



## **Intrinsic motivation for English-speaking development in primary school**

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### **RESUMEN**

El objetivo de este estudio es determinar el papel de la motivación intrínseca en el desarrollo de las habilidades de expresión oral en inglés en la escuela primaria. Estudios previos han demostrado que la motivación es un factor clave en el proceso de aprendizaje, ya que impulsa a los estudiantes a participar activamente, perseverar ante los desafíos y encontrar significado en las tareas académicas. En el contexto del inglés como lengua extranjera, la expresión oral se percibe como una habilidad crucial, pues constituye una parte fundamental de la comunicación. Sin embargo, se ha observado que los estudiantes de primaria experimentan diversas dificultades en su rendimiento académico. Algunas de estas limitaciones incluyen baja motivación, vocabulario limitado y falta de estrategias y participación en actividades de expresión oral. Por lo tanto, este estudio busca investigar la motivación intrínseca y el desarrollo de la expresión oral mediante un enfoque de métodos mixtos con un diseño descriptivo. La muestra de este estudio está compuesta por estudiantes de primaria de una institución educativa del cantón El Carmen,

provincia de Manabí. Se utilizaron instrumentos de investigación como cuestionarios, observaciones en el aula y entrevistas. Los resultados de la investigación destacan que la motivación intrínseca desempeña un papel importante en el desarrollo de la expresión oral, ya que está asociada con la satisfacción y el disfrute que experimentan los estudiantes durante el proceso de aprendizaje al participar en actividades por interés personal o por placer propio, lo que permite un aprendizaje más profundo y significativo.

*Key words: Intrinsic motivation; English-speaking skills; primary school students; learning; participation*

## **Abstract**

The objective of this study is to determine the role of intrinsic motivation in the development of oral English skills in primary school. Previous studies have demonstrated that motivation is a key factor in the learning process, as it drives students to actively participate, persevere in the face of challenges, and find meaning in academic tasks. In the context of English as a foreign language, speaking is perceived as a crucial skill because it is a fundamental part of communication. However, it has been observed that elementary school students experience several difficulties in their academic performance. Some of these limitations include low motivation, limited vocabulary, and a lack of strategies and participation in speaking activities. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate intrinsic motivation and the development of oral expression using a mixed-methods approach with a descriptive design. The sample for this study consists of elementary school students from an educational institution in the El Carmen canton, Manabí province. Research instruments such as questionnaires, classroom observations, and interviews were used. The research results highlight that intrinsic motivation plays an important role in the development of oral expression, as it is associated with the satisfaction and enjoyment

students experience during the learning process when participating in activities out of personal interest or for their own pleasure, which allows for deeper and more meaningful learning.

*Palabras clave: Motivación intrínseca; habilidades de expresión oral en inglés; estudiantes de primaria; aprendizaje; participación*

## **Introduction**

Nowadays, English has become an indispensable subject in educational institutions due to its significant global impact. This has made English communication skills a priority for both primary and secondary schools. Oral expression not only allows students to express ideas and interact, but it also influences real-life situations.

However, many primary school students struggle to speak English in class. One factor that can influence students' oral participation is motivation. It's important to emphasize that intrinsic motivation refers to the interest, enthusiasm, pleasure, and enjoyment learners experience when engaging in or developing a specific activity. Furthermore, it has been shown that when students feel curious, interested, and satisfied with learning tasks, they are more likely to participate in oral activities.

Despite the crucial role of intrinsic motivation, limited student participation in oral English activities remains evident in many classrooms. This is because, in some cases, students may feel insecure, unmotivated, or anxious when using the language. Some authors argue that intrinsically motivated students perceive academic activities as much more meaningful, and therefore participate more actively in coursework and assessments (Yasuhiro et al., 2023).

For this reason, the present study aims to describe the role of intrinsic motivation in the development of oral English-speaking skills in primary school. This research follows a mixed-methods approach, using interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observation to analyse students' motivation and participation in oral speaking activities.

## **Motivation background**

Speaking English effectively is one of the main challenges students face in the process of language acquisition. One possible explanation for this issue is a low level of intrinsic motivation, which refers to the internal drive that makes students find learning enjoyable or meaningful.

