



Can Motivation Shape Service Talk? ARCS Model to Enhance Hospitality Students' Speaking Performance

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the application of the ARCS model in improving students' speaking performance in the D3 Language and Tourism Program at the Sriwijaya State Polytechnic, Palembang. The research uses the Classroom Action Research design, which is carried out in two cycles, each including the planning, action, observation, and reflection stages. The research participants consisted of 30 second-semester students in the English for Hospitality course. The research instruments include role-play-based speaking tests, ARCS observation checklists, field notes, interviews, and speaking rubrics. The results showed that students' speaking skills before the implementation of ARCS were still in the low category, with limitations in fluency, vocabulary, and interactional competence. After implementing the ARCS model through authentic hospitality activities, there was a significant increase in student participation, confidence, and interaction quality. The average speaking score increased gradually from the initial condition to Cycle 1 and reached an optimal increase in Cycle 2, followed by a shift toward more spontaneous and communicative behavior. The study's findings also show that the components of Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction contribute to increased motivation to learn among students. Overall, the application of the ARCS model is effective in improving hospitality students' speaking skills and fostering more interactive, context-based learning. This study recommends the use of motivation-based learning design in vocational education to improve students' communication readiness in the world of work.

Keywords: ARCS Model, Speaking Performance, Hospitality Students, Learning Motivation, English for Hospitality.

Introduction

Speaking skills are among the main competencies students must possess in the hospitality sector, as service communication is at the core of professional interaction in the tourism and hospitality industry. Students in the D3 Language and Tourism Program are required to communicate effectively in various service situations, such as receiving guests, handling reservations, and responding to customer complaints. However, in classroom learning, students' speaking skills still pose several obstacles. Some students understand the material theoretically but struggle to apply the language directly. This condition is often seen during role-play activities, where students are still hesitant to start a conversation and tend to rely on pre-prepared texts.

In addition, the speaking learning that takes place is still scripted and not fully communicative. Students tend to memorize dialogues rather than naturally understand the flow of service communication. This situation affects low-class participation and limited student interaction. (Bonar Siagian & M Bambang Purwanto, 2023). The motivation to learn to speak also seems unstable; at some meetings, students seemed enthusiastic, but at others, they were passive. This shows that speaking learning requires an approach that not only focuses on language practice, but also on the motivation aspect of learning. (Marisya et al., 2023). Therefore, a learning model is needed that actively increases student involvement, and one such model is the ARCS model, which emphasizes attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction in the learning process.

The urgency of this research stems from the need to address the low speaking performance of hospitality students, driven by a lack of motivation and active involvement in learning. If this condition is not handled systematically, students may experience difficulties when facing real communication situations in the world of work. (Dahnial Dahnial et al., 2025). Therefore, this research is important for testing the application of the ARCS model as a motivational approach expected to gradually and sustainably improve students' speaking skills.

The problem of students' speaking skills is directly related to the real needs of the hospitality industry, which demands professional, responsive communication. Students are not only required to understand the structure of language but also to interact spontaneously with guests in dynamic service situations. If speaking ability is still low, students will have difficulty conveying information, handling complaints, or providing effective service. (Ariya Agustin, M Bambang Purwanto, 2025). Therefore, speaking and instruction need to be designed to meet the needs of service communication, so that students are better prepared to face the world of work. (Agustin & Purwanto, 2023).

Research on the ARCS model has been conducted in the context of English learning in general, particularly in reading skills and theory-based learning. However, research specifically examining the application of the ARCS model to speaking learning in the hospitality context remains limited. In addition, most previous research has not focused on the performance of authentic service communication. At the Sriwijaya State Polytechnic, no research has examined the integration of the ARCS model into the speaking learning of D3 Language and Tourism students. This shows that there is a relevant research space to develop a motivation-based learning approach in the context of hospitality vocational education.

Based on these problems, this study aims to identify students' speaking skills before applying the ARCS model, describe the process of implementing the ARCS model in hospitality speaking instruction, and analyze the improvement in students' speaking skills after its application. The research questions include: how students' speaking skills

were before the implementation of the ARCS model, how to implement the ARCS model in hospitality speaking instruction, and how the ARCS model can improve students' speaking performance.

