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TEACHERS' MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING SPEAKING PROFICIENCY AMONG ALGERIAN EFL LEARNERS

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Since the 1990s, research on motivational strategies has shifted focus from a sociological perspective to an education-oriented approach, highlighting situational factors such as language courses and teachers. This study explores how English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' motivational strategies support learners in developing speaking proficiency. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, it integrates quantitative and qualitative data for a comprehensive analysis. The research involved 101 second-year English students at Batna 2 University, with a randomly selected sample of 62 students, alongside 12 experienced second-year teachers. Data were collected through separate questionnaires for students and teachers. The findings reveal that motivational strategies play a pivotal role in fostering EFL learners' speaking proficiency. Both teachers and students emphasized the usefulness of strategies such as interactive activities, personalized feedback, and positive reinforcement. Teachers regularly implemented these strategies, particularly interactive grammar games and fluency-focused activities, while students highlighted the value of establishing rapport and maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere. This study underscores the importance of tailored motivational strategies in helping students improve their speaking skills in EFL contexts.

Keywords: *Teachers' motivational strategies, speaking proficiency, EFL learners, mixed-methods, Algerian context.*

Introduction

Motivation plays a pivotal role in education, significantly shaping teaching approaches and learning outcomes. In the context of EFL instruction, motivation becomes even more crucial, influencing students' engagement and success in language acquisition. According to Dörnyei (2001a), motivation is a key determinant of success or failure in any learning environment. Many students rely on teachers to inspire and support their

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desire to learn, placing a substantial responsibility on educators to employ effective motivational techniques. Additionally, the challenges of motivating EFL students, especially compared to English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, have become apparent. ESL students benefit from daily exposure to the target language, surrounded by visual and auditory stimuli, providing them with motivational and instructional advantages over EFL students. In contrast, EFL learners must exert extra effort to access English language materials, often limited to classroom settings that are disconnected from their daily lives.

In nearly a decade of experience as a university EFL lecturer, we have gained an understanding of the fundamental importance of L2 motivation in student achievement. Moreover, we have observed that students at the English Department of Batna 2 University frequently refrain from participating in speaking classes, indicating a potential lack of motivation due to ineffective motivational strategies and an uninspiring learning environment. This study aims to explore the impact of teachers' motivational strategies on students' speaking proficiency in the aforementioned department. It seeks to answer the following questions: What are the perceptions of EFL teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of motivational strategies in enhancing learners' speaking proficiency? Which specific motivational strategies do teachers and students identify as most impactful in improving EFL learners' speaking skill? It is hypothesized that the use of teachers' motivational strategies in the classroom is likely to improve EFL learners' speaking proficiency. By examining these aspects, the research intends to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of different motivational techniques, thereby helping teachers create a more engaging and supportive learning environment that enhances students' oral proficiency.

Motivation: definition and types

Despite some ambiguity around the term's definition due to its complexity, Unal-Karagiiven (2015) notes a consensus among researchers that motivation is a mental state that stimulates behavior and arouses goal-oriented desire. It drives individuals to initiate and sustain goal-directed actions (Jenkins & Demaray, 2015), making it indispensable for achieving goals. Gardner (2007) highlights the multifaceted nature of motivation, citing factors such as teacher influence, classroom atmosphere, course content, resources, and student traits as contributors to classroom learning motivation.

Researchers have identified different types of motivation. Dörnyei (1994) distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The former arises from internal factors like curiosity, challenge, and personal satisfaction, leading to genuine enjoyment and sustained engagement in activities. In contrast, the latter involves external rewards such as grades, approval, or money (Morris & Maisto, 2002). Deci and Ryan (1985) emphasize the importance of intrinsic motivation in education, noting that it thrives when the learning environment offers optimal challenges, diverse stimuli,

and autonomy. Additionally, Brown (2000) and Gardner (1985) describe integrative and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation occurs when learners study a language to integrate into the target society, while instrumental motivation is driven by practical or external reasons, such as career advancement.

Definition of motivational teaching strategies

Before discussing specific motivational strategies, it is essential to define the phrase "motivational strategies". Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) describe motivational strategies as "instructional interventions applied by the teacher to elicit and stimulate students' motivation" (p. 57). Similarly, Sugita McEown and Takeuchi (2010) refer to them as "techniques consciously used by EFL teachers as ways to promote language-learning motivation" (p. 24). Dörnyei (2001a) further defines these strategies as "motivational influences that are consciously exerted to achieve some systematic and enduring positive effect" (p. 28). Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) categorize motivational strategies into two types: instructional interventions by teachers to stimulate student motivation and self-regulating strategies used by learners to manage their motivation. In this study, motivational strategies refer to those employed by EFL teachers to inspire and enhance students' motivation, aiming to improve their speaking proficiency.

