

Investigating EFL University Students' Motivation to Develop their Speaking Skills

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Abstract

This mixed-methods study explored motivational factors that shape EFL university students' willingness to engage in and persist with the development of their English speaking skills—a domain often perceived as both essential and psychologically demanding. Situated within the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the current study followed a sequential explanatory design, QUAN → QUAL. Participants included 58 EFL university students who completed a structured questionnaire, while 10 participants were followed up with semi-structured interviews to interpret and contextualize statistical findings. Accordingly, the correlational analyses showed that intrinsic motivation was the strongest predictor of students' self-reported speaking practice ($r = .58$, $p < .001$), which supports the idea that internalized enjoyment and personal interest are much more decisive than externally driven goals in sustained speaking engagement. These results are enriched by the qualitative findings, which revealed a recurring competence-anxiety cycle, in which students' perceived inability to speak escalated anxiety, which in turn discouraged further practice. Participants also underlined the demotivating effect of a controlling classroom environment, marked by overcorrection and lack of learner autonomy. This study concludes that, whereas future-oriented goals trigger the initial activation of motivation, the long-term development of speaking depends considerably on the fulfillment of learners' basic psychological needs, especially autonomy and competence. Hence, the study stresses the role of autonomy-supportive teaching practices for sustaining voluntary speaking engagement and offers some pedagogical suggestions that aim at shifting instructional focus from external pressure toward intrinsic involvement.

Key words: EFL learners, learner motivation, L2 Motivational Self System, Self-Determination Theory, speaking anxiety

دراسة دافعية طلبة الجامعات متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية لتطوير مهاراتهم في التحدث

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ملخص

استكشفت هذه الدراسة، التي اعتمدت على منهجية البحث المختلط، العوامل التحفيزية التي تُشكل رغبة طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الجامعات في الانخراط في تطوير مهاراتهم في التحدث باللغة

الإنجليزية والمثابرة عليه، وهو مجال يُنظر إليه غالبًا على أنه أساسي ويتطلب جهدًا نفسيًا كبيرًا. وانطلاقًا من نظام التحفيز الذاتي للغة الثانية (L2MSS) ونظرية تقرير المصير (SDT)، اتبعت الدراسة الحالية تصميمًا تفسيريًا متسلسلاً (كمي ← نوعي). وشملت عينة الدراسة 58 طالبًا جامعيًا من طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، أكملوا استبيانًا منظمًا، بينما خضع 10 مشاركين لمقابلات شبه منظمة لتفسير النتائج الإحصائية ووضعها في سياقها. وبناءً على ذلك، أظهرت تحليلات الارتباط أن الدافعية الذاتية كانت أقوى مؤشر على ممارسة الطلاب للتحدث وفقًا لتقاريرهم الذاتية ($r = 0.58$)، ($p < 0.001$)، مما يدعم فكرة أن المتعة الداخلية والاهتمام الشخصي أكثر تأثيرًا من الأهداف الخارجية في استمرار الانخراط في التحدث. تُثري هذه النتائج المستخلصة من الدراسات النوعية، والتي كشفت عن حلقة متكررة من الكفاءة والقلق، حيث يؤدي شعور الطلاب بعدم قدرتهم على التحدث إلى تفاقم القلق، مما يُثبط بدوره المزيد من التدريب. كما أكد المشاركون على الأثر المُثبط لبيئة الصف الدراسي المُسيطر، والتي تتسم بالإفراط في التصحيح وانعدام استقلالية المتعلم. وتخلص هذه الدراسة إلى أنه في حين أن الأهداف المستقبلية تُحفز الدافعية في البداية، فإن التطور طويل الأمد لمهارة التحدث يعتمد بشكل كبير على تلبية الاحتياجات النفسية الأساسية للمتعلمين، ولا سيما الاستقلالية والكفاءة. ولذلك، تُشدد الدراسة على دور ممارسات التدريس الداعمة للاستقلالية في الحفاظ على المشاركة الطوعية في التحدث، وتقدم بعض الاقتراحات التربوية التي تهدف إلى تحويل التركيز التعليمي من الضغط الخارجي إلى المشاركة الذاتية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، دافعية المتعلم، نظام الدافعية الذاتية في اللغة الثانية، نظرية تقرير المصير، قلق التحدث

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

In recent decades, the acquisition of EFL has become an important part of the higher education structure due to the high, continuing influence of English as the dominant medium in scholastic, professional, and intercultural communication. No longer is proficiency in English merely a valuable asset for university students; instead, it has become a basic qualification that significantly expands employability opportunities, especially within multinational companies and international organizations. In many countries, for example, proficiency in this language has also become a criterion for university entrance and, in addition, one of the selection criteria for students who want to participate in international academic programs or study abroad.