According to self-determination theory, motivation is key to action and is influenced by biological, cognitive, and social factors. People can be motivated by personal values, external coercion, or diverse interests. This concept is fundamental for leaders and educators (Ryan & Deci, 2020). In an educational context, this means that students' motivation to learn is not only determined by rewards and grades but also by their personal values, interest in learning, and sense of purpose. This concept is essential for educators to elaborate on learning strategies.

Similarly, Stephen D. Krashen, an American linguist and educational researcher, is known for developing five hypotheses in second-language acquisition that explain the influence of affective factors. Krashen's (1985) affective filter hypothesis suggests that language learners may be distracted by emotional factors during the learning process and may not be able to assimilate what they should learn in class.

There are different types of motivation; two of them are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. In their study, Ryan and Deci (2000) argue that Intrinsic motivation (IM) refers to the interest and satisfaction that arise from innate psychological needs for competence and autonomy, while extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it leads to a result or reward.

In other words, intrinsic motivation means doing something because it is personally rewarding and satisfies the natural need to feel capable and independent. Extrinsic motivation is based on doing something to obtain a reward or achieve a specific result, not necessarily because

the activity itself is enjoyed. It means that extrinsic motivation requires external support such as praise, expectations from others, and rewards (Aquil et al., 2025).

### **Motivation in the Educational Context and Student Learning**

Motivation plays a fundamental role in the educational process, as it influences students' willingness to learn and their overall academic performance. It acts as the driving force that directs, sustains, and regulates behavior toward learning goals. Contreras and Moreno (2025) claim that motivation becomes the driving force that influences people's actions and thoughts. (p. 17). That is to say, it is an aspect that drives people to act and learn by influencing the effort, persistence, and attitude that learners bring to the learning process; as a result, they learn significantly.

A recent study documenting motivation and the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in primary education settings reveals a multifaceted landscape across different educational environments. According to Soto et al. (2025), motivation remains an important variable in primary education, despite limited exploration. Besides, in education, motivation is when learners engage in activities out of genuine interest and enjoyment, or when they are driven by external rewards such as grades or recognition. Motivation can create supportive environments that foster curiosity, autonomy, and a positive attitude toward learning.

In the context of student learning, motivation is crucial to fostering effective learning and enhancing the quality of higher education. The more motivated learners are, the greater their chances of success in academic tasks (Derakhshan et al., 2020). As a result, it has a role in education. When students are motivated, they engage more in learning, which improves their performance. As a result, motivation not only supports personal success but also enhances the overall value of education.

In addition, Lo et al. (2022) maintain that student motivation is not static; it can be learned and improved. Motivated students achieve better results. The study shows that positive learning experiences can increase expectations of success and self-esteem. These experiences encourage participation in activities and promote academic achievement, making students feel capable, motivated, and valued. Therefore, motivated students tend to participate more actively, face challenges with confidence, and demonstrate a greater desire to improve their performance.

Therefore, motivating learning English is necessary for their mastery of the language. Both students and teachers need to be enthusiastic about learning and teaching. It influences their self-confidence. Improving students' motivation is vital for enhancing their comprehension during the learning process (Laksmi, Yasa, & Mirayani, 2021). In summary, motivation is a factor that influences learning because it can lead to better results when students are motivated. Learning English involves developing the four main skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, enabling students to use the language effectively in real-world contexts. The process requires cognitive, social, and emotional engagement, as students must not only understand grammar and vocabulary but also develop emotional intelligence.

A 1985 study revealed that learning a second language involves adopting the linguistic and cultural patterns of another community. This process requires openness and motivation, since learners who are willing to identify with the target culture tend to be more motivated and, consequently, more successful in acquiring the language (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Additionally, the motivational factors include curiosity, delight, well-being, consistency of interest, perseverance in effort, and classroom enjoyment, among others (Choi, 2025).

### **Intrinsic motivation**

Intrinsic motivation (IM) is the internal drive that leads a person to perform an activity out of personal interest, enjoyment, or curiosity, without seeking external rewards. It arises from the desire to learn, explore, or improve oneself, making the action rewarding in and of itself.

Intrinsic motivation refers to behavior that is determined by internal factors such as personal interest, satisfaction, and desire, influenced by students' enthusiasm for tackling academic challenges (Kamberi, 2025). Intrinsic motivation is understood as the internal drive that leads people to participate in an activity for its own sake, without any external stimulus, characterized by feelings of enjoyment or pleasure.