Dörnyei's taxonomy of motivational strategies

Inspired by his previous study with Csizer (1998) and other educational psychology theories, Dörnyei (2001b) introduces four key components of motivational teaching practice in the L2 classroom. These are (1) creating the basic motivational conditions, (2) generating initial motivation, (3) maintaining and protecting motivation, and (4) encouraging positive self-evaluation. Every single component includes a set of motivational strategies. Firstly, "Creating the basic motivational conditions" involves fostering appropriate teacher behaviors, a supportive classroom atmosphere, and cohesive learner group norms. Next, "Generating initial motivation" focuses on enhancing learners' values and attitudes related to the L2, increasing their expectancy of success, goal-orientation, relevance of materials, and realistic beliefs. The third phase, "Maintaining and protecting motivation," emphasizes making learning stimulating and enjoyable, presenting tasks engagingly, setting specific goals, and supporting learners' self-esteem and autonomy. Finally, "Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation" includes promoting motivational attributions, providing feedback, increasing learner satisfaction, and offering rewards and grades effectively. This cyclical process aims to sustain and enhance student motivation throughout the learning experience.

Previous research on motivational strategies

Several studies have confirmed the positive impact of motivational strategies from Dörnyei and Csizér's (1998) framework on students' learning behavior. Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) replicated this study in Taiwan, surveying 387 EFL teachers about the importance and frequency of using motivational strategies in class. They found four effective strategies: Setting a personal example, recognizing student effort and celebrating success, promoting self-confidence, and creating a pleasant classroom atmosphere. Guilloteaux and Dörnyei's (2008) study investigated 1300 junior high-school students and 27 teachers using self-report questionnaires and the Motivation Orientation of Language Teaching (MOLT) observation instrument, revealing that teachers' use of motivational strategies closely related to students' learning behavior and motivation. In Iran, Papi and Abdollahzadeh (2012) found similar results among 741 male students and 17 teachers, showing a significant correlation between teachers' motivational practices and students' behavior. Wong (2014) identified six effective strategies to enhance motivation through a study involving 900 Chinese secondary-school students and 10 teachers, using questionnaires and lesson observations.

Further studies in Saudi Arabia by Albrabi (2016) and Moskovsky et al. (2013) confirmed that motivational strategies in EFL classrooms could enhance learner motivation and achievement levels. Lee and Lin (2019) expanded the framework by identifying additional strategies, such as direct English instruction and provision of authentic materials, emphasizing teachers' professionalism and autonomy. In Japan, Sugita McEown and Takeuchi (2014) found that some strategies, including maintaining pace with students and displaying enthusiasm, showed a negative correlation with student motivation due to their resemblance to teaching skills rather than motivational strategies. Finally, Lee, Gardner, and Lau (2019) demonstrated that EFL teachers' motivational practices could positively affect students' attitudes and behavior beyond the classroom, highlighting the broader impact of effective motivational strategies.

Several studies provide compelling evidence supporting Dörnyei's (1998) motivational strategies, suggesting their effectiveness across different cultural and ethnolinguistic contexts. For instance, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) identify strategies such as setting an example, creating a relaxed atmosphere, promoting self-confidence, and familiarizing learners with L2 values as particularly effective in motivating EFL students. Similarly, Moskovsky (2013) highlights the importance of providing individual support, background knowledge, and positive rewards. Wong (2014) emphasizes sufficient preparation, recognizing success, and reminding students of the instrumental value of L2. Lee, Gardner, and Lau (2019) find that drawing attention to unique aspects of English, using group work, building confidence, and promoting learner autonomy enhance motivation. Lee and Lin (2019) suggest that recognizing students' strengths, emphasizing the usefulness of knowledge, and providing positive feedback are key motivational strategies.

Speaking skill

Febriyanti (2013) asserts that speaking is the most challenging skill to develop. Nunan (as cited in Boonkita, 2010) affirms that mastering this skill requires learners to be aware of the importance of specific linguistic elements such as pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. These elements collectively contribute to what is known as "linguistic competence." Additionally, Nunan emphasizes that students should understand when, why, and how to use language appropriately, which relates to "sociolinguistic competence." Therefore, appropriate teaching strategies should be employed to enhance students' speaking skill. The two main aspects of speaking are accuracy and fluency. Accuracy refers to "how well the language generated adheres to target language norms" (Yuan & Ellis, 2003, p. 2), encompassing proper pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Fluency, on the other hand, is the ability to produce spoken words "without unnecessary halting or hesitation" (Skehan, 1996, p. 22). By focusing on both accuracy and fluency, teachers can help students improve their speaking proficiency effectively.

Fear and anxiety are significant barriers to student participation in EFL speaking classrooms, necessitating effective motivational strategies from teachers. Hamouda (2012) attributes students' silence to factors such as low mastery of English, fear of speaking in front of others, shyness, lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, and fear of negative evaluation. Similarly, Liu (2006) notes that lack of confidence and fear of losing face cause anxiety, even during speech preparation. Hamouda's (2012) study with Saudi Arabian EFL students identified key fears, including speaking in front of the class, being asked questions, making mistakes, negative teacher treatment, and teacher correction. These fears underscore the importance of teachers employing motivational strategies to create a supportive environment that encourages student participation and helps overcome anxiety and fear in speaking English.

