Jigsaw method in English lessons. Specifically, it investigates how the method influences students' learning motivation and social interaction while examining its perceived contribution to academic performance. The study is informed by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasizes that learning motivation develops through the satisfaction of learners' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Ryan and proposed that these three psychological needs constitute the foundation of self-determined motivation [18], while Martela further explained their relevance in contemporary educational settings [2]. In addition, Martínez-González et al. demonstrated that psychological need satisfaction contributes positively to students' engagement and learning experiences [19]. The study is also informed by Sociocultural Theory, which highlights the central role of social interaction in cognitive development and language learning. Taken together, these theoretical perspectives provide complementary explanations for understanding how collaborative learning through the Jigsaw method can simultaneously support students' motivation and meaningful social interaction. Unlike previous studies that mainly evaluated whether the Jigsaw method improved learning outcomes, this study explains how collaborative learning experiences contribute to students' motivation, classroom interaction, and academic as well as personal growth from the perspectives of both teachers and students. In doing so, the study offers contextual qualitative evidence that enriches the existing literature on cooperative learning in EFL classrooms, particularly within the setting of Indonesian Islamic junior secondary schools. By integrating the perspectives of teachers and students, this study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how the Jigsaw method contributes to meaningful EFL learning beyond academic achievement. The

findings are expected to offer practical implications for English teachers seeking to create more engaging, collaborative, and learner-centered classroom environments.

2. METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to explore teachers' and students' perspectives on the use of the Jigsaw method in English lessons. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to understand participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of the learning process rather than examine causal relationships among variables. According to Creswell and Creswell [20], qualitative research is appropriate when researchers seek to understand participants' experiences and the meanings they attribute to a particular phenomenon. Through this approach, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of how the Jigsaw method influenced students' motivation, social interaction, and perceived academic performance in the context of EFL learning.

Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at MTsN 7 Agam, an Islamic junior secondary school in West Sumatra, Indonesia. The participants consisted of 56 eighth-grade students and three English teachers who had prior experience implementing the Jigsaw method in English lessons, particularly in teaching descriptive texts. The participants were selected through purposive sampling because they had direct experience with the implementation of the Jigsaw method and were therefore able to provide relevant information regarding its use and impact. Creswell and Creswell [20] explained that purposive sampling enables researchers to select participants who possess rich and relevant information regarding the phenomenon under investigation. Including both teachers and students enabled the study to capture multiple perspectives and develop a more comprehensive understanding of the learning experience.

Data Collection

Data were collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations. The questionnaire was administered to students to gather information about their perceptions of the Jigsaw method, particularly regarding motivation, social interaction, and learning experiences.

To enrich and clarify the questionnaire findings, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the three English teachers and selected students. These interviews provided participants with opportunities to elaborate on their experiences and express their views in greater depth. Semi-structured interviews were selected because they provide flexibility for participants to explain their experiences while allowing researchers to explore emerging issues in greater detail [21].

In addition, classroom observations were conducted to examine how the Jigsaw method was implemented during English lessons. The observations focused on students' participation, interaction patterns, collaborative activities, and classroom engagement. Observations complemented the questionnaire and interview data by capturing participants' actual classroom behaviors and interactions, thereby strengthening the credibility of the findings [21]. The use of multiple data collection methods enabled the researcher to obtain richer data and enhance the credibility of the findings through data triangulation.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Following the framework proposed by Braun and Clarke [22], the analysis began with organizing and reviewing the data obtained from the questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations. The researcher then carefully examined the data several times to gain a thorough understanding of the participants' responses and experiences. Relevant information was subsequently coded and categorized based on recurring patterns and emerging themes. This iterative coding process enabled the researcher to identify meaningful patterns across different sources of qualitative data.

Following the coding process, broader themes were identified and refined to represent the major findings of the study. Particular attention was given to themes related to students' motivation, social interaction, and perceived academic performance. Finally, findings from the different data sources were compared and interpreted to ensure consistency and to develop a comprehensive understanding of how the Jigsaw method contributed to students' learning experiences. In line with Miles et al. [23], data from questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations were continuously compared to verify emerging

themes and strengthen the trustworthiness of the analysis. The use of data triangulation enhanced the trustworthiness and credibility of the analysis.