Intrinsic motivation (IM) is key to persistence at work, where people experience activities as an end in themselves, guided by interest and enjoyment (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022). In terms of education, motivation is a factor related to learning while enjoying the activity or the process of acquiring a language.

Intrinsic motivation (IM) is conceived as a native drive that leads to action because the activity is valuable in itself, independent of external rewards. It arises from self-interest and is guided by internal value functions that remain difficult to characterize (Morris et al., 2022). Intrinsic motivation plays a fundamental role in learning, since when students feel a genuine interest in an activity, they tend to participate and become more persistent.

### **The importance of intrinsic motivation in younger English as a Foreign Language learners**

Motivation and attitude are factors that determine the experiences, achievements, and overall success of those learning English as a foreign language (EFL). They include both internal and external elements of English proficiency. They can range from internal factors such as the desire for self-improvement, personal interest, and curiosity to extrinsic motivations such as social pressure, academic requirements, and career advancement (Baxtiyarovich, 2024).

Previous studies suggest that a lack of motivation to speak English is influenced by their family, classmates, educators, teaching resources, and teaching methods. Therefore, teachers should use various materials and teaching formats, such as discussion sessions, news articles, conversations, and interviews, because they capture students' attention (Brahim, 2024, p. 1). Furthermore, Rodríguez et al. (2023) found that some internal factors affecting student learning include self-will, enthusiasm, enjoyment, satisfaction, and autonomy; all of which play a significant role in their learning.

According to Khan and Takkac (2021), learning a foreign language can be difficult without the motivating factors that drive learners to learn any foreign language, including English. Learning English is a complex phenomenon that depends on many intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. In short, the idea is that successful English learning depends not only on cognitive skills or teaching methods but also on motivational factors that encourage students to stay engaged in learning. Intrinsic motivation is a key factor in academic success in English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching. Therefore, it can be fostered through student-centered strategies, meaningful task design, and supportive environments, thereby improving participation and achievement (Rezaee & Ghaneolhosseini, 2025).

### **The role of speaking in Language Learning**

Speaking plays a central role in learning English because it is the main way students use the language to communicate ideas, express feelings, and interact with others. It helps learners connect theory with practice, turning knowledge of grammar and vocabulary into real communication skills.

Speaking is the act of transmitting information or ideas orally through which students can express their feelings, thoughts, tell stories, make requests, participate in conversations, explore topics, and demonstrate the various functions of language. Oral communication has significant

importance beyond the educational setting (Ghafar & Raheem, 2023). Therefore, speaking is considered a necessary and fundamental skill that enables effective communication and personal expression. Through oral communication, students not only share information but also develop essential language skills such as vocabulary expansion, grammatical accuracy, and coherent sentence structure.

English has become a lingua franca, with the largest number of speakers worldwide. Thus, Shamim (2021) explains, oral expression occupies a prominent place in the communication process, especially when the medium of communication is a foreign language. Therefore, special attention should be paid to improving the oral expression of students of English as a foreign language (EFL).

### **Components of speaking competence**

Oral competence is the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately through spoken language. It involves more than just speaking correctly. Khabibova (2025) suggests that oral competence encompasses not only linguistic skills but also grammatical, sociolinguistic, discursive, and strategic components, all of which help ensure effective and appropriate communication in various contexts.

The development of oral competence is fundamental, as it not only teaches the structure of language but also prepares students for real-life communication (p. 4). Additionally, spoken language is used in real-life situations. It involves not only accurate pronunciation and appropriate use of grammar and vocabulary but also fluency, coherence, and interactional skill.

Derakhshan et al. (2016a) explain that Speaking is a production skill divided into two main categories: accuracy and fluency. Accuracy involves the use of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Fluency, on the other hand, considers two elements: production skill and interaction skills in the environment.

## **Speaking strategies for middle-level Learners**

Developing effective speaking strategies is essential for middle-level learners, as it marks a crucial transition from language use to more fluent, confident communication. Thus, students need guidance and structured opportunities to express ideas and interact naturally in English. Moreover, using specific speaking strategies can significantly enhance learners' oral competence and motivation to speak. These strategies not only improve pronunciation and vocabulary but also build learners' confidence in using English in real-world communicative situations.