The effect of motivational teaching strategies on learners' speaking skill

While numerous studies have explored the impact of motivational teaching strategies on learners' motivation and overall learning outcomes, research specifically examining their effect on enhancing learners' speaking proficiency remains scarce. Two notable studies, however, provide valuable insights into this area. Navas Colón's study (2023) at the Pontifical Catholic University of Ambato employed a mixed methods approach to explore student motivations for improving English speaking skills. The research involved a questionnaire administered to 20 students aged 15 to 22 in the seventh level of English (B2 CEFR), divided into two groups based on motivation and performance. Group A, with 11 students, showed lower motivation and higher repetition rates, while Group B, with 9 students, had higher motivation and fewer repeaters. The study found that 84% of students liked English for its real-life applications, though classroom motivation was often lacking. All students aimed to enhance their English for better

future opportunities. Teacher influence was critical, with preferences for high proficiency or native speakers and interactive, engaging lessons. The use of technology and interactive applications also boosted motivation. The study emphasized the importance of self-motivation, effective teaching strategies, and diverse classroom materials in improving English speaking skills.

Padilla Mina (2018) examines the impact of ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction) Model, developed by Keller (1987), on the development of EFL speaking skills among A2 level students in a bilingual secondary school using a quasi-experimental approach with an experimental and control group. The intervention involved applying ARCS motivational strategies to one group and comparing the results with a control group using pre- and post-tests based on a rubric from the University of Cambridge. Conducted through field research, the study utilized observation and oral tests for data collection. Participants included 44 tenth-grade students (23 males and 21 females) with a basic level of English. The results demonstrated significant improvements in the experimental group's speaking, pronunciation, and communicative interaction skills, confirming the hypothesis that ARCS strategies enhance oral performance. Specifically, the experimental group showed a 15% improvement in grammar, 10% in vocabulary, 30% in pronunciation, and 25% in communicative interaction. The study highlighted the effectiveness of motivational strategies in fostering linguistic abilities and increasing student engagement in learning English.

Research design

This research investigates the impact of motivational strategies on EFL learners' speaking proficiency, utilizing a descriptive survey design. Due to departmental regulations prohibiting interventional treatments in fundamental courses like oral expression, an experimental design was not feasible.

Choice of the method

Given the research's objectives, mixed methods were employed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, aiming for a comprehensive understanding of the topic. This approach allows for the acquisition of complementary data, enhancing the depth of analysis, as Kumar (2014) notes. Furthermore, Ushioda (1998) suggests that L2 motivation cannot be fully understood through quantitative methods alone, supporting the adoption of a mixed-methods approach.

Population and sample

The study's population consists of 101 second-year English students at Batna 2 University. To manage this large population, a sample of 62 students was randomly

selected. Second-year students were chosen because their one-year experience with teachers provides valuable insight into how teachers' motivational practices affect their attitudes toward English language learning. Additionally, 12 second-year teachers who have taught oral expression for at least five years at the English department of Batna 2 University also participated in the study. Due to the practical size of the teacher group, sampling was deemed unnecessary.

Data collection instruments

Two different questionnaires were used to gather data from both students and teachers. We opted for this instrument for its reliability, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness in collecting empirical data within a limited timeframe.

Description of the students' questionnaire

The students' questionnaire comprises 12 questions, including "yes/no" questions, open-ended questions, multiple-choice questions, and Likert scale questions.

- *Questions 1-3 gather students' general information, such as age, gender, and perception of their English language level.*
- *Questions 4-5 explore students' level of comfort in oral presentations and teachers' encouragement of their classroom participation*
- *Question 6 is a Likert scale question measuring students' motivation levels.*
- *Questions 7-12 assess whether specific teachers' motivational practices correlate with students' motivation.*

Validity, piloting, and reliability of students' questionnaire

To ensure the validity, reliability, and effectiveness of the students' questionnaire, several steps were taken. First, the content validity was verified by two experts who are EFL lectures at the English Department of Batna 2 University. Based on their feedback, two new items were added to measure the relationship between motivational strategies and speaking proficiency, resulting in a refined version of the questionnaire. Reliability was tested by checking the internal consistency of the items using Cronbach's alpha in SPSS 25, yielding a value of 0.71, which is considered reliable. A pilot study was then conducted with 21 second-year students from the Department of English and Literature at Biskra University to assess the relevance and coverage of the questions. Finally, the questionnaire was then administered to the participants of the main study.

Description of the teachers' questionnaire

It consists of eight questions, including "yes/no" questions, open-ended questions, and Likert scale questions.

- *Question 1 explores teachers' actual use of motivational strategies*
- *Questions 2-7 investigate the perceived effectiveness of various motivational strategies in enhancing different aspects of EFL learners' speaking proficiency*
- *Question 8 explores the most effective motivational strategies according to teachers*

Validity, piloting, and reliability of teachers' questionnaire

Ensuring the validity, piloting, and reliability of the teachers' questionnaire was crucial. Content validity was verified by sending a draft to three EFL teachers at Batna 2, who provided feedback that led to corrections in the wording of questions. A pilot study, similar to that of the students' questionnaire, was conducted to ensure that the questions generated the necessary data and to remove any ambiguous or confusing items. Oral Expression teachers outside the sample were asked to validate the items meticulously. Moreover, the internal consistency of the questions was checked using Cronbach's alpha in SPSS 25, yielding a value of 0.82, indicating good reliability. The finalized questionnaire was then sent via Gmail to 12 second-year Oral Expression teachers.