3. FINDINGS

This section presents the findings obtained from questionnaires administered to 56 students and three English teachers, as well as interviews conducted with the teachers. The findings are organized according to the three dimensions investigated in this study: students' motivation, social interaction, and academic performance. Together, these findings provide insights into how the Jigsaw method shaped English learning experiences from both teachers' and students' perspectives.

Students' Motivation in Jigsaw-Based Learning

The questionnaire results revealed that students generally perceived the Jigsaw method positively. The highest percentage score reached 90%, while the lowest score was 69%. Most responses fell within the range of 76%–86%, indicating that the majority of students viewed the learning experience favorably.

Table 1. Summary of Questionnaire Results

Respondent Group	Number of Respondents	Highest Score (%)	Lowest Score (%)	Overall Perception
Students	56	90	69	Positive
Teachers	3	81	73	Positive

The findings suggest that students appreciated learning activities that required active participation and collaboration. Rather than remaining passive recipients of information, students became directly involved in discussing learning materials and sharing ideas with peers. The positive responses indicate that the Jigsaw method created learning opportunities that were perceived as engaging and meaningful. This finding is consistent with Wang et al. [24], who reported that Jigsaw-based cooperative learning can enhance students' academic motivation and learning engagement in EFL classrooms. Similarly, Ryan and Deci [18] argued that learning environments promoting autonomy, competence, and social interaction tend to strengthen students' intrinsic motivation.

Teachers' Perspectives on Student Motivation

The interview findings further support the questionnaire results. Teachers consistently reported that students became more enthusiastic during English lessons when the Jigsaw method was implemented. According to the teachers, students appeared more willing to participate in discussions, ask questions, and contribute ideas during classroom activities.

One teacher explained that students demonstrated greater interest in learning because they had opportunities to interact with classmates while completing learning tasks. Another teacher observed that the collaborative nature of the method encouraged students who were usually passive to become more involved in classroom discussions.

These findings indicate that motivation was closely connected to students' opportunities for participation and interaction. While previous studies often highlighted the relationship between cooperative learning and academic achievement, the present study suggests that students' motivation was also shaped by the social and collaborative nature of the learning process. This observation supports the findings of Larsari et al. [12], who found that the Flipped-Jigsaw approach increased students' autonomy and engagement. It also aligns with Li [25], who emphasized that students' motivation in EFL learning develops through meaningful participation and supportive classroom environments.

Social Interaction through the Jigsaw Method

Social interaction emerged as one of the most significant outcomes of the Jigsaw method. Questionnaire responses showed that students valued opportunities to communicate and collaborate with their classmates. The learning activities required students to exchange information, discuss ideas, and support one another in understanding lesson content.

The findings indicate that the Jigsaw method encouraged students to interact more frequently than in traditional classroom settings. Through collaborative activities, students developed stronger communication skills and became more comfortable participating in discussions. These findings are consistent with Johnson and Johnson [26], who emphasized that positive interdependence and face-to-face

interaction are essential characteristics of effective cooperative learning. Likewise, Gillies [27] explained that cooperative learning promotes communication, mutual support, and active participation among students.

The interview findings indicate that the Jigsaw method enhanced students' communication and collaboration skills. According to Teacher 1 (T1), "*Students become more willing to communicate and cooperate. They learn to listen to one another and help their friends understand the material.*" Likewise, Teacher 2 (T2) noted: "*Students who were usually quiet became more involved in discussions because they felt more comfortable learning with their peers.*"

These findings suggest that the collaborative nature of the Jigsaw method fostered a supportive classroom environment and encouraged greater student participation in learning activities. Jigsaw method transformed classroom interaction from a predominantly teacher-centered process into a more collaborative learning experience. Students became active contributors rather than passive participants. In addition, the method appeared to strengthen peer relationships by creating opportunities for communication and cooperation among students with different academic abilities and social backgrounds. Similar findings were reported by Kristiansen [9], who found that promotive interaction encouraged students to cooperate more effectively and actively support one another during collaborative learning activities.

Compared with several previous studies that focused primarily on learning outcomes, the present study highlights social interaction as a central benefit of the Jigsaw method. The findings indicate that collaborative learning contributes not only to academic learning but also to the development of communication and interpersonal skills. This result also supports the meta-analysis conducted by Cochon Drouet et al. [20], which concluded that the Jigsaw method positively influences students' educational outcomes, including collaborative skills and classroom participation.