The novelty of this research lies in integrating the ARCS model into speaking instruction, with a focus on hospitality service communication. This study not only examines learning motivation in general but also directly links it to students' communication performance in real service situations. (Purwanto et al., 2025). In addition, this study also combines a motivational approach with authentic role-play activities that reflect the needs of the tourism and hospitality industries. This approach makes a new contribution to the development of vocational-based English language learning. (Purwanto et al., 2024).

It is hoped that this research will serve as a reference for English teachers in vocational education in designing more communicative and motivation-based speaking instruction. In addition, the results of this research are expected to serve as a basis for developing learning models that meet the needs of the hospitality industry. In the future, this research can be further developed by involving experimental design, a wider number of participants, and integration with other approaches to improve students' communication skills more comprehensively. Thus, this research is expected to make a real contribution to improving the quality of speaking instruction and students' communication readiness in the world of work.

Research Methods

This section of the methodology describes in detail the research procedure used to investigate the effect of applying the ARCS model on students' speaking performance in the context of hospitality learning. The research method is designed to describe the process of actions carried out in the classroom while systematically measuring changes in students' speaking skills. The explanation in this section includes the research design, setting, and participants, procedures for implementing actions in each cycle, data collection instruments, and data analysis techniques used. Overall, the methodology was designed to capture two things at once—the learning process in the classroom and the results of improving students' speaking skills. Thus, the research steps described in this section provide a clear basis for understanding how the ARCS model is applied and for measuring its impact on the communication performance of hospitality students in a structured manner.

1. Research types

This study uses a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design that enables gradual learning improvement through cycles of action and reflection in hospitality classrooms. The research was carried out in two continuous cycles. In Cycle 1, the researcher designed and applied the ARCS model in speaking activities through simple role-play, then observed students' responses, who, in the early stages, still tended to be passive and lacked confidence in communicating (Yuliana et al., 2024). Furthermore, a reflection was conducted to evaluate the implementation of the first cycle and identify areas for improvement. Based on the results of this reflection, Cycle 2 was carried out by improving learning strategies through activities that are more authentic, interactive, and relevant to the hospitality industry situation, such as simulations of handling guest complaints, as well as providing improvised spaces so that students can speak more naturally. Thus, the CAR design in this study serves not only as a research method but also as an adaptive approach to gradually and contextually improve students' speaking skills.

2. Research Data Sources

The research instrument used in this study is designed to collect comprehensive data on improvements in students' speaking performance following the application of the ARCS model. The main instrument is a speaking test in role-play format, tailored to the hospitality context, including handling guest check-in, taking reservations, and addressing complaints. This test aims to measure students' speaking ability directly in authentic service communication situations. In addition, the ARCS observation checklist is used to observe the implementation of the Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction components during the learning process (Purwanto et al., 2026). Using this observation sheet, the researcher recorded the level of student involvement, responses to learning activities, and changes in learning motivation observed in the classroom.

To complete the observation data, the researcher also used field notes that function to record important events during the learning process, including students' verbal and non-verbal behaviors that were not captured in the checklist. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with several students to obtain more in-depth information about their perceptions of the ARCS model's use in speaking learning. Meanwhile, students' speaking ability is assessed using a speaking rubric that covers fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and interactional competence. The combination of these instruments allows for more valid and triangulated data collection, enabling the results of research on improving the speaking skills of hospitality students to be analyzed more accurately and comprehensively.

3. Research Population and Sample

This research was conducted in the D3 Language and Tourism Study Program at the Sriwijaya State Polytechnic Palembang, specifically in the English for Hospitality course, attended by 2nd-semester students. This selection is based on the needs of early-stage students being introduced to service communication skills in the hospitality industry. The research participants were 30 students from a regular class in the 2nd semester, with general characteristics of vocational students preparing for work in the tourism and hospitality industry. In general, students have varied English language skills, but most still show limitations in speaking, such as lack of confidence, limited hospitality vocabulary, and a tendency to use memorized dialogue. In addition, students are more accustomed to theory-based learning than direct service communication practices, so a learning approach that encourages active engagement and the contextual use of language is needed. Therefore, this research setting is considered relevant to implement the ARCS model to improve students' speaking performance in authentic communication situations in the hospitality sector.