Data presentation and analysis

Quantitative data from the questionnaires were presented using tables in MS Word to enhance clarity and readability. Qualitative data were analyzed using deductive thematic analysis which was chosen due to its simplicity and broad applicability compared to other qualitative methods.

Analysis and interpretation of the students' questionnaire

Table 1. Students' age

Age	Number	Percentage
18	1	1.61%
19	14	22.58%
20	19	30.64%
21	17	27.41%
22	4	6.45%
23	2	3.22%
24	1	1.61%
25	1	1.61%
28	2	3.22%
30	1	1.61%

Table 1 reveals that the majority of the students are young. Specifically, the highest percentages of students are 20 and 21 years old, accounting for 30.64% and 27.41% of the total, respectively. Following closely are 19-year-olds, who make up

22.58% of the cohort. A smaller number of students are aged 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, and 30, collectively representing the remaining percentages. Notably, only three students are aged 25, 28, or 30, highlighting that older students are a minority in this group.

This distribution suggests a trend where younger students are more likely to choose studying English at the outset of their educational journeys, potentially driven by early career aspirations. Conversely, the few older students might be pursuing English studies to enhance their career prospects or broaden their professional opportunities, possibly as part of continuing education or career development initiatives.

Table 2. Students' gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	19	30.6%
Female	43	69.4%

Table 2 illustrates the gender distribution of students, indicating a significant disparity between males and females. Females constitute 69.4% of the students, while males make up 30.6%. This distribution aligns with the common perception in Algerian society that females are more likely to study foreign languages than males. Various reasons might explain this gender difference, but generally, it is observed that females are more inclined towards interpersonal interactions, whereas males tend to prefer dealing with objects and things.

Table 3. Students' self-assessment of their level of spoken English

Level of spoken English	Number of students	Percentage
Very poor	1	1.6%
Below average	8	12.9%
Average	33	53.2%
Above average	18	29%
Excellent	2	3.2%

Table 3 details the self-assessed spoken English proficiency levels among the students. A significant portion of them (53.2%) rated their spoken English as average. About 29% of the students considered their proficiency to be above average. In contrast, 12.9% rated their spoken English as below average, and 1.6% as very poor. Only 3.2% of students evaluated their spoken English as excellent.

Table 4. Comfort level in classroom oral presentations

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	34	59.65%
No	23	40.35%

Based on Table 4, a significant portion of students (59.65%) indicated they were comfortable with oral presentations, while 40.35% expressed discomfort. Those who were apprehensive about oral presentations cited a variety of reasons, which can be categorized into three main groups: language-related, personality-related, and situation-related. Some students reported experiencing nervousness and anxiety, others mentioned a limited vocabulary that hampers their speaking abilities, and some indicated that the fear of public speaking and the presence of an audience made them uncomfortable.

Table 5. Teachers' encouragement of students' classroom participation

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	48	80%
No	12	20%

Based on the data presented in Table 5, it is evident that a significant majority of students (80%) reported that their teachers actively encourage classroom participation. Conversely, a smaller portion (20%) indicated that their teachers do not promote their involvement in class activities.

Table 6. Students' assessment of self-motivation

Options	Number	Percentage
Strongly disagree	11	18%
Disagree	18	29,5%
Agree	15	24,6%
Strongly agree	17	27,9%

The results indicate a varied perception among students regarding their self-motivation in the classroom. 47.5% (18% strongly disagree + 29.5% disagree) of them disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, suggesting that nearly half of the students do not find it hard to keep themselves motivated in the classroom. 52.5% (24.6% agree + 27.9% strongly agree) of respondents agree or strongly agree, indicating that just over half of the students do struggle with maintaining motivation in the classroom. These results show a fairly even split among learners, with a slight majority finding it challenging to stay motivated in the classroom.

Table 7. Students' perceptions of teachers' influence on learner boredom and interest

Options	Number	Percentage
Strongly disagree	2	3.38%
Disagree	10	16.94%
Agree	25	42,37%
Strongly agree	22	37,28%

Table 7 indicates that a significant majority of students believe that teachers play a crucial role in influencing learners' boredom or interest. Specifically, 79.65% (42.37% agree + 37.28% strongly agree) of students agree or strongly agree with the statement, suggesting that most learners perceive teachers as pivotal in shaping their engagement levels. In contrast, 20.32% (16.94% disagree + 3.38% strongly disagree) of students disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that a smaller proportion of students do not view teachers as the primary factor in influencing their interest or boredom.