Academic Performance

Although motivation and social interaction were the primary focus of this study, both teachers and students perceived positive academic outcomes resulting from the implementation of the Jigsaw method. Teachers reported that students demonstrated a better understanding of the lesson content, particularly descriptive texts, after participating in collaborative learning activities. This finding is consistent with Rahmi et al.[29], who reported that the implementation of the Jigsaw strategy in teaching descriptive texts improved students' learning experiences through active peer interaction and collaborative problem-solving.

The interview findings further suggest that students benefited from discussing learning materials with their peers. Through collaborative interactions, students were exposed to diverse perspectives and explanations, which helped them develop a deeper understanding of the lesson content. Similarly, Lin et al. [30] found that combining Jigsaw with cooperative learning activities strengthened students' learning confidence and conceptual understanding through peer discussion.

Personal Growth

Beyond academic learning, the findings reveal evidence of personal development among students. Teachers observed improvements in students' confidence, communication skills, and willingness to participate in classroom discussions. Students who had previously shown limited participation became more active contributors during learning activities. These findings are in line with Jeppu et al. [10], who reported that students participating in Jigsaw learning developed stronger teamwork, communication, and collaborative problem-solving skills. Similar conclusions were also reported by Montazeri Khadem et al. [31], who identified increased confidence and active participation as important benefits of the Jigsaw method.

Table 2. Major Themes Emerging from the Findings		
Theme	Evidence from Questionnaires	Evidence from Interviews
Motivation	Positive responses from students (69%–90%)	Increased enthusiasm and participation
Social Interaction	Positive perceptions of collaboration and communication	Stronger cooperation and peer support
Academic Performance	Positive perceptions of learning experiences	Improved understanding of descriptive texts
Personal Growth	Positive attitudes toward collaborative learning	Increased confidence and communication skills

The findings of this study reveal that the Jigsaw method offered more than simply an alternative approach to teaching English. From the perspectives of both teachers and students, it created a learning environment that encouraged active participation, meaningful peer interaction, and greater engagement in classroom activities. The positive responses gathered from questionnaires and interviews suggest that students did not merely learn English content; they also experienced learning as a collaborative and supportive process. These findings reinforce previous evidence indicating that cooperative learning creates learning environments that support both academic and social development [7], [27].

One of the most notable findings concerns students' motivation. The Jigsaw method helped sustain students' interest in learning by involving them directly in classroom activities rather than positioning them as passive recipients of information. Students were given opportunities to contribute to discussions, exchange ideas, and work together toward shared learning goals. As a result, they became more engaged in the learning process and developed stronger social connections with their classmates. This finding is consistent with Self-Determination Theory, which proposes that meaningful participation and supportive social relationships enhance students' intrinsic motivation [18].

The findings also highlight the important role of social interaction in supporting learning. Through collaborative activities, students learned to communicate effectively, share responsibilities, and provide mutual support. These experiences fostered a classroom atmosphere in which learning became a collective effort rather than an individual task. Such interaction not only enhanced participation but also contributed to the development of valuable interpersonal skills. These outcomes are also consistent with the cooperative learning principles proposed by Johnson and Johnson [26] and Aronson and Patnoe [32], who emphasized that structured peer collaboration promotes both academic achievement and social competence.

Beyond its influence on motivation and social interaction, the Jigsaw method was perceived to support both academic and personal growth. Teachers observed improvements in students' understanding of lesson content, while students demonstrated greater confidence, responsibility, and willingness to participate in classroom discussions. Taken together, these findings suggest that the impact of the Jigsaw method extended beyond academic achievement, contributing to a richer learning experience where academic learning, social engagement, and personal development were closely interconnected.

4. DISCUSSION

The present study explored students' perceptions of the implementation of the Jigsaw cooperative learning method in English language learning at an Islamic junior high school. Overall, the findings demonstrate that students perceived the Jigsaw method positively, particularly in enhancing learning motivation, promoting social interaction, and supporting both academic and personal development. These findings reinforce previous research suggesting that cooperative learning extends beyond improving academic outcomes by fostering meaningful engagement, communication, collaboration, and learner autonomy [23], [26], [27]. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), such outcomes are particularly significant because language learning requires active participation, meaningful interaction, and opportunities for learners to construct knowledge collaboratively rather than passively receiving information [33], [34].