Among the four basic language skills-listening, speaking, reading, and writing-speaking has a special and at the same time painful position. Speaking is widely considered one of the most difficult skills to acquire, on the one hand, but is also often equated with general proficiency in the language, on the other (Folse, 2006; Richards, 2008). In both academic and social contexts, the ability to speak fluently is taken as proof of successful language learning. Speaking, however, goes well beyond the production of grammatically correct sentences. Efficient oral production requires the integration of grammatical knowledge, phonological

control, paralinguistic features such as stress and intonation, non-verbal communication, discourse management, and appropriateness within sociolinguistic conditions (Shumin, 2002).

Despite its complexity and centrality to communication, speaking instruction in many EFL contexts is still limited or undervalued, often being reduced to mechanical practice of vocabulary and sentence patterns. Accordingly, learners can finish years of formal instruction without acquiring sufficient confidence or fluency in spoken English. Given that learners often link success in language learning with their ability to speak, it comes as no surprise that speaking is frequently reported as the most wanted skill among foreign language learners (Ur, 1996). This strong wish does not necessarily turn into consistent effort and active engagement in those contexts where real opportunities for authentic speaking practice do not occur very often.

1.2 Problem Statement

However, developing speaking skills has indeed been a challenging task for university students in an EFL environment, especially where the setting is predominantly restricted to the classroom. In such cases, usually categorized as "outer circle" or EFL settings, learners have limited contact with English outside academic environments; therefore, opportunities for spontaneous interaction and meaningful practice are limited. Consequently, many students fail to put their theoretically gained knowledge into practice in actual spoken performance.

These can be broadly grouped into linguistic, affective, and pedagogical factors. Linguistically, students frequently report inadequate knowledge of vocabulary (Al-Hosni, 2014; Kashinathan & Abdul Aziz, 2021), an inability to produce grammatically correct utterances in actual time (Derakhshan et al., 2016), and lack of access to suitable speaking materials (Erdem & Tutkun, 2016). These are compounded by affective barriers. Speaking is a widely acknowledged anxiety-provoking language skill (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986), and many learners experience fear of making errors, negative evaluation by peers, and low self-confidence; all these are bound to lower one's motivation to engage in speaking activities (Shen & Chiu, 2019).

Added to these learner-related factors are pedagogical practices that inadvertently obstruct speaking development. The excessive use of the L1 during instruction (Cristina, 2012) and, in some contexts, the lack of proficient or native-speaking English teachers (Tsang, 2019) may decrease students' exposure to spoken English and deplete their communicative competence. Together, they create in the

classroom a learning environment where students acknowledge the importance of speaking yet remain reluctant or unable to engage in its practice.

Motivation is, therefore, considered to be the major variable determining whether the learners will persevere in overcoming the aforementioned obstacles. Traditionally, it has been considered one of the primary determinants of success or failure in foreign language learning (Dörnyei, 2001; YE, 2020; Ma et al., 2020). According to Dörnyei (1998), even the most adequate teaching methods and an ideally designed curriculum cannot ensure successful learning without motivation. However, motivation is not a stable attribute but rather a situational characteristic that changes according to classroom experience, instructional practices, and learners' perceived self-competence (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Hiew, 2012). This situational nature of motivation underscores the necessity for a focused investigation into those very specific motivational mechanisms that underscore EFL university students' engagement with speaking skills.

1.3 Theoretical Framework and Purpose of the Study

Research on motivation in second language learning has shifted significantly since the pioneering work of Gardner and Lambert (1972), it expanded from socially oriented models to more cognitively and psychologically grounded frameworks. In particular, this study draws on three complementary theoretical perspectives: to look at the motivation of learners toward speaking development.