Table 8. Relationship between students' motivation and their choice of topics and activities in the speaking class

Options	Number	Percentage
Strongly disagree	7	12%
Disagree	10	16%
Agree	18	30%
Strongly agree	26	42%

Table 8 reveals that 72% (30% agree + 42% strongly agree) of students agree or strongly agree with the statement, indicating that a substantial majority believe there is a positive relationship between their motivation and having the freedom to choose speaking activities. This suggests that when students feel they have autonomy in selecting activities, their motivation increases. Conversely, 28% (12% strongly disagree + 16% disagree) of the respondents disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, indicating that a smaller proportion of students do not see a connection between their motivation and freedom of choice in speaking activities. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of autonomy and choice in fostering student motivation.

Table 9. Students' perceptions of the impact of learning communication strategies on motivation

Options	Number	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	6	10%
Disagree	12	20%
Agree	19	31%
Strongly Agree	24	39%

As table 9 shows, 70% (31% agree + 39% strongly agree) of students agree or strongly agree with the statement, indicating that a significant majority believe that learning communication strategies would enhance their motivation. This suggests that many learners see value in acquiring these skills as a means to boost their engagement and interest. 30% (10% strongly disagree + 20% disagree) of students disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that a smaller proportion do not perceive a link between

learning communication strategies and their motivation. These findings suggest that most students recognize the potential benefits of learning communication strategies for increasing their motivation, highlighting the importance of integrating such strategies into the curriculum to support student engagement.

Table 10. The frequency of teachers' inquiry about students' speaking difficulties

Options	Number	Percentage
Never	12	20%
Rarely	24	39%
Sometimes	13	21%
Very often	5	8%
Always	7	12%

The purpose of asking about students' speech difficulties is for teachers to get to know their students better, allowing them to tailor their motivational strategies to meet the learners' needs. It can be seen from Table 11 that 59% (20% never + 39% rarely) of students report that their teachers either never or rarely inquire about their speaking difficulties. This suggests that a majority of students feel their challenges in speaking are not being regularly addressed by their teachers. 21% of participants indicate that teachers sometimes inquire about their speaking difficulties, showing that a portion of students experience occasional support. Only 20% (8% very often + 12% always) of students feel that their teachers frequently or always inquire about their speaking difficulties, indicating that a small minority of students receive consistent attention and support regarding their speaking challenges.

Table 11. Students' preferences of teachers' correction

Options	Number	Percentage
The teacher corrects you on the spot.	18	30%
The teacher corrects you after finishing your speech.	44	70%
The teacher does not correct at all.	0	0%

As can be seen from Table 11, 30% of students prefer to be corrected on the spot. A significant majority of 70% of them prefer to be corrected after finishing their speech, suggesting they feel more comfortable with feedback given after they have completed their speaking task. Interestingly, none of the respondents prefer no correction at all, indicating a unanimous preference for some form of correction from the teacher.

Table 12. Students' preferred motivation strategies

Options	Number	Percentage
Use of humor in class	15	24.6%
Establishing rapport and developing relationship with students	15	24.6%
Promote learners' cooperation	5	8.2%
Commend students on their efforts and provide rewards	14	23%
Provide constructive feedback	12	19.7%

Table 12 reveals that the most favored motivational strategies among students are using humor in class and establishing rapport and relationships, each chosen by 24.6% of respondents. Commending efforts and providing rewards follows at 23, highlighting the value of recognition. Providing constructive feedback is selected by 19.7%. Promoting learners' cooperation is the least preferred at 8.2%. Overall, students value a supportive, engaging, and interactive classroom environment to boost their motivation and performance.

Analysis and interpretation of the teachers' questionnaire

Table 13. Teachers' usage of motivational strategies

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	12	100%
No	0	0%

We can see from Table 13 that all teachers utilize motivational strategies in their classes which means that they are aware of their importance in enhancing students' academic performance.

Table 14. The perceived effectiveness of various motivational strategies in enhancing EFL learners' formal accuracy (morphology and syntax) as reported by teachers

Options	Number	Percentage
Immediate corrective feedback during speech	3	25%
Post-speech feedback sessions	2	16.66%
Interactive grammar games and activities	12	100%
Personalized grammar notes and tips for students	10	83.33%
Peer correction and collaborative learning	4	33.33%

Interactive grammar games and activities are overwhelmingly considered the most effective strategy, with 100% of respondents indicating their effectiveness. This suggests that interactive and engaging activities are highly beneficial in enhancing students' speaking proficiency. Personalized grammar notes and tips for students also

received strong support, with 83.33% of respondents (10 out of 12) endorsing this strategy. This highlights the importance of tailored feedback and individualized support in motivating students. Immediate corrective feedback during speech was noted by 25% of respondents (3 out of 12), indicating that some teachers find immediate correction beneficial for student improvement during speaking tasks. Peer correction and collaborative learning garnered support from 33.33% of respondents (4 out of 12), showing that collaborative approaches are also valued, though to a lesser extent than personalized and interactive strategies. Post-speech feedback sessions were chosen by 16.66% of respondents (2 out of 12), indicating that reflective feedback after speaking tasks is seen as useful by some teachers, but less so than other strategies. Overall, the results emphasize the significant role of interactive, engaging activities and personalized feedback in motivating students and enhancing their speaking proficiency. Teachers value a combination of strategies, with a clear preference for those that are interactive and tailored to individual student needs.