4. Data Collection Techniques

This research was carried out in two cycles, following the systematic Classroom Action Research (CAR) procedure. The research procedure consists of stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection, which are carried out repeatedly in two cycles as shown in Figure 1.

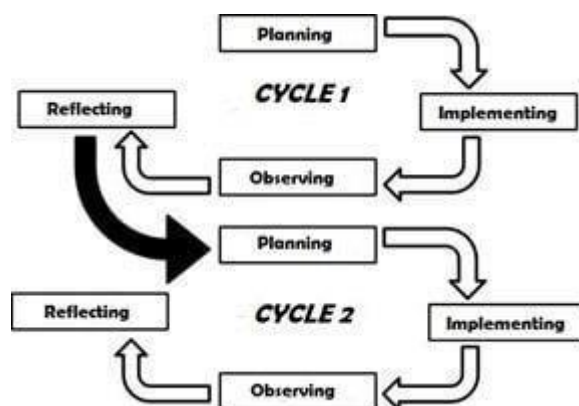


Figure 1. CAR Stages (Cycle 1 & Cycle 2)

In **Cycle 1**, the initial stage begins with **planning**: the researcher designs speaking-learning activities based on the ARCS model, integrated into the hospitality context. Materials and activities focus on simple service situations to attract students' attention and build learning relevance. The next stage is action, where learning is carried out through hospitality role play, which encourages students to practice direct communication. During this process, the researcher conducted observations to record students' levels of participation, confidence, and the quality of their interactions. The results of the observations were then analyzed at the reflection stage to identify obstacles that arose, such as students who still depend on texts or are less active in interacting.

Based on the results of the first-cycle reflection, the research continued to Cycle 2 by refining the learning strategy. Improvements focus on using more interactive and challenging speaking activities, such as small-group discussions, complex service simulations, and more spontaneous two-way communication. In addition, speaking tasks are designed to be more authentic by presenting real service situations. This approach aims to increase student engagement while encouraging natural language use. Through these stages, the learning process unfolds gradually and reflectively, so that improvement in students' speaking performance becomes more evident from the first to the second cycle.

5. Data Analysis Techniques

The data in this study were analyzed using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive picture of improvements in students' speaking performance following the application of the ARCS model. Quantitative analysis focused on increasing student speaking scores obtained from role-play results in each cycle, then calculated by comparing mean scores between the initial condition, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2. In addition, speaking skills were analyzed using percentage improvement to more clearly assess the magnitude of changes in student performance. Meanwhile, qualitative analysis of observation and interview data was conducted to illustrate changes in student motivation, participation, and confidence throughout the learning process. The qualitative data were analyzed descriptively by identifying patterns of behavior and student responses to the application of the ARCS model. By integrating these two approaches, the data analysis in this study not only shows a numerical increase in scores but also provides a deeper understanding of the process of changing students' speaking skills in the context of hospitality learning.

Results and Discussion

Result

The study's results are classified into three main areas: the initial condition of students' speaking ability before implementing the ARCS model, the process of implementing the ARCS model in learning activities, and the improvement in students' speaking skills after the model is applied. These three findings are arranged sequentially to illustrate the changes that occur during the learning process. At first, it was still awkward in the classroom – some students spoke quietly, while others just smiled as they looked at their notes. However, slowly, the dynamics of the class changed after the motivational strategy was implemented. Therefore, the following section describes in detail the research findings across these three aspects, so that the development of students' speaking performance can be more clearly and systematically structured.