According to Sudrajat and Apriliani (2022), a strategy is a meticulously designed plan to achieve a specific goal. In the context of learning, it refers to all the actions taken by both the teacher and the student to ensure that learning is meaningful, effective, and efficient. Therefore, a well-planned strategy for teaching oral expression provides structure, purpose, and coherence. Younger students often need clear guidance, engaging activities, and step-by-step support to develop confidence and fluency in speaking using real or simulated situations, such as role-playing, dialogues, or group debates.

Conferring to Tiu et al. (2023), some strategies to develop oral competence are Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Teaching (TBLT) and methodologies focused on pronunciation. Furthermore, some oral communication strategies include games, exercises, and songs to teach English to young students, fostering learning through high enthusiasm and fluent communication, despite internal and external challenges.

Effective methods or strategies for developing oral expression include role-playing, pictures, flashcards, charts, chants, and interviews. They can improve pronunciation, grammar, current language, and specific activities (Derakhshan et al. 2016b). Moreover, it is known that the use of active learning strategies can positively influence students by increasing their desire to learn.

## **Impact of intrinsic motivation on speaking development**

Sánchez and Pérez (2024) state that Intrinsic motivation encourages students to enjoy the learning process, seek strategies, and solve problems when faced with challenges, as it promotes automaticity and helps foster confidence, self-control, and self-regulation. Speaking activities, research projects, project-based learning, and flipped learning encourage students' self-engagement, especially when they focus on social topics, thus facilitating student interaction with the target language (p. 1).

According to Alotumi (2021), regarding English-speaking, students who place a higher value on the task might be more enthusiastic about participating in English-language oral communication when they perceive that developing English proficiency is valuable. Therefore, when students recognize the value and usefulness of learning English, they become more eager to participate in oral communication. In other words, if learners believe that improving their English proficiency will benefit them.

Intrinsic motivation can be seen as a key factor in students' oral expression, because it gives them the opportunity to produce good language naturally and strengthens active participation in the conversation (BENZAHERA). Similarly, Radia (2023) mentions that students tend to develop good oral performance when they have good intrinsic motivation. In other words, intrinsic motivation has a significant impact on oral expression.

In a nutshell, the literature highlights the importance of intrinsic motivation in enhancing students' participation and oral performance. When learners feel internally motivated, they tend to enjoy speaking activities and engage more actively in the learning process. Therefore, the use of varied and meaningful teaching strategies is essential to foster students' interest and support the development of their oral communication skills.

## **Methodology**

The primary objective of this study is to determine the role of intrinsic motivation in the development of English-speaking skills in primary school. A descriptive mixed-methods research with a concurrent convergent design provided a broader understanding of intrinsic motivation and oral expression.

This research was conducted at a private school located in the El Carmen canton, Manabí province, where several students struggle to express themselves in English despite receiving consistent English instruction.

The population consisted of 221 English students and teachers. The sample included three English teachers who participated in interviews, ten teachers who completed the survey, and fifteen classroom observations. Therefore, the sample will include 40 fifth-grade students, 20 from parallel "A" and 20 from parallel "B", 25 from sixth grade, and 20 from seventh grade.

The sampling method used was convenience sampling. This is defined as a non-probability sampling method in which units are selected for inclusion in the sample because they are the most accessible to the researcher due to geographical proximity and the availability of resources within the educational institution.

For data collection, three instruments were used: a semi-structured interview, a survey, and an observation checklist. These instruments were previously validated by expert review. Furthermore, the reliability of the survey was measured using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a value of 0.828, indicating a high level of reliability. The observation instrument also showed acceptable reliability, with a value greater than 0.6.

his study employed data triangulation through interviews, surveys, and observations to strengthen the understanding of the problem and the reliability of the results. It is important to note that the data were analyzed using descriptive and statistical methods. The quantitative information from the questionnaire was processed using IBM SPSS Statistics software, applying

measures such as mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. These analyses allowed for the interpretation of the students' level of intrinsic motivation and oral performance. Finally, the results from the instruments were compared to describe the role of intrinsic motivation in the development of oral expression.

## **Results**

This section presents the results of a study that seeks to determine the role of intrinsic motivation in the development of English-speaking skills in primary school students' oral performance and explore perceptions about the role of intrinsic motivation. Qualitative and quantitative data were obtained through the application of three instruments: interviews, surveys, and observation sheet using categories.