Table 15. The perceived effectiveness of various motivational strategies in enhancing EFL learners' oral accuracy as reported by teachers

Options	Number	Percentage
Engaging pronunciation drills and exercises	11	91.66%
Providing immediate pronunciation correction during speech	3	25%
Practicing with audio recordings and feedback	7	58.33%
Using fluency-focused games and activities	12	100%
Offering encouragement and positive reinforcement during speaking tasks	12	100%

As Table 15 shows, two strategies stand out significantly: "Using fluency-focused games and activities" and "Offering encouragement and positive reinforcement during speaking tasks," both of which received a full percentage of 100%. This suggests a strong consensus among teachers that these approaches are highly impactful in motivating learners and improving their oral accuracy. Additionally, "Engaging pronunciation drills and exercises" garnered a high percentage of 91.66%, indicating that teachers view this traditional method as highly effective in addressing pronunciation issues and enhancing oral accuracy.

On the other hand, "Providing immediate pronunciation correction during speech" received a substantially lower percentage of 25%, suggesting that while some teachers find it helpful, it may not be as widely adopted or perceived as effective compared to other strategies. "Practicing with audio recordings and feedback" received a moderate percentage of 58.33%, indicating that it is viewed as somewhat effective by a majority of respondents but may not be as universally favored as the top-ranking strategies.

Table 16. The perceived effectiveness of various motivational strategies in enhancing EFL learners' vocabulary as reported by teachers

Options	Number	Percentage
Introducing new words in engaging contexts	9	75%
Using vocabulary games and challenges	12	100%
Encouraging students to use new words in discussions and presentations	11	91.66%
Providing personal vocabulary lists and regular tests	3	25%
Facilitating peer sharing and collaborative vocabulary exercises	5	41.66%

Among the listed options, "Using vocabulary games and challenges" emerges as the most highly regarded strategy, with a full percentage of 100%. This indicates a unanimous agreement among teachers on the efficacy of incorporating games and challenges to enhance vocabulary acquisition, underscoring the significance of interactive and engaging activities in this regard. Similarly, "Encouraging students to use new words in discussions and presentations" received a notably high percentage of 91.66%, demonstrating strong support for promoting active usage of newly acquired vocabulary in meaningful contexts. This suggests that teachers recognize the importance of providing opportunities for students to apply their vocabulary knowledge in authentic communication settings, thereby reinforcing retention and comprehension.

"Introducing new words in engaging contexts" also garnered a substantial percentage of 75%, indicating that presenting vocabulary within relevant and captivating contexts is perceived as an effective approach for facilitating understanding and retention among learners. Conversely, "Providing personal vocabulary lists and regular tests" received a significantly lower percentage of 25%, suggesting that while some educators may employ this traditional method, it is not widely regarded as highly effective for promoting vocabulary acquisition compared to more interactive strategies. Similarly, "Facilitating peer sharing and collaborative vocabulary exercises" received a moderate percentage of 41.66%, indicating that while there is recognition of the potential benefits of peer interaction in vocabulary learning, it may not be as universally embraced as other strategies. In summary, these results emphasize the importance of incorporating interactive and contextually rich activities, such as vocabulary games, discussions, and presentations, to effectively enhance EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, they highlight the potential limitations of more traditional methods, such as personal vocabulary lists and tests, in promoting robust vocabulary development.

Table 17. The perceived effectiveness of various motivational strategies in enhancing EFL learners' style (pragmatic/sociolinguistic aspects) as reported by teachers

Options	Number	Percentage
Role-playing different social situations	10	83.33%
Using real-life examples and scenarios	12	100%
Watching and discussing culturally relevant videos	11	91.66%
Leading discussions on sociolinguistic norms and practices	7	58.33%

Among the listed options, "Role-playing different social situations" emerges as the most highly regarded strategy, with a full percentage of 100%. This indicates a unanimous agreement among teachers on the efficacy of incorporating role-playing activities to improve learners' understanding and application of pragmatic language use, underscoring the significance of experiential learning in this domain. Similarly, "Using real-life examples and scenarios" received a notably high percentage of 100%, demonstrating strong support for contextualizing language learning within authentic social contexts. This suggests that educators recognize the importance of exposing students to real-world communicative situations to foster their sociolinguistic competence effectively. "Watching and discussing culturally relevant videos" also garnered a substantial percentage of 91.66%, indicating that incorporating multimedia resources aligned with learners' cultural interests can be an effective means of enhancing their sociolinguistic awareness and understanding. Conversely, "Leading discussions on sociolinguistic norms and practices" received a significantly lower percentage of 58.33%, suggesting that while some educators may value this approach, it may not be as universally regarded as highly effective for developing learners' sociolinguistic skills compared to more experiential methods. Similarly, "Providing personal feedback on language use in social contexts" received a moderate percentage of 75%, indicating that while there is recognition of the importance of personalized guidance, it may not be as uniformly embraced as other strategies.