1. Students' Speaking Performance Before Implementing ARCS

Prior to implementing the ARCS model, hospitality students' speaking skills showed that conditions were still limited to a few main aspects. During the initial learning activities, most students seem hesitant to speak, with long pauses before responding and a tendency to read notes during role-playing. Fluency is still low because students often pause mid-sentence and use repeated expressions. In addition, the limitations of hospitality-specific vocabulary become evident when students struggle with service terms such as reservations, check-in procedures, and guest complaints. Interaction between students has also not developed optimally; communication tends to be one-way and does not elicit a spontaneous response from the interlocutor. This condition affects overall speaking performance, as reflected in the initial mean score, which remains below the expected competency standard. These findings show that students need a learning approach that increases motivation and active involvement in service communication practices.

Table 1. Students' Speaking Performance Before ARCS Implementation

No	Speaking Aspect	Criteria Description	Mean Score
1	Fluency	Frequent pauses, limited speech continuity	60.2
2	Pronunciation	Several mispronunciations affect clarity	62.4
3	Vocabulary	Limited hospitality-related expressions	58.7
4	Grammar	Frequent grammatical errors	61.3
5	Interactional Competence	Minimal response and weak conversational flow	59.8
Overall Mean Score			60.5

Table 1 shows that students' speaking skills are still in the low to sufficient range across all assessment areas. The highest average scores were found in pronunciation (62.4) and grammar (61.3), but both still showed unstable performance in service communication. Meanwhile, the vocabulary (58.7) and interactional competence (59.8) aspects received the lowest scores, indicating that students had difficulty using hospitality-specific vocabulary and responding spontaneously in conversations. The fluency aspect also showed a relatively low score (60.2), indicating that students still often experience long pauses and irregularities in speech flow. Overall, the average score of

60.5 indicates that students' speaking skills prior to implementing the ARCS model did not meet the expected communication standards in the hospitality services context.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that students still need a learning approach that increases motivation, enriches service vocabulary, and encourages more active communication. This initial condition is an important basis for applying the ARCS model as a learning strategy, expected to improve students' speaking performance and gradually increase their communication.

2. Implementation of ARCS Model

The implementation of the ARCS model in speaking learning is carried out systematically by integrating each motivational component into hospitality classroom activities. This implementation shows a change in student involvement, with students being more active during the learning process. The Attention component focuses on engaging students through media use and real-world service situations to build initial interest. Furthermore, Relevance is developed through speaking topics that are directly related to communication needs in the hotel industry. The Confidence component is implemented through gradual exercises that allow students to speak more purposefully before moving on to more spontaneous communication. Finally, Satisfaction is given through feedback and appreciation of student performance to strengthen learning motivation. The implementation of these four components resulted in positive changes in student participation, confidence, and the quality of interaction during speaking learning.

Table 2. Implementation of the ARCS Model in the Speaking Classroom

ARCS Component	Learning Activities	Implementation Description	Observed Results
Attention	Video hospitality scenario	Students watched short videos related to hotel service situations	Students showed increased interest and paid more attention to speaking tasks
Attention	Real guest complaint simulation	The lecturer demonstrated a real-life complaint handling scenario	Students became more engaged and curious about service communication
Relevance	Speaking topics related to hotel service	Topics included check-in, reservation, and guest assistance	Students perceived learning as meaningful and relevant to future careers
Confidence	Guided role play	Students practiced using structured dialogue and lecturer guidance	Students became less anxious and more willing to speak
Confidence	Pair practice	Students practiced speaking in pairs before performing	Students showed improved fluency and interaction
Satisfaction	Feedback	The lecturer provided constructive feedback after the performance	Students recognized strengths and areas for improvement

Satisfaction	Performance appreciation	Students received praise and recognition for participation	Students showed higher motivation and active participation
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Table 2 shows that each component of the ARCS model is implemented through structured learning activities and positively impacts student involvement in speaking activities. In the Attention component, the use of hospitality scenario videos and simulations of successful guest complaint handling attracted students' attention. It increased their interest in learning, as evidenced by increased focus and activity during the activity. Furthermore, in the Relevance component, speaking topics directly related to hotel services, such as check-in, reservations, and guest services, make students feel that the material they are learning relates to their professional needs, thereby making participation in communication practices more meaningful. In the Confidence component, the application of guided role-play and paired exercises provides students with opportunities to practice gradually, helping reduce anxiety and increase their confidence in speaking. Meanwhile, the Satisfaction component is realized through providing constructive feedback and appreciation for student performance, which increases motivation and active participation in learning. Overall, the implementation of the ARCS model shows that integrating activities that are interesting, relevant, gradual, and rewarding can create a more interactive learning atmosphere and support the improvement of hospitality students' speaking skills.