The positive perceptions expressed by the participants indicate that the effectiveness of the Jigsaw method lies not only in its instructional procedures but also in its capacity to satisfy learners' psychological and social needs during the learning process. Students reported increased confidence, greater willingness to participate in classroom activities, improved collaboration with peers, and stronger responsibility for mastering and sharing learning materials. These experiences are consistent with the principles of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which proposes that students are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled [18], [35]. Recent developments of SDT further emphasize that learning environments supporting these three basic psychological needs contribute to higher levels of engagement, persistence, well-being, and academic achievement across diverse educational contexts [2], [36], [37].

The findings also support the fundamental principles of cooperative learning, which emphasize positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interaction, and the development of interpersonal skills as essential components of effective learning [26], [27], [38]. Within the Jigsaw structure, each student assumes responsibility for mastering a specific segment of the learning material before teaching it to peers, creating mutual dependence that encourages active participation and shared responsibility. Such collaborative processes not only facilitate knowledge construction but also cultivate communication skills, empathy, and respect for diverse perspectives, all of which are important competencies in twenty-first-century education [7], [32].

Furthermore, the present findings align with a growing body of empirical studies reporting the effectiveness of the Jigsaw method across various educational settings. Previous research has consistently shown that Jigsaw learning enhances students' motivation, engagement, collaborative skills, communication, and academic performance [7], [31], [32]. However, while many previous studies have focused primarily on measuring learning outcomes quantitatively, the present study contributes by providing qualitative evidence of how students themselves experience the implementation of the Jigsaw method in an Indonesian Islamic junior high school context. These insights enrich the existing literature by illustrating how cooperative learning influences students' motivation, social interaction, and personal development from the learners' own perspectives.

Based on these findings, the discussion is organized into three major themes that emerged from the analysis. The first section discusses how the Jigsaw method enhances students' learning motivation through the fulfillment of learners' psychological needs. The second examines how cooperative learning promotes meaningful social interaction and collaborative learning experiences. The third explores the contribution of the Jigsaw method to students' academic performance and personal development, followed by a discussion of its theoretical and pedagogical implications for English language teaching.

Jigsaw and Students' Learning Motivation

The findings of this study indicate that the Jigsaw method played a significant role in enhancing students' motivation to learn English. Most participants described the learning process as more enjoyable, interactive, and meaningful than conventional classroom instruction. Rather than passively listening to teachers' explanations, students actively engaged in discussions, exchanged ideas with their peers, and assumed responsibility for mastering specific learning materials before sharing them with their groups. This active involvement appears to have increased not only their interest in learning English but also their willingness to participate throughout the lesson.

These findings can be understood through the perspective of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which explains that learners are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation when their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled [18], [35]. The structure of the Jigsaw method naturally accommodates these three needs. Students experience autonomy when they independently explore and understand their assigned materials, competence when they successfully explain the content to their peers, and relatedness through continuous collaboration and mutual support within both expert and home groups. Consequently, motivation emerges not because students are required to complete classroom tasks, but because they feel capable, connected, and actively involved in the learning process.

This interpretation is consistent with recent developments in motivational research. Vansteenkiste et al. [36] emphasize that learning environments supporting students' psychological needs contribute to higher engagement, persistence, and academic well-being. Likewise, Martela [2] argues that meaningful learning experiences are created when students perceive themselves as active agents rather than passive recipients of instruction. From the perspective of second language learning, Al-Hoorie [37] also suggests that motivation is dynamic and develops through supportive classroom interactions. Together, these perspectives help explain why the participants in this study expressed greater enthusiasm and confidence during Jigsaw activities.

The participants' experiences also align with previous empirical studies examining cooperative learning in English language education. Wang et al. [24] reported that students participating in Jigsaw activities demonstrated higher academic motivation, stronger self-efficacy, and greater resilience in learning. Similarly, Larsari et al. [12] found that integrating the Flipped-Jigsaw approach promoted learner autonomy and sustained engagement among EFL learners. Li [25] further argues that learning environments encouraging autonomy and active participation are more likely to foster high-quality motivation because students become directly involved in constructing knowledge. These studies strengthen the present findings by suggesting that motivation grows when students perceive themselves as important contributors to the learning process.