First, the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation presents a basic understanding of why learners engage in language learning activities. Intrinsic motivation is that related to learning for enjoyment, interest, or personal satisfaction, while extrinsic motivation is related to learning that is driven by external rewards or future outcomes, such as employment or academic success (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

It conceptualizes motivation in terms of learners' future self-guides. The latter is comprised of the ideal L2 Self-representing learners' desired future image as competent users of the language; the Ought-to L2 Self-reflective of the external expectations and obligations; and the L2 Learning Experience-percentage relevant to learners' immediate classroom environment and day-to-day learning experiences.

Finally, Self-Determination Theory, or SDT, places greater emphasis on motivational quality than on motivational quantity and maintains that the three basic psychological needs-autonomy, competence, and relatedness-must be satisfied in order for enduring engagement to occur. According to SDT, learners

would more likely be willing to expend effort in speaking when they feel a sense of choice, perceive themselves as capable, and experience supportive social interactions.

Generally guided by these frameworks, the main goal of this study is to explore the motivational factors driving or deterring EFL university students from engaging and persisting in developing their speaking skills in English. More concretely, this study aims at identifying dominant motivational orientations, and at exploring the relationship of these motivational orientations with self-reported speaking practice and perceived challenges of students.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is going to be guided by the following research questions:

1. What motivational orientations-(intrinsic, extrinsic integrative, instrumental)-characterize EFL university students' attitudes toward developing their English speaking skills?
2. Is there a significant relation between students' motivational orientations and self-reported frequency of English speaking practice?
3. What challenges and demotivating factors do EFL university students perceive as hindering their efforts to improve speaking proficiency?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this research contributes to motivation studies by applying well-received motivational frameworks, especially SDT and L2MSS, to the domain of speaking skills, which has received relatively less focused attention in motivation studies at the university level. This study contributes both theoretically and practically to the field of EFL and second language acquisition. By examining the interaction of classroom context and psychological needs with learners' willingness to speak, the study will provide a more nuanced understanding of motivation as a dynamic and context-sensitive construct.

The implications of these findings are practically important for EFL teachers and syllabus designers. Since teachers "play a central role in influencing the nature of learners' classroom experiences" (Lamb, 2017, p. 3), understanding motivational drivers and barriers to speaking can make the development of more effective teaching practices possible. The study strengthens the potential contributions of autonomy-supportive teaching approaches, constructive feedback, and strategic use

of the mother tongue as scaffolding rather than substitution (Maeng & Lee, 2015). This research, therefore, aspires to make an evidence-based recommendation that would help EFL university students narrow the persistent gap between their strong desire to speak English and their actual performance.

Section Two: Literature Review

2.1 Motivation in Second Language Acquisition

Motivation has, for a considerable period of time, been considered one of the most decisive psychological variables in the success or failure of SLA. Among various individual differences investigated in SLA research-aptitude, learning strategies, and anxiety-motivation has consistently emerged as a central explanatory construct. According to Dörnyei (2001), motivation serves both as an initial catalyst that initiates language learning and as a sustaining force enabling learners to persevere through what is often a protracted, effortful, and sometimes frustrating process. This dual function puts into perspective motivation not as some static learner trait but rather as dynamic and in evolution.

In the context of language learning, motivation reflects learners' goals, attitudes, effort, persistence, and emotional engagement with the target language. It denotes not only why learners decide to study a language, but also how intensively and how consistently they pursue that goal. Dörnyei (1998) points out that even the most imaginatively tailored curricula coupled with instruction that is pedagogically sound cannot ensure successful learning without adequate motivation on the part of learners. This has given researchers reason to consider motivation as a precondition, rather than an additional variable, for successful language learning.

Importantly, however, motivation in SLA is not uniform across skills. For example, learners might be highly motivated to read or write in a foreign language while at the same time avoiding oral tasks, especially in classroom contexts that make oral performance highly public and evaluative. Such skill-specific variation highlights the importance of considering motivation not only as a general orientation toward language learning but also with respect to specific skills, such as speaking, that make high cognitive, affective, and social demands on learners.

2.2 Big Theoretical Frameworks of L2 Motivation

Several influential theoretical models have thus far underpinned the study of L2 motivation, each reflecting a wider development in psychology and education. The present research draws most heavily on three complementary frameworks that,

together, offer the fullest understanding of motivational processes in EFL learning: Gardner's Socio-Educational Model, Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System, and Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

2.2.1 From the Socio-Educational Model to the L2 Motivational Self System

Early research into language learning motivation comes from the work of Robert Gardner and the Socio-Educational Model that delivered one of the first comprehensive explanations of why learners invest effort in acquiring a second language. Central to this model is the distinction between integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation refers to learners' desire to identify with or integrate into the target language community, while instrumental motivation stems from practical considerations, such as employment opportunities, academic success, or examination requirements (Martin, 2020).