3. Students' Speaking Improvement

The improvement in students' speaking skills after implementing the ARCS model was gradual, from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. Improvements occurred in fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and interactional competence. These changes do not appear all at once—they start small, then feel more stable in the second cycle. Some students are starting to speak more fluently, though they still pause. Then, in the next cycle, their response becomes more spontaneous. To clarify these findings, the results of the improvement in student speaking are presented in the following tables.

Table 3. Students' Speaking Performance Improvement Across Cycles

Speaking Aspect	Before ARCS	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Improvement
Fluency	60.2	70.4	81.6	+21.4
Pronunciation	62.4	72.1	83.2	+20.8
Vocabulary	58.7	69.3	82.5	+23.8
Grammar	61.3	71.0	80.4	+19.1
Interactional Competence	59.8	73.2	84.1	+24.3
Overall Mean Score	60.5	71.2	82.4	+21.9

Table 4. Percentage of Students Achieving Speaking Competency

Cycle	Students ≥ 75	Students < 75	Percentage Achieved
Before ARCS	6	24	20%
Cycle 1	16	14	53%
Cycle 2	26	4	87%

Table 5. Observed Changes in Speaking Behavior

Indicator	Before ARCS	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
Students willing to speak	Low	Moderate	High
Use of hospitality vocabulary	Limited	Developing	Appropriate
Interaction spontaneity	Minimal	Increasing	Natural
Confidence level	Low	Improved	Strong
Role play performance	Script-based	Semi-guided	Communicative

Table 3 shows a gradual improvement in students' speaking skills from before ARCS implementation to Cycle 2. All aspects of the assessment showed a consistent upward trend, with the overall average score increasing from 60.5 in the initial condition to 71.2 in Cycle 1 and reaching 82.4 in Cycle 2. The most notable improvement occurred in interactional competence and vocabulary, indicating that students began to respond to conversations more spontaneously and use hospitality vocabulary more appropriately. The evidence is displayed in Table 4 which shows an increase in the percentage of students who achieve the speaking competency standard. In the initial condition, only 20% of students achieved a score of ≥ 75 ; this increased to 53% in Cycle 1 and reached 87% in Cycle 2. This data shows that applying the ARCS model not only increases the average score but also expands the number of students who achieve the expected speaking competencies.

Meanwhile, Table 5 reinforces the quantitative findings by showing changes in students' communication behavior during the learning process. Prior to the implementation of ARCS, students tended to be passive, text-dependent, and use limited vocabulary. In Cycle 1, participation increased, although the interaction remained semi-structured. However, in Cycle 2, the change became more significant, with students showing higher confidence, a more appropriate use of hospitality vocabulary, and more natural interaction without relying on memorized dialogue. Overall, the three tables show that implementing the ARCS model can improve students' speaking performance, as evidenced by assessment scores and student communication behavior in the context of hospitality learning.

Discussion

The application of the ARCS model in speaking learning shows that the components of Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction contribute to increasing hospitality students' learning motivation. In the Attention aspect, the use of service scenario videos and guest complaint simulations has increased student involvement in the classroom. Students became more focused, and some even started asking questions before the role play began—a rare occurrence before. As attention increased, so did the interest in talking. This aligns with the concept of learning motivation, which emphasizes that attention is the first step toward active involvement in learning (Keller, 2010). Furthermore, in the Relevance aspect, speaking tasks that are grounded in real situations in hotels make students feel their learning is more meaningful. They see a direct link between class materials and the work needs of the hospitality industry, so participation naturally increases.