An interesting aspect emerging from this study is the relationship between responsibility and motivation. Because every student was expected to become an "expert" on one part of the lesson before teaching it to other group members, participants realized that their preparation influenced not only their own understanding but also the success of the entire group. This shared responsibility encouraged students to prepare more seriously and participate more actively during classroom discussions. Such experiences reflect the principles of positive interdependence and individual accountability, which Johnson and Johnson [26] and Kagan [38] identify as the foundation of effective cooperative learning. When students recognize that every group member has an essential contribution, learning becomes a shared responsibility rather than an individual task.

The motivational benefits observed in this study are also consistent with findings from recent research on the implementation of the Jigsaw method. Rahmi et al. [29] reported that Jigsaw increased students' engagement and learning motivation by encouraging active collaboration and peer support. Similar results were found by Puspita [40], who observed that students became more enthusiastic and confident when learning English through Jigsaw activities. Chopra et al. [11], Jeppu et al. [10], and Cochon Drouet et al. [8] likewise concluded that cooperative learning creates a more inclusive and participatory classroom atmosphere, allowing students to communicate more freely and learn from one another. Although these studies were conducted in different educational contexts, they collectively reinforce the argument that Jigsaw enhances motivation by creating meaningful opportunities for interaction, responsibility, and active participation.

Another important finding is that increased motivation was accompanied by greater confidence in using English. Several participants explained that they felt more comfortable expressing opinions and asking questions because discussions took place within small groups rather than in front of the whole class. This supportive atmosphere appeared to reduce the fear of making mistakes, a challenge commonly experienced by EFL learners. As students became more accustomed to sharing ideas with their peers, they gradually developed greater confidence in communicating in English. This finding suggests that the motivational value of Jigsaw extends beyond increasing students' interest in learning; it also helps create an emotionally supportive classroom environment where learners feel safe to participate and develop their language skills.

The findings indicate that the effectiveness of the Jigsaw method in fostering students' motivation cannot be attributed solely to its cooperative learning structure. Instead, its strength lies in creating a supportive learning environment where students experience autonomy, competence, relatedness, and shared responsibility simultaneously. These interconnected experiences encourage students to participate more actively, develop greater confidence, and sustain their motivation to learn English. Therefore, the present study enriches the existing literature by providing qualitative insights into how Jigsaw facilitates motivational development within the context of an Indonesian Islamic junior high school.

Jigsaw as a Means of Strengthening Social Interaction

The findings indicate that the Jigsaw method plays an important role in strengthening social interaction among students. Throughout the learning process, students were encouraged to communicate actively, exchange ideas, listen to different perspectives, and support one another in completing shared learning tasks. These interactions created a more collaborative classroom atmosphere where students gradually became more comfortable expressing their opinions and engaging in academic discussions. Such experiences demonstrate that learning is not only an individual cognitive process but also a social activity that develops through interaction with others [34].

Students also reported that the Jigsaw activities helped them become more familiar with classmates whom they rarely interacted with during regular lessons. Since each member was responsible for mastering and teaching different parts of the learning material, every student had an equal opportunity to contribute to the group. This structure reduced the tendency for only high-achieving students to dominate classroom discussions while encouraging quieter students to participate more actively. These findings are consistent with Johnson and Johnson [26], who argue that positive interdependence and individual accountability are essential elements in promoting meaningful social interaction and cooperative learning.

Another notable finding is that students gradually developed stronger communication and teamwork skills through repeated participation in Jigsaw activities. They learned to explain concepts clearly, ask questions politely, negotiate different opinions, and solve problems collectively. These interpersonal skills emerged naturally because successful task completion depended on effective collaboration rather than individual performance alone. Similarly, Gillies [27] emphasizes that cooperative learning provides valuable opportunities for students to develop communication, negotiation, and interpersonal competencies that extend beyond academic achievement.

The interview data also suggest that the collaborative environment fostered mutual respect and empathy among students. During expert-group discussions and home-group teaching sessions, students became more aware of their peers' different learning abilities and communication styles. Rather than competing with one another, they were encouraged to help classmates understand the lesson, creating a classroom culture characterized by cooperation and shared responsibility. This finding supports the social interdependence perspective developed by Johnson and Johnson [26], which explains that cooperative goals encourage supportive relationships and positive interactions among group members.

