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Motivation and Self-Confidence as Predictors of Speaking Fluency and Accuracy in EFL Contexts

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ABSTRACT: Effective communication is vital for humans as social beings, especially in EFL contexts. Speaking skills such as fluency and accuracy are essential, and emotional factors like motivation and self-confidence significantly influence learners' performance. Although these predictors are widely recognized, their relationships with speaking proficiency are interpreted differently across studies, indicating a need for further research to develop an effective instructional model. This study adopted a quantitative correlational approach to investigate the associations between motivation and self-confidence as predictor variables, and speaking fluency and accuracy as outcome variables, both individually and collectively. Data were collected from 60 respondents through questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and linear regression. Results indicated a moderate correlation between motivation and speaking fluency (r = 0.406), and between self-confidence and fluency (r = 0.559). For speaking accuracy, motivation showed a low correlation (r = 0.324), while self-confidence had a moderate correlation (r = 0.491). Simultaneously, the predictors showed moderate correlations with fluency (R = 0.559) and accuracy (R = 0.493). The influence values were 0.313 for fluency and 0.243 for accuracy, indicating that motivation and self-confidence contributed 31.3% and 24.3% to students' speaking fluency and accuracy, respectively.
Keywords: *Motivation, Self-Confidence, Speaking Fluency, Speaking Accuracy*

INTRODUCTION

Hasan et al. (2022) defined communication as the action of transmitting information, messages, ideas, and emotions to other groups and people. The process includes sending and receiving messages in different forms, like languages (speaking and writing); electronically (email, texts, social media), non-verbal actions (body movements); and sign languages. The basic aspect of process communication is not simply giving instructions or information, but also ensuring that the message is understood by the intended recipient.

According to King (2022), individuals engage in communication for various purposes, such as conveying messages, captivating an audience, providing information, or expressing emotions

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like enjoyment. Communication may also be used to influence outcomes, determine the tone of interaction, whether polite or critical, and to express agreement or dissatisfaction.

Special skills are required to communicate effectively. One of them is speaking skills. Speaking skills refer to the ability to convey thoughts, ideas, or information effectively through verbal communication. It involves the use of spoken language to express oneself clearly, fluently, and coherently in various contexts and situations. The students should master some elements of speaking to have strong speaking skills, such as fluency and accuracy.

Nation and Newton (2009) mentioned that fluency refers to the skill of speaking a language effortlessly, fluidly, with minimal pauses or interruptions. Meanwhile, Thornbury (2005) described fluency as the capacity to produce and express speech spontaneously and smoothly, free from frequent pauses or repeated self-corrections. It involves speaking smoothly, with natural pacing and rhythm, and being able to express ideas without struggling for words or getting stuck. Fluency encompasses not just speed but also the ability to convey thoughts effortlessly, using appropriate vocabulary and grammar, and maintaining a conversation or speech without significant interruptions. It's about being able to speak a language comfortably, with confidence and ease, even if occasional errors may occur.

In terms of speaking accuracy, Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005) stated that accuracy refers to the degree to which the target language is used correctly according to its grammatical rules and conventions; while Derakhshan, Khalili, & Beheshti (2016) mentioned that accuracy is the capability to produce grammatically correct sentences, which are also appropriate in terms of vocabulary and pronunciation. According to Toni, Hassaskhah, and Birjandi (2017), speaking accuracy refers to the appropriate usage of grammar and vocabulary with accurate pronunciation to express meaning clearly and effectively. These definitions emphasize that speaking accuracy encompasses grammatical correctness, appropriate vocabulary usage, and proper pronunciation.

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It is a critical component of language proficiency, particularly in formal contexts where precise communication is essential. Ibrar, Javed, and Saveed (2024) stated that a person usually does self-assessment based on certain values, which can lead to various emotional responses depending on their personal situation. Zhang (2023) believed that the students' emotional aspects can impact language acquisition.

Sumaiya et al. (2022) stated that motivation is one of the emotional aspects faced by students. Motivation is a crucial element in cognitive development. In the acquisition of knowledge, motivation may influence students' success in an ESL/EFL setting. According to Rubenfeld et al. (2007), two types of motivation involved in learning include extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation activities are a means to an end. Grades, rewards, or social pressure are critical factors influencing language learning that play a crucial role in language acquisition and impact the learning process.

Intrinsic motivation relates to the drive to complete the assignment that brings personal satisfaction and a sense of regulation, such as through personal interest, enjoyment, or the desire to communicate. Moreover, they believe that some strategies can be employed to enhance students' motivation in learning a language, such as creating engaging lessons, using authentic materials, fostering a supportive learning environment, or recognizing and rewarding students' progress. Finally, they mention that some common obstacles, such as boredom, frustration, and anxiety, should be overcome to maintain motivation in language learning.