Although Gardner's framework was highly influential, subsequent researchers questioned the relevance of the framework to contexts in which learners have limited contact with native-speaking communities, such as is often the case with many EFL settings. Against the backdrop of contextual limitations with regard to applying L2 motivation, Dörnyei re-conceptualized L2 motivation from the perspective of contemporary self-psychology and proposed what he called the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS). The L2MSS focuses not on the language communities located externally but rather on the internalized future self-images of learners as the principal motivational driving forces.

Therefore, the L2MSS is constituted of three interrelated components. Ideal L2 Self: Learners represent their aspirations and their wanted future identity as competent users of the target language. Ought-to L2 Self is externally imposed expectations, duties, or obligations like parental and societal pressure. L2 Learning Experience refers to the learners' immediate classroom environment, which includes teaching methods, peer interaction, and affective classroom climate. This model has generally been adopted in EFL research as it accommodates both future-oriented goals and situational learning experiences, making it particularly suitable for university-level learners.

2.2.2 Self-Determination Theory and Types of Motivation

Self-Determination Theory was first introduced by Deci and Ryan in 1985, and in recent years, the interest in using it within SLA research has gained more and more prominence because of its emphasis on the quality rather than the intensity of motivation. SDT views motivation as a continuum, ranging from amotivation-a

stage at which people do not intend to act-to intrinsic motivation, which represents the highest level of self-determination. Between the two extremes lie various forms of extrinsic motivation that vary in the extent to which they have been internalized by the learner.

According to SDT, extrinsic motivation is not considered a single category; rather, it is viewed as a set of regulatory styles, including external regulation, introjected regulation, and identified regulation. The different forms reflect the heterogeneity in both learner autonomy and the personal acceptance of the learning activity. Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is defined as engaging in an activity for its inherent enjoyment, interest, or satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

One of the core assumptions of SDT is that sustained motivation depends on the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to learners' sense of volition and choice; competence involves feelings of effectiveness and capability; and relatedness concerns meaningful social connections within the learning environment (Deci & Ryan, 2002). When these needs are supported by the instructional context, learners are more likely to internalize motivation and demonstrate persistence, engagement, and positive learning outcomes. In speaking-focused contexts where learners are particularly sensitive to evaluation and error, the satisfaction of competence and autonomy needs becomes especially critical.

2.3 Speaking as a Skill: Cognitive and Affective Challenges

Speaking is considered to be one of the most complicated and challenging skills while learning a second language. Apart from receptive skills, speaking requires learners to produce language in real time, in conditions of cognitive pressure and social scrutiny. The model by Levelt (1985) provides an excellent framework to understand such complexity by conceptualizing speaking as a multistage process: starting from conceptualization, then formulation and articulation, to finally self-monitoring.

Each of these stages presents potential problems for EFL learners. Poor vocabulary knowledge and grammatical control can impede formulation, while pronunciation and fluency problems hamper articulation. On the other hand, self-monitoring, even when necessary for accuracy, can become excessive and disruptive, especially when learners experience a fear of error. It is for these reasons that many learners suffer breakdowns in fluency even when they possess sufficient linguistic knowledge.

Beyond cognitive constraints, however, affective factors are very influential in shaping learners' speaking behavior. Anxiety about speaking has been repeatedly cited as the primary impediment to oral involvement in EFL classes. Learners frequently shy away from speaking because of fear of possible negative evaluation, feeling embarrassed, or believing oneself incapable, which, in turn, leads to fewer opportunities for practice and a slowing down in the development of the skill. It can thus turn into a kind of vicious cycle in which the limited speaking experience strengthens anxiety and also undermines confidence, thereby discouraging further participation.

2.4. Teachers' Motivational Practices and Classroom Climate

The teacher's role is central in shaping the learners' motivational experiences, and it is especially heightened in speaking-oriented classrooms since instructional practices bear direct influence on whether learners develop or shrink from a willingness to communicate. Lamb 2017 highlights that teachers are not passive transmitters of linguistic knowledge but rather active agents in constructing motivational climates that support or undermine learner engagement.