### **Intrinsic Motivation and observable Indicators**

The interview results revealed that intrinsic motivation plays an important role in students' participation in English-speaking activities. One English teacher said, "*It is the inner force that stimulates students' participation in a determinate activity or task.*" This type of motivation encourages learners to participate willingly in language activities.

Moreover, teachers report that the most common indicators of intrinsic motivation are enthusiasm, spontaneous participation, persistence, and enjoyment during language activities. Based on this, some experts interviewed highlight enthusiasm as a key indicator. Furthermore, Nazareth et al. (2025) argue that several factors, such as personal interest, internal satisfaction, sense of purpose, inspiration, resilience, commitment, and satisfaction, drive intrinsic motivation.

### **Impact on Speaking Skills and Behavior**

Intrinsic motivation is what influences students' oral expression skills and classroom behavior. In other words, motivated students show greater confidence, are more willing to speak, and participate voluntarily, without being asked. Experts agree that "*intrinsic motivation*

*encourages risk-taking and fluency, as students focus more on expressing their ideas than on avoiding mistakes, leading to more natural and frequent oral participation”.*

### **Compensation for Limited Vocabulary or Low Proficiency**

One expert agrees that intrinsic motivation can compensate for a limited vocabulary or low language proficiency. On the other hand, other elementary school teachers mention that *“motivated students demonstrate persistence and a strong desire to communicate, which encourages them to participate, reducing anxiety and allowing them to communicate effectively despite linguistic limitations”*. In line with Krashen (1982), affective filters can either block or facilitate learning.

### **Teacher’s Role in Sustaining Intrinsic Motivation**

The interview data indicate that creating a safe, supportive, and anxiety-free environment helps students feel more confident participating and making mistakes without fear. One participant emphasizes that *“...capturing students’ attention and offering meaningful choices..., transforming the classroom into a space of genuine self-expression rather than obligation.”*

### **Classroom Factors**

One teacher states: *"A safe and low-anxiety environment, combined with playful activities, makes speaking more enjoyable and meaningful."* Some interactive activities include games, role-playing, group work, and a positive atmosphere.

According to several participants, factors that can hinder intrinsic motivation among elementary school students include fear of making mistakes, excessive correction, monotonous activities, and a stressful classroom environment. Experts note that *“overemphasis on grades and repetitive tasks reduces curiosity and decreases students’ willingness to participate and negatively affects their engagement in speaking activities”*.

### **Effective Teaching Strategies**

One professional suggests that *“the most effective teaching strategies include gamification, role-plays, and topics related to students’ interests”*. Focusing on successful communication instead of perfect grammar helps learners feel more confident and motivated.

Designing speaking activities can be very complex. According to the interview results, teachers can design conversation tasks that foster enjoyment and curiosity by using fun and age-appropriate topics, allowing for personalization and encouraging creativity *“tasks that include elements of mystery, real-life relevance, or topics chosen by the students increase participation.”*

### **Impact on Confidence and Willingness to Speak**

Intrinsic motivation significantly increases students’ confidence and willingness to speak. When learners enjoy the activity and are not driven by external pressure, they become less afraid of making mistakes. Specialists agree that *“intrinsic motivation shifts the focus from external judgment to personal achievement, making students more confident and active participants in speaking tasks”*.

Motivated students tend to improve their pronunciation, fluency, and interaction skills more quickly because they practice speaking more frequently. One primary teacher highlights *“Motivated students improve pronunciation, fluency and interaction more quickly because they practice speaking more often”*.

### **Challenges in Enhancing Speaking Skills**

Participants agree that teachers face various challenges when fostering oral expression skills through intrinsic motivation, including limited class time, large class sizes, exam pressure, and student anxiety. One professional mentioned that *“when students want to participate, they frequently do not want to speak because they feel anxious or nervous”*.

### **Quantitative data**

#### **Table 1**

*Pupils express a desire to improve their English skills for personal reasons*

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Mean               | 2.50 |
| Median             | 3.00 |
| Mode               | 3    |
| Standard Deviation | .707 |

*Note.* Descriptive statistics of teachers' responses regarding pupils express a desire to improve their English skills

The results indicate a moderate perception among teachers regarding students' desire to improve their English skills for personal reasons. The median and mode indicate that the most common response was neutral. Furthermore, the relatively low standard deviation suggests that teachers' responses were fairly consistent.

**Table 2**

*Scholars demonstrate curiosity and ask questions during English lessons*

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Mean               | 2.00 |
| Median             | 2.00 |
| Mode               | 2    |
| Standard Deviation | .667 |

*Note.* Descriptive statistics based on teachers' responses regarding students' curiosity and their tendency to ask questions during English lessons.

The results show that the mainstream of teachers surveyed agree that students demonstrate curiosity and ask questions during English classes. Furthermore, the low standard deviation suggests that responses are similar across participants, demonstrating that students do show curiosity during English classes.

**Table 3**

*Students seem to enjoy English tasks without external rewards*

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Mean               | 2.70 |
| Median             | 3.00 |
| Mode               | 3    |
| Standard Deviation | .949 |

*Note.* Descriptive statistics based on teachers' responses regarding students' seem to enjoy English tasks without external rewards.

The following graph indicates that several participants agree, meaning that many students seem to enjoy the English activities even when they don't receive external rewards. Meanwhile, a group of participants remain neutral, and some even disagree. Furthermore, the standard deviation confirms this variability in responses, indicating differing perceptions.

**Table 4**

*Schoolchildren try to speak English even when activities are challenging*

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Mean               | 2.30 |
| Median             | 2.00 |
| Mode               | 2    |
| Standard Deviation | .675 |

*Note.* Descriptive statistics based on teachers' responses regarding students' willingness to try speaking English even when classroom activities are challenging.

The graph shown reflects that a significant portion of the teachers surveyed affirm that their students show a willingness to try to communicate in English even when the activities may be difficult. Nevertheless, one group of participants prefers to remain neutral.

**Table 5**

*Learners participate voluntarily and show confidence in English-speaking activities*

|        |      |
|--------|------|
| Mean   | 2.80 |
| Median | 3.00 |

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Mode               | 2    |
| Standard Deviation | .789 |

The following table presents the different perceptions regarding the statement about whether students participate voluntarily and demonstrate confidence in English-language activities. There is a tendency toward neutral responses. Furthermore, some participants stated their agreement. Additionally, the moderate standard deviation indicates some variability in the participants' opinions.

### **Observation sheet**

#### **Intrinsic Motivation**

Regarding the observation sheet applied to primary school students, it was evident that the students show a moderate level of intrinsic motivation related to participation and interest during speaking activities because in most classes it was observed that they rarely and sometimes feel motivated, although they show curiosity or interest in participating in speaking activities, the level of participation does not always occur, which indicates that intrinsic motivation is present, but it is not constant in the classroom.

#### **Persistence and Effort**

Concerning persistence and effort, observations have shown that students occasionally demonstrate autonomy and a willingness to continue speaking tasks, especially when they commence activities independently or perform tasks for personal satisfaction. This suggests that many students require teacher guidance to maintain their participation. Furthermore, the results indicate that student persistence in speaking activities is moderate.

#### **Enjoyment of Learning Tasks**

Regarding the category of enjoyment of learning tasks, the data show that students sometimes display enthusiasm and positive attitudes during English-speaking activities. Although

some observations indicate active participation or positive reactions, these behaviors are not consistent across all participants. Consequently, the findings suggest that enjoyment in speaking tasks is moderate.

### **Enjoyment of Learning Tasks**

About participation in oral activities, it was observed that students occasionally participate in paired or group conversation activities, and English is rarely used spontaneously during classroom interactions. While some students show a willingness to communicate, most observations fall between rarely and sometimes.

### **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to describe the role of intrinsic motivation in the development of English-speaking skills among primary school students. To achieve this objective, three instruments were applied: an interview, a questionnaire, and an observation sheet. The triangulation of these instruments enabled an understanding the influence of intrinsic motivation in speaking development.

### **Intrinsic Motivation**

The experts interviewed stated that intrinsic motivation significantly influences students' willingness to communicate in English. It was observed that motivated students tended to participate more consistently, showing curiosity and interest in English classes, which allowed for a gradual improvement in pronunciation and fluency. However, teachers stated that the classroom environment, teaching strategies, and student anxiety can directly affect intrinsic motivation.