Another emotional aspect faced by the students is self-confidence. Ghafar (2023) mentioned that self-confidence has an important position in the success of studying ESL or EFL, and it refers to the attitudes and beliefs towards oneself. He also stated that self-confidence reflects a person's trust in their capabilities, talents, and personal attributes. It is marked by feelings of certainty and assurance in oneself. Broadly speaking, self-confidence involves an internal evaluation of

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competence and conviction in being able to carry out the job effectively.

Those who are confident about something typically do not worry about the final result; rather, they are convinced that the outcome will be positive. In essence, self-confidence represents a strong belief in achieving a favorable and successful result. Several studies showed the correlations among academic achievement, such as speaking and writing performance of the students, and certain emotional aspects like anxiety, inspiration, and self-confidence. According to Aghajani and Amanzadeh (2017), anxiety has an impact on students' speaking performance. Kusmartini (2021) discovered that a greater degree of anxiety is related to smaller attainment in speaking. In terms of speaking performance, multimedia and self-efficacy contribute to speaking performance (Kusmartini, 2022a).

In terms of reading motivation, Kusmartini (2022b) reported that students who were more motivated to read tended to achieve higher levels of reading proficiency. The study conducted by Salehpour and Roohani (2020) explored how motivation is connected to speaking skills among Iranian EFL learners. The study indicated that male students' speaking capability was moderately and significantly influenced by extrinsic motivation. The link between intrinsic motivation and speaking proficiency was stronger and meaningful for female students. The study also found that females were more intrinsically motivated, while males were driven by external rewards. A t-test confirmed significant gender differences in types of motivation.

Uztosun (2021) found that there is a relationship between foreign language speaking competence and self-regulated students' speaking stimulus. The multiple regression analysis revealed that 34% of EFL speaking competence could be predicted by self-regulated speaking motivation, with regulation of affect as a significant contributing factor. Mayangsari, Simaibang, and Mulyadi (2021) detected a moderate relationship between the predictors (self-confidence & learning motivation) and capability to speak simultaneously (R = 0.516), the contribution was

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26.7%. Novia and Ramayanti (2023) and Al-Hebaish (2012) revealed a strong association of self-confidence with speaking attainment.

Meanwhile, Gürler (2015) found a weak connection between self-confidence and speaking skills. Slightly different findings explained by Sumardi, Dollah, and Farahdiba (2022); they mentioned that the correlation was moderate (r = 0.55). The research conducted by Setyawati, Alberth, and Sapan (2023) revealed the correlation of self-confidence with students' speaking achievement (r = 0.716) and a strong correlation between motivation and speaking competence (r = 0.634). The previous research showed that there was no specific research regarding the connection between the predictors (motivation & self-confidence) and outcome variables (speaking fluency and accuracy of the students).

Research regarding this matter is very crucial to determine the best model of EFL. The purposes of this research were: 1) to study the correlation of motivation with learners' speaking fluency; 2) motivation and speaking accuracy; 3) self-confidence and speaking fluency; 4) self-confidence and speaking accuracy; 5) effect and contribution of motivation and self-confidence to their speaking fluency and accuracy.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational design. Sixty randomly selected respondents were asked to complete the questionnaires. All respondents were students of Sriwijaya State Polytechnic enrolled in English courses, excluding those from the Language and Tourism departments. Descriptive analyses and linear regression were employed to analyze the data.

Sugiyono (2008) discussed the strength of the correlation coefficient in the defined intervals as follows. A coefficient between 0.00 and 0.199 reflects a negligible or very weak

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association, indicating almost no relationship between the variables. When the value falls within the range of 0.20 to 0.399, the connection is considered weak, showing a slight but present link.

A moderate association was identified with coefficients from 0.40 to 0.599, which implied a reasonable degree of relationship. Values ranging from 0.60 to 0.799 signified a strong correlation, demonstrating a considerable connection between the measured variables. Lastly, coefficients between 0.80 and 1.000 denoted a very strong or highly significant relationship, suggesting a close and meaningful association. These categories serve as a practical framework for evaluating the strength of relationships in quantitative research.

The researcher categorized the scores for each variable into three distinct intervals to interpret the data more effectively. A score ranging from 10 to 23 was classified as low, indicating a weaker presence or lower level of the measured trait. Scores between 24 and 37 were considered medium, representing a moderate level. Meanwhile, scores that fell within the 38 to 50 range were categorized as high, suggesting a strong or prominent presence of the trait. This classification helped the researcher to analyze and interpret participants' responses in a structured manner.

FINDINGS

1. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Table 1. Summary of the Variables

	Motivation	Self-Confidence	Speaking Fluency	Speaking Accuracy
No. of Respondents	60	60	60	60
Mean	40.88	37.08	35.73	34.03
Median	42	39	38.50	36
Std. Deviation	6.104	8.949	9.646	9.020
Kurtosis	-0.099	-0.764	-0.462	-1.080
Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.608	0.608	0.608	0.608

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Min Score	25	18	14	18
Max Score	49	49	48	49

Table 1 summarizes the descriptive statistics for students' motivation, self-confidence, speaking fluency, and speaking accuracy. Each variable was assessed among 60 respondents. The mean and median values across all variables indicate generally positive perceptions, particularly in motivation (M = 40.88) and self-confidence (M = 37.08). Standard deviations indicate moderate variability in responses, while the kurtosis values, ranging from -1.080 to -0.099 with consistent standard error, suggest a relatively normal distribution. The minimum and maximum scores further reflect the range of students' perceptions across all four categories.

Table 2. Level of Students' Perception

	Interval	**Remarks**	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage (%)**
Motivation	10-23	Low	0	0
	24-37	Medium	17	28.33
	38-50	High	43	71.67
Self-Confidence	10-23	Low	4	6.66
	24-37	Medium	22	36.67
	38-50	High	34	56.67
Speaking Fluency	10-23	Low	11	18.33
	24-37	Medium	16	26.67
	38-50	High	33	55
Speaking Accuracy	10-23	Low	11	18.33
	24-37	Medium	24	40
	38-50	High	25	41.67

Table 2 presents the distribution of students' perception levels regarding motivation, self-confidence, speaking fluency, and speaking accuracy. The data are categorized into three levels: low, medium, and high, based on score intervals. The majority of students demonstrated high

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levels of motivation (71.67%) and self-confidence (56.67%). Similarly, most students showed a high level of speaking fluency (55%) and speaking accuracy (41.67%), indicating generally positive perceptions in all assessed aspects of speaking.

2. Correlation and Contribution

Table 3. Correlation & Contribution of the Predictors to Speaking Performance

Predictors	**Outcome**	**Pearson Correlation (r)**	**Sig. (1-tailed)**	**N**	**R Square**
Motivation	Speaking Fluency	0.406	0.001	60	0.165
Motivation	Speaking Accuracy	0.324	0.006	60	0.105
Self-Confidence	Speaking Fluency	0.559	0.000	60	0.313
Self-Confidence	Speaking Accuracy	0.491	0.000	60	0.228
Motivation and Self-Confidence	Speaking Fluency	0.559	0.000	60	0.313
Motivation and Self-Confidence	Speaking Accuracy	0.493	0.000	60	0.243

Table 3 summarizes the correlation coefficients and contributions (R Square) of motivation and self-confidence—both partially and simultaneously—toward students' speaking fluency and accuracy. All correlations are statistically significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed). Motivation is moderately correlated with speaking fluency (r = 0.406) and accuracy (r = 0.324), while self-confidence demonstrates stronger correlations with fluency (r = 0.559) and accuracy (r = 0.491). When combined by using linear regression, motivation and self-confidence contribute

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to 31.3% of the variance in fluency and 24.3% in accuracy, indicating a meaningful influence on students' speaking performance.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

A correlation of moderate strength (r = 0.406) was identified between students' motivation to learn speaking and their level of speaking fluency. This means that more motivated students tend to speak more fluently. Although the correlation is not very strong, it still shows an important link. Motivated students are likely to practice more and engage in speaking activities. This effort helps improve their fluency over time. Fluency, as described by Nation and Newton (2009), is the skill of speaking a language in a smooth, easy manner with little hesitation. Teachers can use this finding to boost motivation through engaging lessons and real-life speaking opportunities. Motivation is not the only factor in fluency, but it is a key part.

A well-rounded teaching approach should include strategies to increase motivation. Understanding different types of motivation could help improve results. Overall, motivation plays a meaningful role in developing speaking fluency. This corresponds to the research conducted by Setyawati, Alberth, and Sapan (2023) regarding its strength in terms of connection (r = 0.634). This supports the idea put forward by Sumaiya et al. (2022). They mentioned that motivation is one of the emotional aspects faced by the students; therefore, motivation is a crucial aspect of the learning process.

A moderately strong positive correlation (r = 0.559) was found, showing that higher levels of self-confidence are associated with greater speaking fluency among students. However, the relationship is not very strong. Self-confidence is important, but not the only factor affecting fluency. Regression analysis shows self-confidence explains 31.3% of fluency ($R^2 = 0.313$). The other 68.7% may be due to factors like vocabulary, grammar, motivation, practice, or anxiety.

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These findings support earlier studies regarding the self-confidence function in linguistic development. Fluency depends on many factors. Improving fluency needs more than just building confidence. It also requires support in other language skills. A complete approach helps students become more fluent speakers. Setyawati, Alberth, and Sapan (2023) reported a similar correlation (r = 0.716). Ghafar (2023) believed that self-confidence has an important influence on the attainment of foreign language skills, and it refers to the attitudes and beliefs towards oneself.

A significant yet low correlation (r = 0.324) exists between students' motivation for learning speaking and their speaking accuracy. This means that more motivated students tend to have slightly better speaking accuracy. The relationship is positive but not strong. A correlation of 0.324 shows only a modest link. Other factors likely play a bigger role in speaking accuracy. These may include teaching methods, practice, language complexity, or personal differences. Still, motivation remains an important factor in learning.

Teachers should combine motivational strategies with other approaches. A low correlation also suggests the need for further research. Exploring different types of motivation could give deeper insights. Overall, motivation matters but is only part of the picture. Similar research conducted by Uztosun (2021) found a weak link; the motivation factor accounted for 34% of their speaking ability, with affect regulation having a notable influence. A moderate association (r = 0.491) was found linking students' self-confidence in speaking with spoken language accuracy. This means pupils who have higher confidence tend to speak more accurately. The relationship is positive and meaningful. Self-confidence encourages students to speak more and take risks without fear of mistakes. This leads to more practice and better accuracy over time.

According to Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005), accuracy pertains to the degree of conformity to the grammatical role of the linguistic acquisition in learners' language production. Confident students often perform better due to reduced anxiety and greater comfort in speaking. Teachers

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can improve students' accuracy by building their self-confidence.

Supportive environments, positive feedback, and encouragement help boost confidence. Continued efforts to grow self-confidence may lead to consistent gains in accuracy. Further research can explore how self-confidence shapes speaking accuracy in more detail. It aligns with the theory mentioned by Toni, Hassaskhah, and Birjandi (2017); they emphasized that accuracy in speaking entails the correct utilization of syntax, vocabulary, and pronunciation to ensure effective communication of intended meaning.

A coefficient of 0.559 was identified in the relationship between motivation and self-confidence as predictors and speaking fluency as the outcome, indicating a moderately strong connection. This indicates that when both motivation and self-confidence increase, students tend to show better fluency in speaking. However, since the correlation is not strong, these two variables are only moderately related to speaking fluency. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.313, meaning that 31.3% of the variance in speaking fluency can be explained by motivation and self-confidence combined.

The remaining 68.7% is influenced by other variables, which were not investigated in this current research. This finding supports the idea that affective factors like motivation and self-confidence are important in second and foreign language speaking performance, but they are not the only contributors. Therefore, language learning should be approached holistically by addressing both psychological and linguistic aspects of speaking. A related study was conducted by Mayangsari, Simaibang, and Mulyadi (2021). A slight difference was in terms of the outcome variable, current issue specifically highlighted speaking fluency and accuracy, while they reported speaking skills in general.

The findings indicate a statistically significant moderate correlation (R = 0.493) between the predictors—students' motivation and confidence to speak—as well as their speaking

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accuracy. This suggests that the higher levels of both motivation as well as self-confidence, the greater accuracy in spoken language performance. The correlation is positive and meaningful, though not very strong. It shows that motivation and self-confidence are important in developing speaking accuracy.

Students who exhibit higher levels of confidence and motivation are more likely to demonstrate improved performance in speaking tasks. They are more willing to take risks and make fewer mistakes. In this case, persistence is very crucial in developing speaking ability. Motivation and confidence help reduce anxiety during speaking. This finding is consistent with prior studies by Aghajani and Amanzadeh (2017) and Kusmartini (2021) regarding the significant connection between anxiety and speaking performance of the pupils, highlighting its influence on their oral proficiency.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In conclusion, the present study reveals that both motivation and self-confidence play significant roles in students' speaking performance. Motivation exhibits a moderate positive correlation with speaking fluency, whereas self-confidence demonstrates a stronger moderate correlation, accounting for 31.3% of the variance in fluency. Although the association between motivation and speaking accuracy is low, it remains statistically significant, indicating a modest influence. Conversely, self-confidence shows a moderate correlation with speaking accuracy, underscoring its importance in enhancing precise oral output.

Collectively, motivation and self-confidence moderately predict speaking fluency and accuracy; however, other variables also contribute to these outcomes. Consequently, an integrative approach addressing both motivation and self-confidence and linguistic elements, including consistent practice, grammatical competence, and vocabulary expansion, is imperative

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to effectively improve students' speaking proficiency. It is suggested that teachers enhance students' motivation through engaging and meaningful speaking activities to support fluency development. Confidence-building strategies, such as positive reinforcement and low-anxiety environments, should be integrated to improve fluency outcomes.

Educators should not rely solely on motivation to develop accuracy but combine it with targeted grammar and pronunciation exercises. Teachers can foster self-confidence through supportive feedback and opportunities for low-pressure speaking practice to increase accuracy. Language programs should include combined strategies that strengthen both motivation and self-confidence to improve overall speaking performance. Future teaching practices should adopt a holistic model, integrating affective support and structured language practice for comprehensive skill development.

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