According to Reeve (2009, 2016), teacher behaviors fall along a continuum ranging from the controlling to autonomy-supportive styles. Autonomy-supportive teachers offer meaningful choices, acknowledge the perspective of the learners, and promote self-initiation, thus supporting the ownership feelings of students about their learning process. In contrast, controlling teachers rely on rewards externally, instructions that are rigid, and pressuring language, often dismissing internal motivational resources of the learners.

Empirical studies confirm that an autonomy-supportive teaching style is associated with higher levels of intrinsic motivation, engagement, and achievement, whereas controlling practices tend to produce compliance rather than true involvement. In speaking instruction, these differences are particularly salient: students take communicative risks more when being supported than when judged.

Apart from teacher style, certain motivational strategies alone, such as humor, encouragement, and structured preparation of speaking tasks, have been found to enhance learner motivation. Moreover, using learners' L1 strategically as scaffolding rather than replacing English can reduce cognitive overload and anxiety, hence allowing participation.

2.5 Synthesis of the Literature and Research Gap

The literature reviewed also underlines the crucial role motivation plays in the process of developing EFL speaking competence and the fact that established theoretical models provide valuable insights into its nature and sources. Empirical research suggests that higher levels of speaking proficiency are associated with intrinsic and integrative orientations, while mere reliance on instrumental or externally regulated forms of motivation may not sustain oral engagement.

Despite this growing body of research, several gaps remain: much of the existing literature treats motivation as a general construct without adequately addressing skill-specific differences-particularly with respect to speaking; though SDT has been widely applied within educational psychology, relatively few SLA studies have examined speaking motivation in an SDT framework in university-level EFL contexts; and there is an underexplored interaction between classroom practices, psychological need satisfaction, and learners' willingness to speak.

The present study aims to fill these gaps by providing an in-depth inquiry into EFL university students' motivational profiles related to the development of speaking skill, combined by quantitative and qualitative data, so that both structural and experiential aspects of motivation are captured.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

In this study, I have opted to conduct it using a mixed research design with a sequential explanatory design of QUAN to QUAL. This particular design has been utilized in recognition of the fact that issues of perceptions and realities of motivations cannot be captured in a single mode of research. Indeed, through research with quantitative data, it is simple to identify or measure the particular motivational aspects. Conversely, through research with qualitative data, there is opportunity to explore people's perceptions in regards to such aspects.

The first phase of the study entails the collection of quantitative data using a structured questionnaire to identify the major motivational orientations and their relation to the amount of actual speaking practice engaged in by students. The second phase requires the collection of qualitative data using semi-structured interviews for a strategically chosen subset of participants. The second phase is aimed at explaining and contextualizing the findings from the quantitative study and shedding more light on students' individual perspectives on motivation, anxiety, and classroom experiences, among other factors affecting speaking development. The second phase targets answering the second and fourth research questions.

The reason why the sequential explaining design is suited just for the proposed study is the fact that the data of motivation is known to vary based on some factors, such as context and pedagogy, according to some researchers, such as Hiew in 2012.

3.2 Participants and Sampling

3.2.1 Population and

The target population will be the students enrolled in English Foreign Language courses at higher learning institution, where the use of the language is limited to the classrooms, as it is not the medium of communication outside the classrooms since the students are studying it as a Foreign language.

For the quantitative portion, respondents will be chosen through the use of a convenience sampling method, which is normally used in education-related studies because of logistical considerations and accessibility. 58 EFL students in their second, third, or fourth year in EFL courses will be asked to participate in this study, as this number will provide enough data to test or correlate statistics properly and with reliability.

For the qualitative component, a purposive sampling technique will be applied. Among the questionnaire participants, the procedure will identify and choose a total of 10 participants according to the identified profiles of their motivation as measured by the results from the quantitative component. This will ensure that all dimensions and types of the participants' motivation are accounted for, including individuals identifying as being mostly internally motivated, mostly extrinsically motivated, and/or overall less motivated. Through this sampling strategy, greater insights and valid comparison will be included to meet the demands to provide more insightful research on the aspect of motivation as stated by YE (2020).

3.2.2 Research Design

In this particular study, English language learners are mostly limited to classroom learning and get minimal exposure to the language for speaking purposes. Therefore, this represents a fitting environment to investigate speaking motivation, considering the influence of classroom learning on learning English.

3.3 Research Instruments

In order to adequately respond to research questions, there are three instruments of data collection. They include a Motivation Questionnaire, a Self-Reported

Speaking Practice Scale, and a Semi-Structured Interview Protocol. The three instruments mentioned above contribute to triangulating data.

3.3.1 Motivation Questionnaire

The Motivation Questionnaire is used as the main tool in the quantitative phase of the research. It was developed from pre-existing motivation instruments with a strong basis in the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT), with slight changes to be used in the domain of English speaking skills.

The survey questionnaire has a total of 20 items. It is scaled through a Likert Scale of five points. Its points run from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The items are grouped under several subscales according to the constructs mentioned in the literature review. These subscales are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: The Items of the questionnaire

Sub-scale	The Construct Measured	Item
Intrinsic Motivation	Enjoyment and Interest in English Speaking (Deci & Ryan, 1985)	<i>I like talking in English even if I commit error</i>
Extrinsic Motivation	Motivation regulated by external rewards or pressures (Deci & Ryan, 1985)	<i>I would like to work on speaking skills because I need to get high grades</i>
Instrumental Motivation	practical and job-related goals	<i>Improving my speaking skills will enable me to find a better job</i>
Ideal L2 Self	Future self-image as a fluent English speaker (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015)	<i>I envision myself communicating effectively and confidently in the English language</i>
Speaking Anxiety	Fear and discomfort linked with oral performances (Horwitz et al., 1986)	<i>I get nervous when I have to speak in English in class</i>

3.3.2 Self-Reported Scale for Speaking Practice

For the purpose of determining actual level of participation in speaking activities by the learners, as opposed to just their attitude, there is incorporated in the questionnaire a Self-Reported Speaking Practice Scale. This scale evaluates students' speaking practices outside the classroom by means of a five-point scale ranging from "1 – Never" to "5 – Daily."

The factors considered are common speaking behaviors such as:

- Conversing with friends or relatives in the English language
- Involvement in English-speaking clubs, online sites, and discussion groups
- Practicing pronunciation, shadowing, or self-recorded speaking tasks

With this scale, there is an operational definition for speaking engagement, and one can assess motivational orientations in relation to reported behavior.

3.3.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

As a way to complement the results from the quantitative analysis, a semi-structured format will be utilized during the conduct of the qualitative research. This will provide the advantage of some level of structure and similarity among the interviews while also being able to pursue other matters raised by the results.

The types of questions asked in an interview are aimed at triggering reflective thinking on three primary domains:

Motivational Experiences: The students' views of what will motivate or demotivate them to speak English, focusing on Ideal L2 Self and autonomy, competence, and relationship needs satisfaction (Deci and Ryan 1985).

Speaking Challenges: Speakers' experiences of linguistic, psychological, and social problems faced while speaking, such as lack of vocabulary, grammatical pause, and fear of peer assessment (Al-Hosni, 2014; Derakhshan et al., 2016).

Teaching Influence and Classroom Environment: Students' perceptions of teaching practices, comparisons between autonomy-supportive and controlling classroom teaching styles (Reeve, 2009, 2016), and the use of the L1 as a scaffold (Maeng & Lee, 2015).

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

Data acquisition is done at various levels:

Quantitative Phase: The questionnaire was done in a paper-and-pencil format during class time. Participants were told the purposes of the experiment and required to provide their consent before answering the questionnaire.

Qualitative Phase: Once the quantitative data is explored, potential participants were approached and asked to consent to take part in individual interviews. All tape recordings from the interviews are done with the participant's consent and they were transcribed for later analysis and reanalysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data is analyzed making use of SPSS as follow:

The means and standard deviations of descriptive statistics for every motivational sub-scale are used to answer the first research question.

Pearson product–moment correlation coefficients are calculated to identify how motivational factors are related to self-reported speaking practices. The second research question is being investigated here.

3.5.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative interview data will be analyzed using thematic analysis, in an iterative and inductive manner:

- Being familiar with the data through repeated readings of the transcripts
- Production of initial codes reflecting meaningful patterns
- Identification and development of themes of shared motivational experiences and struggles
- Integrating the themes from both qualitative and quantitative test to facilitate the interpretation of the data.

With this analysis, it is possible for the study to transcend the numerical relationship and present an in-depth description of how learners conceive of and negotiate their motivations regarding speaking development, which has not yet been extensively investigated from the qualitative paradigm.

4. Analysis and Results

In this section, results earned from the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, according to the sequential explanatory design (QUAN → QUAL) employed within this research, are to be presented. The quantitative study is focused on answering the first two research questions, having as aim to explore dominant motivational types and explore their link to self-reported speaking activity. The qualitative study succeeds these results, answering research questions three and four, addressing motivational factors and issues for/against speaking development.

4.1 Quantitative Results

To collect the quantitative data, a sample of 58 university-level EFL students was involved.

4.1.1 Speaking Motivational Orientations

The first research question investigated the primary orientations of EFL university students regarding the development of English speaking skills. The descriptive results are presented using mean and standard deviation measures. Table (2) below highlights the findings based on the five-point likert scale (5 = Strongly Agree).

Table (2) The Results of the Questionnaire

Motivational Scale	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Instrumental Motivation	4.35	0.61	high external and goal-oriented motivation
Ideal L2 Self	4.13	0.75	Strong future-oriented self-image
Intrinsic Motivation	3.55	0.98	Moderate enjoyment
Integrative Motivation	3.21	1.05	Moderate identification with L2 culture
Speaking Anxiety	3.88	0.85	High degree of anxiety

The results showed that Instrumental Motivation was the most salient motivational factor for the participants, but closely followed by the Ideal L2 Self. The implication of the findings is that the motivation for the development of speaking ability is primarily influenced by the learner's considerations for the future, such as career opportunities and development, which corresponds to theoretical

assumptions about the importance of English for the higher education setting (Dick, 2022; Irham, 2022). The high saliency score for the Ideal L2 Self suggests that the L2 Motivational Self System has a certain degree of relevance for the participants, referring to the fact that the participants have a certain image of the selves that will master English well in the future (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

Nevertheless, a rather high average score on Speaking Anxiety indicates an important ambivalence within motivational characteristics of learners. Learners' strong motivational orientation towards speaking English is accompanied, to a considerable extent, by anxiety related to speaking, thus confirming previous research regarding speaking, among other skills, being the most anxiety-producing aspect of EFL studies (Horwitz et al., 1986). The concomitance of high levels of both motivational strength and anxiety indicates, rather indirectly, that having strong motivational strength is no sufficient condition to ensure successful speaking activities.

4.1.2 Relationship Between Motivation and Speaking Practice

The second research question focused on the correlation between the motivational orientations of the students and their self-rated practice of English speaking. The correlation coefficients are presented in table (3) below. Pearson product correlation coefficients were used.

Table (3): The Results about Practice of Speaking English

Motivational Scale	r	p-value
Intrinsic Motivation	0.58	< .001
Ideal L2 Self	0.45	< .001
Instrumental Motivation	0.21	< .05
Speaking Anxiety	-0.39	< .001

This analysis has also shown that there is strong positive correlation between intrinsic motivation and speaking practice. This clearly suggests that those students who were more self-motivated to speak English out of enjoyment and personal interest were also observed to practice more regularly. This clearly supports a

fundamental assumption in Self-Determination Theory. This theory clearly asserts that those behaviors that are intrinsically motivated are more self-regulated and sustainable than those motivated and maintained through external rewards (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

The Ideal L2 Self correlated positively and significantly with speaking practice. This indicated that having a clear and positive vision of a future self promotes learners to put efforts into speaking practice. Nevertheless, the correlation is less strong than intrinsic motivation, and it may act only when there is a positive and practical vision of the future.

Conversely, however, Instrumental Motivation, while the most common overall, presented a very weak relationship to speaking practice. This finding indicates a situation where, while external factors such as career objectives can serve to begin a process of motivation, they are far less beneficial for maintaining a level of voluntary and persistent effort for speaking skill development. Finally, a negative relationship between Speaking Anxiety and practice justified that anxiety is a substantial inhibitor of speaking activities (Shen & Chiu, 2019).

4.2 Qualitative Results

In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 students purposively sampled, differing in their motivational profiles. Through the interviews, three major themes emerged that address the challenges and demotivating factors that affect students' speech development (RQ3).

4.2.1 Theme 1: The Competence Anxiety

One of the clear themes to come from the interviews was the cyclical pattern between perceived incompetence and speaking anxiety. Students spoke of how their limited knowledge of vocabulary and doubts about grammar led to fear of judgment, followed by avoidance of speaking situations, which in turn limited opportunities to improve and perpetuated feelings of incompetence.

Student A: *“I know English is important for my future career, but whenever I try to talk, I quit because I know I don’t know my grammar properly, and I don’t want my friends to laugh at me, so I just keep silent.”*

Lastly, this particular theme gives an answer that explains why there is so much anxiety as reflected in the quantitative findings and endorses the psychological need of competence as asserted by Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan,

2002). The feeling of competence will fade away when there is constant failure and worry about becoming the focus of embarrassment.

4.2.2 Theme 2: The impact of a controlling the environment of the classroom

Another major theme was the students' views of their classroom environments and the teaching styles of their teachers. Several students felt that controlling teaching styles, including aspects such as correcting every mistake and restrictive task designs, contributed negatively to their motivation to communicate effectively.

Student R: *"My teacher corrects us immediately whenever there's a mistake. It's embarrassing, so I don't talk. I wish there was a way to choose what to talk about or to simply finish what I want to say."*

These reports shed light on the demotivating role of controlling educational practices and fit with Reeve's (2009, 2016) differentiation between autonomy-supportive and controlling teacher behaviors. In terms of SDT, such classrooms can be seen to jeopardize learners' feelings of autonomous regulation. Meanwhile, this result corroborates Lamb's (2017) point regarding the important role played by teachers in shaping learners' experiences in class.

4.2.3 Theme 3: The Relation between Instrumental Targets and Internal Engagement

The conclusion of the third theme was made on the basis of the quantitative result that while the motivation by instrument was strong, it was a weak correlate to speaking practice. Students appreciated the relevance of English in their future. There was a lack of engaging class work.

Student S: *"I want to speak English because I want to work in an international company. That's my goal. But the practice is boring—just textbooks. If we had games or role-plays, I would practice more."*

The issue at hand is marked by its focus on the difference between forward thinking and motivation (Ideal L2 Self) and actual learning experiences (L2 Learning Experience) (Dörnyei & Ryan 2015). Though instrumental motivations may be a driving force behind learning, lack of engaging activities within learning will hinder speakers from investing more in speaking activities.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Findings

In this study, an attempt was made to explore the factors that motivate EFL university students to improve their English language speaking skills using the mixed methodology method. The findings will offer insight into the complex manner in which the various dimensions of motivation interact with affect-related issues.

First of all, the quantitative analysis made clear that students are mostly motivated by instrumental motivation and a strong Ideal L2 Self, because of the acknowledged value of English for educational and career achievements. However, high levels of speaking anxiety were also shown, signifying the fact that motivation will in no way remove affective obstacles.

Second, through the correlation analysis, there is an important implication of the presence of motivation and its efficacy. Although the results of the study revealed the dominance of instrumental motivation, intrinsic motivation is still identified as the strongest predictor of actual speaking practice.

The current finding supports the defining tenet of Self-Determination Theory, which proposes that intrinsic or self-regulated motivation is more efficacious than extrinsically motivated activities, which are based on regulations and regulations-oriented tasks (Deci and Ryan, 1985).

At last, qualitative results added meaning to these results as they demonstrated a cycle of competence and anxiety, and specifically pointed to the demotivating effect of controlling learning environments. Collectively, these results portray how psychological needs and educational practices influence a willingness to speak English.

5.2 Theoretical and Practical Implications

5.2.1 Theoretical Implications

First, the research makes a contribution to the field of second language acquisition as it empirically verifies the use of the theory of Self-Determination in the context of English speaking skills in the target language. It illustrates the fact that while the L2 Motivational Self System, especially the Ideal L2 Self, is recognized to have a high level of significance in the motivational process, speaking activities in the target language require the fulfillment of the psychological needs of autonomy and competence in second language learners.

5.2.2 Practical Implications

On the basis of the findings, the following teaching suggestions are proposed:

- Encourage Intrinsic Motivation
- Employ Autonomy-Supportive Teaching Practices
- Offer Strategic Scaffolding: the strategic use of the L1 can aid learners in fostering confidence and overcoming cognitive overload to break down the competence-anxiety cycle as was proposed by (Maeng & Lee, 2015).

5.3 Limitations

This study has suffered from some limitations like: the use of self-reported data on speaking practice could be susceptible to social desirability bias. A convenience sampling technique is considered non-representative of the desired population.

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