Table 18. Teachers' inquiring about students' needs and interests in the speaking class

Options	Number	Percentage
Always	1	8.33%
Often	4	33.33%
Sometimes	7	58.33%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%

Table 18 shows that 58.33% of teachers sometimes inquire about their students' needs and interests, while 33.33% often do so. Only 8.33% always incorporate student preferences. Notably, no teachers reported rarely or never engaging in this practice. Inquiring about students' needs and interests makes them feel like an important part of the teaching/learning process, potentially boosting their motivation.

Table 19. Teachers' frequency of offering evaluation choices for students' speaking proficiency

Options	Number	Percentage
Always	0	0%
Often	1	8.33%
Sometimes	3	25%
Rarely	2	16.66%
Never	6	50%

Table 19 reveals that 50% of teachers never provide students with choices regarding how their speaking proficiency is evaluated. Only 8.33% of them often offer evaluation choices, and none always do so. Meanwhile, 25% sometimes provide such options, and 16.66% rarely do. This suggests that most teachers do not regularly incorporate student preferences into the evaluation process. Allowing students to have a say in their evaluation methods could potentially enhance their motivation and engagement. The low frequency of providing choices indicates an opportunity for teachers to adopt more flexible evaluation practices that could better meet students' needs and preferences.

Analysis of the open-ended question

Thematic analysis identifies several key strategies that the surveyed teachers believe are the most effective in enhancing EFL learners' speaking proficiency.

Teacher-student relationship

The surveyed teachers reported that establishing a positive and supportive relationship between teachers and students is paramount in enhancing learners' speaking proficiency. They explained that when students feel comfortable and valued by their teacher, they are more likely to participate actively and take risks in speaking activities. T3, for instance noted, *"I always try to call my students by their first names. This small gesture motivates them."* T6 also emphasized the importance of building trust over time, stating, *"I encourage my students to share their interests and experiences with me, which helps me understand their unique backgrounds and language learning needs. This personal connection makes it easier for them to open up during speaking tasks."* Moreover, by fostering a supportive classroom environment where mistakes are viewed as opportunities for learning, teachers can empower students to overcome their fear of speaking. T5 shared, *"I often share anecdotes about my own language learning journey and the challenges I faced. This helps students realize that making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process and encourages them to take risks in speaking."*

Praise and recognition

The surveyed teachers stated that when students receive positive reinforcement for their achievements and efforts, they are motivated to continue improving their speaking skills. For example, T7 mentioned, "*I make it a point to acknowledge even small improvements in my students' speaking abilities. This boosts their confidence and encourages them to strive for further progress.*" Additionally, by praising students' contributions during speaking activities, teachers can create a supportive atmosphere where learners feel valued and empowered to participate actively. T2 shared, "*I keep track of each student's speaking development throughout the semester and celebrate their milestones with personalized praise. This not only boosts their morale but also reinforces the importance of consistent effort in language learning.*"

Use of humor

Teachers asserted that using humor in the EFL classroom can significantly enhance learners' speaking proficiency by creating a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment. They explained that when students feel at ease, they are more likely to participate in speaking activities and take risks with their language use. One surveyed teacher remarked, "Incorporating jokes and funny stories into my lessons helps to break the ice and makes students feel more comfortable speaking." T8 reported, "*I often use humorous role-plays and games to encourage students to practice speaking. They are more engaged and less anxious about making mistakes when they are having fun.*"

Consistent constructive feedback

Teachers reported that providing specific and actionable feedback helps students understand their strengths and areas for improvement and therefore motivates them. For instance, T1 explained, "*I always give immediate feedback after speaking activities, highlighting what students did well and offering suggestions for improvement. This helps them refine their speaking continuously.*" T3 also noted, "*When I point out specific pronunciation or grammar errors, students are more likely to remember and apply the corrections.*" Consistent feedback fosters a growth mindset, motivating students to engage more actively and confidently in speaking tasks.

Discussion and conclusion

The present study explores the impact of motivational teaching strategies on EFL learners' speaking skill, focusing on two research questions. The hypothesis suggests that implementing motivational strategies would enhance speaking proficiency among students. The data gathered from both teachers and students provides a comprehensive view of the effectiveness of these strategies and their alignment with existing research.

Teachers and students both acknowledge the significance of motivational strategies in enhancing EFL learners' speaking proficiency. Teachers reported high usage of various motivational strategies, emphasizing the importance of interactive and engaging activities. The strategies identified as most effective include interactive grammar games, fluency-focused activities, personalized feedback, and positive reinforcement. These findings align with prior studies, such as Cheng and Dörnyei (2007), Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008), and Wong (2014), which emphasize the importance of creating a supportive and engaging classroom environment. The significance of individualized support and recognition parallels findings by Moskovsky, Alrabai, Paolini, & Ratcheva (2013) and Papi and Abdollahzadeh (2012), which noted the substantial impact of teacher-student interactions on motivation and performance.