Strategies such as gamification, role-playing, and engaging topics increase students' intrinsic motivation in oral activities. Moreover, previous research suggests that anxiety about learning a foreign language negatively impacts students' willingness to communicate in the classroom, whereas positive psychological factors increase their participation in communicative activities (Lin Y et al., 2025).

Furthermore, teachers added that the most common indicators of intrinsic motivation are enthusiasm, spontaneous participation, persistence, and enjoyment during language activities. Moreover, they stated that other factors, such as personal interest, internal satisfaction, a sense of purpose, creativity, resilience, commitment, and satisfaction, also drive intrinsic motivation. These characteristics suggest consistency with previous research indicating that intrinsic motivation is associated with interest, enjoyment, and satisfaction derived from participation in learning activities (Schunk & Dibenedetto, 2020).

### **Speaking development**

Similarly, the results of this study suggest that the development of spoken English is related to students' level of intrinsic motivation. Additionally, data triangulation revealed that although students show some interest and curiosity during English classes, their participation in oral activities is inconsistent.

Besides the results indicate that when students are intrinsically motivated, they show a greater willingness to communicate, demonstrating increased confidence in pronunciation and fluency. Likewise, the questionnaire results revealed that students exhibit moderate levels of curiosity and occasionally attempt to speak English even when the tasks are challenging. Poupar et al. (2025) define intrinsic motivation as the inherent tendency toward spontaneous interest, often characterized by curiosity and participation in an activity for personal enjoyment.

However, several responses expressed ambivalence toward statements that students express a desire to improve and that students seem to enjoy English assessment. Thus, intrinsic motivation is not consistently evident among all students. These findings indicate that although students show interest in learning English, their motivation does not always translate into consistent participation or active speaking performance in the classroom. On the other hand, Agustin (2023) notes that interaction activities foster a positive perception among students and enhance their motivation and confidence to speak English in the classroom.

Designing effective oral strategies can be challenging, especially in primary education. Interview results suggest that teachers play a crucial role in creating tasks that foster enjoyment and curiosity. When oral activities are meaningful, interactive, and relevant to students' interests, they tend to participate actively, which promotes the development of their oral communication skills. This is supported by previous research highlighting self-determination and gamification as effective frameworks for increasing participation and facilitating language learning processes (Luu et al., 2025). Furthermore, other studies have shown that game-based learning positively influences students' motivation and English proficiency (Cheng et al., 2026).

The findings of this study indicate that intrinsic motivation plays a relevant role in speaking; however, its level is moderate. Data triangulation shows that teachers perceive motivation as essential for participation and the improvement of oral skills; however, the questionnaire results reflect moderate levels of curiosity and willingness to communicate. This is supported by the observation checklist, which reveals that student participation in oral activities is limited and not always spontaneous. These results suggest that, although students show some interest in learning English, their intrinsic motivation is not strong enough to promote oral

communication. Therefore, combining intrinsic motivation with engaging and meaningful strategies is essential to strengthen students' speaking development.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the results from the classroom observation sheet provide direct evidence of student behavior during speaking activities. The data revealed that students demonstrate a moderate level of intrinsic motivation, evidenced by indicators such as curiosity, engagement with the task, and participation in oral activities. However, these behaviors were not consistently observed in all students. Most observations were concentrated among students with occasional participation, suggesting that while some students show interest and willingness to participate, these behaviors are not consistently present in all classroom situations.

The results of this study highlight the importance of implementing teaching strategies that promote intrinsic motivation in English-speaking activities. Teachers should create a supportive and low-anxiety classroom environment where students feel confident to participate and make mistakes. In addition, the use of interactive activities such as games, role-plays, and meaningful tasks can increase students' interest and engagement. Providing students with opportunities to express their ideas, make choices, and participate actively can also strengthen their motivation and improve their speaking performance. Therefore, fostering intrinsic motivation should be considered a key element in teaching practices to enhance oral communication skills.

This study contributes to the understanding of the influence of intrinsic motivation in the context of learning English as a foreign language in primary education. The findings support the idea that intrinsic motivation is associated with student participation and engagement in oral activities; however, they also demonstrate that motivation alone does not guarantee consistent oral performance. These results reinforce the importance of considering additional factors, such as the classroom environment, teaching strategies, and emotional variables, when analyzing the

development of oral expression. Therefore, this study provides evidence that complements existing theories on motivation by highlighting the complex relationship between intrinsic motivation and oral skills in young learners.

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