Within the context of an Indonesian Islamic junior high school, these positive social interactions were particularly meaningful because collaborative learning reflected values such as mutual assistance, respect,

and collective responsibility that are emphasized in both educational practice and local cultural norms. As students worked together toward common learning goals, they not only improved their understanding of the subject matter but also strengthened their sense of belonging within the classroom community. This finding aligns with Kagan [38], who suggests that structured cooperative learning promotes social cohesion by ensuring that every learner participates actively and contributes meaningfully to group success.

The findings suggest that the Jigsaw method strengthens students' social interaction by encouraging active communication, mutual support, equal participation, and collaborative problem-solving. The qualitative evidence demonstrates that these social experiences create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment where students develop both academic understanding and interpersonal competence. These findings reinforce previous research showing that the effectiveness of Jigsaw extends beyond cognitive outcomes, contributing significantly to the development of positive peer relationships and collaborative classroom cultures [27].

Beyond Academic Achievement: Academic and Personal Growth

The findings of this study indicate that the benefits of the Jigsaw method extend beyond improvements in students' academic performance. While participants acknowledged that the learning activities helped them understand the lesson more effectively, they also emphasized the development of personal qualities such as confidence, responsibility, communication skills, and independence. These findings suggest that the impact of Jigsaw is holistic, supporting not only cognitive development but also students' personal growth throughout the learning process.

One of the most frequently reported outcomes was the increase in students' self-confidence. Many participants explained that they initially felt hesitant to speak in front of their classmates, yet repeated opportunities to present information and explain learning materials gradually reduced their anxiety. As students became responsible for teaching their assigned topics to their peers, they gained greater confidence in expressing ideas and answering questions. This finding supports Aronson [41], who argues that the Jigsaw classroom is designed not only to improve learning outcomes but also to build students' confidence and self-esteem by giving every learner an essential role within the group.

The interview data also reveal that students developed a stronger sense of responsibility toward both their own learning and the success of their group members. Since each student was expected to master a specific part of the material before teaching it to others, they became more aware of the importance of preparing carefully and contributing actively during discussions. This reflects one of the fundamental principles of cooperative learning, namely individual accountability, which encourages every learner to take responsibility for achieving both personal and group learning goals [26], [42].

Another important finding concerns the development of communication and leadership skills. Throughout the Jigsaw activities, students learned how to explain concepts clearly, respond to their classmates' questions, provide constructive feedback, and facilitate group discussions. Some participants also demonstrated leadership by helping organize discussions and encouraging less active members to participate. These interpersonal competencies emerged naturally through collaborative learning experiences rather than through direct instruction. Gillies [27] explains that cooperative learning environments provide meaningful opportunities for students to strengthen communication, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving skills that are valuable both inside and outside the classroom.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that Jigsaw encourages students to become more independent learners. Before returning to their home groups, students needed to understand their assigned materials independently while collaborating with members of their expert groups. This process required them to read carefully, identify important information, and organize their understanding before explaining it to others. Such learning experiences promote self-regulated learning because students become actively involved in monitoring and managing their own learning process. Prince [43] similarly argues that active learning approaches encourage students to take greater responsibility for constructing knowledge rather than relying solely on teacher-centered instruction.

Beyond these individual competencies, the findings also indicate that the Jigsaw method helps prepare students with broader skills required for lifelong learning. Collaboration, communication, critical thinking, adaptability, and responsibility are increasingly recognized as essential competencies for success in education and society. By engaging students in meaningful cooperative learning experiences, Jigsaw provides opportunities to cultivate these transferable skills alongside academic knowledge. This perspective is consistent with the OECD [44], which emphasizes that education should foster not only academic achievement but also social, emotional, and collaborative competencies needed to address future challenges.

Taken together, the findings of this study indicate that the benefits of the Jigsaw method are not limited to improving students' academic achievement. The learning experiences also contribute to students' personal development by encouraging them to participate actively, take responsibility for their own learning, work collaboratively with their peers, and share knowledge during group discussions. As a result, students not only gain a better understanding of the learning materials but also become more confident, independent, responsible, and effective in communicating with others. These findings are in line with previous studies showing that cooperative learning supports both students' academic development and the growth of important personal and social skills needed inside and outside the classroom [26], [27], [42].

Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study offer several important implications for English language teaching, particularly in EFL classrooms where student participation and interaction remain ongoing challenges. First, the study demonstrates that the Jigsaw method can serve as an effective instructional strategy for creating more student-centered learning environments. Rather than relying primarily on teacher explanations, students actively construct knowledge through discussion, peer teaching, and collaborative problem-solving. This suggests that English teachers should consider integrating structured cooperative learning activities into their regular classroom practice to encourage greater learner engagement and participation [26], [42].

Second, the findings indicate that successful language learning involves more than improving students' academic achievement. Students' increased motivation, confidence, communication skills, and willingness to collaborate illustrate that meaningful learning occurs when cognitive, social, and emotional aspects of learning are addressed simultaneously. Therefore, English teachers should design learning experiences that provide opportunities for students not only to master language content but also to develop interpersonal skills that support long-term learning and future professional competencies [27], [44].

From a theoretical perspective, the findings provide additional support for Social Interdependence Theory and Social Constructivism, demonstrating that learning becomes more meaningful when students work collaboratively toward shared goals and construct understanding through social interaction [26], [34]. The present study extends these theoretical perspectives by providing qualitative evidence from an Indonesian Islamic junior high school, showing that positive interdependence, peer interaction, and individual accountability contribute not only to academic learning but also to students' motivation and personal development within a culturally supportive learning environment.

The study also has implications for educational policy and curriculum implementation. As current educational reforms increasingly emphasize twenty-first-century competencies, including communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and learner autonomy, the Jigsaw method offers a practical approach for integrating these competencies into everyday classroom instruction. The findings suggest that cooperative learning should not be viewed merely as an alternative teaching technique but as a pedagogical approach that supports the broader goals of contemporary education [44].

Finally, the study highlights several directions for future research. Since this research was conducted in a single Indonesian Islamic junior high school using a qualitative approach, future studies could examine the effectiveness of the Jigsaw method across different educational levels, school contexts, and cultural settings. Quantitative or mixed-methods research may also investigate the long-term effects of Jigsaw on English language proficiency, critical thinking, learner autonomy, and collaborative competencies, thereby providing broader evidence regarding its educational impact.

5. CONCLUSION

This study explored teachers' and students' perspectives on the implementation of the Jigsaw method in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, focusing on its influence on students' motivation, social interaction, and academic learning. The findings indicate that the Jigsaw method creates a more engaging and collaborative learning environment by encouraging students to participate actively, communicate with peers, and assume shared responsibility for learning. Both teachers and students perceived the method positively, highlighting its role in increasing learning motivation, improving classroom interaction, and supporting students' understanding of lesson content.

Beyond its contribution to academic learning, the findings demonstrate that the Jigsaw method promotes broader aspects of students' personal development. Through structured cooperative learning, students developed greater confidence, communication skills, responsibility, independence, and collaborative abilities. These outcomes suggest that the effectiveness of the Jigsaw method extends beyond knowledge acquisition by fostering essential interpersonal and lifelong learning competencies that are increasingly valued in contemporary education.

The study also contributes to the existing literature by providing qualitative evidence from the context of an Indonesian Islamic junior secondary school, where cooperative learning aligns with educational values emphasizing mutual support, respect, and shared responsibility. By incorporating both teachers' and students' perspectives, the research offers a more comprehensive understanding of how the Jigsaw method influences classroom experiences and supports meaningful language learning.

Despite these contributions, the study has several limitations. The research was conducted in a single school using a qualitative design with a relatively small number of participants, which may limit the transferability of the findings to other educational contexts. In addition, the study focused primarily on participants' perceptions rather than measuring long-term improvements in English language proficiency or other learning outcomes.

Future research is therefore recommended to examine the long-term effectiveness of the Jigsaw method across different educational levels, institutional settings, and learner populations. Employing mixed-methods or longitudinal designs could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how cooperative learning influences language proficiency, critical thinking, learner autonomy, and twenty-first-century competencies over time. Such research would further strengthen the evidence base for the integration of the Jigsaw method into EFL teaching and learning practices.

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