Moreover, students believe that establishing rapport and creating a comfortable, positive classroom climate are the most impactful motivational strategies. They associate rapport with breaking the barriers of shyness, which is crucial for improving their speaking proficiency. This finding is further supported by Lamb (2017), who identifies the teacher-student relationship as paramount for fostering and maintaining motivation. In his review of research on teachers' motivational strategies, Lamb shows that strategies consistently ranked as important by both students and teachers emphasize interpersonal connections. The present study confirms that humor in the classroom is welcomed by teachers and students alike. This finding is also reported by Buskits et al. (2002), who found that students not only learn effectively from humorous teachers but also enjoy the learning process (Buskist, Sikorski, Buckley, & Saville, 2002). Dörnyei (2001b) states that learners' involvement is highest in a psychologically safe classroom climate where students are encouraged to express their opinions and feel protected from ridicule and embarrassment. Regarding students' preferred motivational strategies, the findings indicate they seek strategies that counteract anxiety.

Both qualitative and quantitative data highlight that strategies such as interactive activities, personalized feedback, and positive reinforcement play a crucial role in developing students' speaking abilities. The study emphasizes the importance of motivational strategies in supporting EFL learners' progress in speaking skills. By offering a comprehensive perspective on effective teaching practices, it advocates for the sustained use of interactive, personalized, and supportive approaches to create an engaging learning environment that promotes oral proficiency in EFL learners.

Recommendations, limitations, and suggestions for future research

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made for teachers and policymakers to enhance the effectiveness of motivational strategies in EFL learning. Teachers should incorporate interactive grammar games, fluency-focused

activities, and personalized feedback into daily teaching practices, as these strategies significantly improve student engagement and learning outcomes. Regularly recognizing and celebrating student achievements can help maintain high levels of motivation and confidence among learners. Adapting teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of students is also crucial, ensuring that each learner receives the necessary support and encouragement. For policymakers, supporting professional development by providing resources and opportunities for teachers to develop their skills in implementing motivational strategies is essential. Moreover, revising curricula to include proven motivational strategies can significantly enhance students' speaking skills.

This study has some limitations that need to be addressed in future research. One limitation is the reliance on questionnaires as the sole data collection tool. To gain a deeper understanding of how motivational teaching strategies affect oral performance, future studies should use a variety of data collection methods. Additionally, this study used a descriptive research design instead of an experimental one due to departmental policies that prohibit educational experiments in fundamental courses. This raises questions about the generalizability of the results. Future research should consider using experimental designs where possible to establish more robust findings. It is also recommended to explore the long-term effects of motivational strategies on EFL learners' speaking proficiency, examine their impact over extended periods, and investigate the effectiveness of different combinations of strategies across various cultural and linguistic contexts. Furthermore, future studies should focus on how technology can enhance motivational strategies, particularly through the integration of digital tools into language teaching to better engage and motivate students.

Conflict of interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflict of interests in this research.

Ethical standards

The author affirms this research does not involve human subjects.

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**ԱՏԳԼԵՐԵՆԸ ՈՐՊԻԵՍ ՕՏԱՐ ԼԵԶՈՒ ԴԱՍԱՎԱՌՈՂ
ՈՒՍՈՒՑԻՉՆԵՐԻ ՄՈՏՏԻՎԱՑԻՈՆ ՇԱԶՄԱՎԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ
ԱԼԺԻՐՑԻ ՍՈՎՈՐՈՂՆԵՐԻ ԽՈՍՈՂԱԿԱՆ ՀԱՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ
ԽԹԱՆՄԱՆ ԳՈՐԾՈՒՄ**

Սահմանագիրի

Սույն հետազոտությունը դիտարկում է, թե ինչպես են անզերենը որպես օտար լեզու դասավանդող ուսուցիչների մոտիվացիոն մեթոդները նպաստում սովորողների խոսղական հմտությունների զարգացմանը: Կիրառվել է խառը մեթոդաբանություն՝ համադրելով քանակական և որակական տվյալները համապարփակ վերլուծություն իրականացնելու համար: Հետազոտությանը մասնակցել են Բատնա երկու համալսարանների անզերեն բաժնի երկրորդ կուրսի 101 ուսանողներ, որոնցից պատահականության սկզբնքով ընտրվել են 62-ը: Երկրորդ կուրսում դասավանդող 12 փորձառու դասախոս նույնպես մասնակցել է հարցմանը: Տվյալները հավաքագրվել են ուսանողների և դասախոսների համար նախատեսված առանձին հարցաթերթիկների միջոցով: Արդյունքները ցույց են տալիս, որ մոտիվացիոն ռազմավարությունները կարենու դեր ունեն սովորողների խոսղական հմտությունների զարգացման գործում: Ուսուցիչներն ակտիվորեն կիրառել են հատկապես խաղային և հաղորդակցական վարժությունների մեթոդները, իսկ ուսանողները կարենու են ուսուցիչների հետ վստահելի հարաբերությունների ձևավորումը և դրական մթնոլորտը: Ուսումնասիրությունն ընդգծում է լեզվի ուսուցման համատեքստում անհատականացված մոտիվացիոն մեթոդների կիրառման անհրաժեշտությունը:

Բանալի բառեր՝ մոտիվացիոն ռազմավարություններ, խոսղական հմտություններ, անզերենը որպես օտար լեզու սովորողներ, խառը մեթոդաբանություն, ալժիրյան համատեքստ: