



**CREATIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING  
MOTIVATION AND SPEAKING SKILLS OF LOW-LEVEL EFL  
LEARNERS**

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**Abstract:** *This study investigates the effectiveness of creative teaching strategies in enhancing motivation and speaking skills among low-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in secondary schools. In many EFL contexts, students demonstrate limited language proficiency and low motivation due to traditional, teacher-centered instructional methods. To address this challenge, a range of non-traditional and interactive teaching strategies, including role-plays, games, pair and group work, visual prompts, and communicative tasks, were implemented over a six-week instructional period. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining classroom observations, speaking performance assessments, and student questionnaires. The findings reveal a noticeable improvement in students' classroom participation, confidence, and oral communication skills. The study concludes that creative teaching strategies play a significant role in creating a supportive learning environment and fostering active learner engagement, particularly among low-motivated EFL learners. The results suggest practical implications for EFL teachers seeking to improve speaking outcomes through learner-centered instruction.*



**Keywords:** *EFL learners; creative teaching strategies; learner motivation; speaking skills; secondary education*

## 1. Introduction

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in secondary schools often faces challenges related to learners' low motivation and limited speaking ability. Many students perceive English as a difficult subject, which leads to anxiety, passive participation, and reluctance to communicate orally. Traditional teaching methods that emphasize grammar rules, memorization, and teacher-centered instruction frequently fail to meet the communicative needs of low-level learners.

In recent years, educational researchers have highlighted the importance of learner-centered and creative teaching approaches in language classrooms. Creative teaching strategies encourage active participation, reduce fear of making mistakes, and promote meaningful interaction among learners. Speaking skills, in particular, require frequent practice in a supportive and engaging environment. However, in many EFL classrooms, opportunities for authentic speaking practice remain limited.

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of creative teaching strategies on the motivation and speaking skills of low-level EFL learners in secondary education. The research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How do creative teaching strategies influence learners' motivation in EFL classrooms?

2. What effect do these strategies have on students' speaking performance?

By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the growing body of research on effective EFL teaching practices and provide practical insights for classroom teachers.

## 2. Literature Review

Motivation is widely recognized as a key factor in second language acquisition. According to Gardner (1985), motivated learners are more likely to engage actively in language learning and persist despite difficulties. In EFL contexts,



low motivation is often associated with limited exposure to authentic language use and monotonous classroom practices.

Creative teaching strategies have been defined as instructional approaches that involve imagination, originality, and learner involvement (Richards, 2013). Such strategies include games, storytelling, role-play, problem-solving tasks, and project-based learning. Previous studies indicate that creative activities can increase learner engagement and reduce anxiety, particularly in speaking tasks (Harmer, 2015).

Speaking skills development requires opportunities for meaningful interaction and communicative practice. Brown (2007) emphasizes that speaking competence improves when learners are exposed to real-life communication tasks rather than isolated grammar exercises. Research conducted by Littlewood (2004) also supports the use of communicative language teaching to enhance oral proficiency.

Despite the growing interest in creative pedagogy, there is still limited empirical research focusing specifically on low-level EFL learners in secondary schools. This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring how simple, creative strategies can positively influence motivation and speaking performance among this learner group.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining qualitative and quantitative data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of creative teaching strategies. The approach allowed for the analysis of both measurable improvements in speaking skills and learners' subjective experiences.

#### **3.2 Participants**

The participants were low-level EFL learners from a secondary school. The group consisted of students aged 14–16 who demonstrated limited speaking ability and low classroom participation. All participants had been studying English as a foreign language for several years but lacked confidence in oral communication.



### 3.3 Teaching Intervention

The intervention lasted six weeks and involved the integration of creative teaching strategies into regular EFL lessons. The strategies included:

- Role-plays based on everyday situations
- Language games and competitions
- Pair and group speaking tasks
- Use of pictures and visual prompts
- Short dialogues and communicative activities

The lessons were designed to create a relaxed atmosphere where students felt encouraged to speak without fear of making mistakes.

### 3.4 Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected using the following tools:

- Classroom observations to monitor participation and interaction
- Speaking performance assessments conducted before and after the intervention
- Student questionnaires to gather feedback on motivation and attitudes toward speaking

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative data from speaking assessments were analyzed by comparing pre- and post-intervention results. Qualitative data from observations and questionnaires were thematically analyzed to identify patterns related to motivation, confidence, and engagement.

## 4. Results and Discussion

The results of the study indicate a positive impact of creative teaching strategies on both motivation and speaking skills. Classroom observations revealed increased student participation, with learners more willing to speak during pair and group activities. Students who were previously silent began to contribute short responses and gradually engaged in longer utterances.



Speaking assessment results showed noticeable improvement in fluency, pronunciation, and overall confidence. Although grammatical accuracy remained a challenge for some learners, their ability to communicate meaning improved significantly.

Questionnaire responses suggested that students found creative activities enjoyable and less stressful than traditional exercises. Many learners reported feeling more confident and motivated to speak English during lessons. These findings align with previous research highlighting the role of creative and communicative approaches in reducing speaking anxiety (Harmer, 2015).

The discussion of results suggests that creative teaching strategies not only support language development but also foster a positive learning environment. By shifting the focus from error correction to communication, teachers can help low-level learners overcome psychological barriers to speaking.

## 5. Conclusion

This study examined the role of creative teaching strategies in enhancing motivation and speaking skills among low-level EFL learners in secondary schools. The findings demonstrate that learner-centered, interactive activities can significantly increase student engagement, confidence, and oral communication ability.

The study recommends that EFL teachers incorporate simple creative strategies into their daily teaching practice, particularly when working with low-motivated learners. While the research was limited in scope and duration, it provides valuable insights into effective classroom practices.

Future research could involve a larger sample size, a longer intervention period, or a comparative study between traditional and creative teaching methods. Overall, the study highlights the importance of creativity and learner involvement in achieving successful EFL instruction.



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