In the Confidence aspect, gradual speaking exercises, ranging from guided role-play to spontaneous communication, help reduce student anxiety. They become more daring in their attempts, even though they still make small mistakes. This is interesting—confidence seems to grow not because their abilities are perfect, but because they feel safe

to speak. Meanwhile, the Satisfaction component is realized through providing positive feedback and appreciation for student performance. The impact is quite felt; The classroom atmosphere became more interactive, and students seemed to enjoy speaking activities. This condition supports the view that learning satisfaction can strengthen intrinsic motivation and improve communication performance (Dörnyei, 2001; Keller, 1987).

The findings of this study align closely with previous studies that affirm the ARCS model's effectiveness in improving students' motivation and speaking ability. According to John M. Keller (2010), integrating the Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction components into learning design can significantly increase learning engagement by helping students feel more directed and clearer about their learning goals. This is also supported by Zoltán Dörnyei (2001), who states that motivation plays a central role in the success of second-language learning, especially in productive skills such as speaking. In addition, research by Al-Shammari (2020) shows that using the ARCS model in English language learning can increase students' confidence in oral communication, especially when learning activities are designed in stages and in context. These findings corroborate research indicating that hospitality students are more likely to speak up when they feel safe and supported in the learning process.

Furthermore, research by Chang and Lehman (2002) confirms that the relevance of learning materials to real context can significantly increase student participation and engagement. In the context of vocational education, this is increasingly important because students tend to be more responsive to learning that is practical and directly related to the world of work. Research by Hsu (2019) also shows that motivation-based approaches, such as the ARCS model, are highly effective in improving students' communication readiness in professional settings. In line with this, Jack C. Richards (2006) emphasizes that effective language learning must provide students with opportunities to use language in authentic contexts, rather than merely as a structural exercise. In fact, several recent studies, such as Kim and Keller (2013), found that the combination of motivational design and communicative activities improved speaking performance more significantly than conventional methods. Thus, these studies reinforce the view that the ARCS model is not only theoretically relevant but also practically effective in improving students' speaking skills, especially in the context of hospitality vocational education.

Overall, the results of this study show that the increase in students' speaking performance is not solely due to language practice but also to a structured motivational design. The ARCS model serves as a framework that connects students' psychological needs to speaking and learning activities. When attention is awakened, relevance is felt, confidence increases, and satisfaction is gained, students become more active in communication. In other words, motivation is not just a supporting factor but a key component that shapes speaking performance in hospitality. These findings show that motivation-based learning design can create a more communicative and practice-oriented learning environment.

This research provides important implications for the teaching of English in hospitality vocational education. Teachers are advised to integrate the ARCS model in the design of speaking learning so that students are more motivated and actively communicate. Additionally, authentic assignments that reflect real service situations need to be prioritized to increase learning relevance. Institutionally, the results of this research can also serve as a basis for developing a competency-based curriculum for service communication. Implementing ARCS not only improves speaking skills but also

prepares students for the demands of professional communication in the hospitality industry.

Although the ARCS model shows positive results, there are some challenges in its implementation. One of the main challenges is the consistency of teachers in designing motivational activities appropriate to the classroom context. In addition, limited learning time often makes it difficult to provide gradual speaking exercises. Another challenge arises from the variety of students' abilities, which means some students need more intensive support. In this context, the leadership role of teachers is important, as they can motivate, direct, and foster an inclusive communication environment. Research by Northouse (2018) shows that instructional leadership affects student motivation and engagement.

For further research, the study could be expanded by integrating the ARCS model with a leadership approach to language learning, such as transformational leadership in the speaking class. The research can also examine the relationship between lecturers' leadership styles and students' willingness to communicate in the hospitality context. In addition, longitudinal studies can be conducted to see the long-term impact of the ARCS model on students' communication readiness in the world of work. A blended approach between educational leadership and language learning has the potential to yield a more comprehensive learning model – not only improving speaking skills but also shaping the professional communication competencies needed in the hospitality industry.

Conclusion

The application of the ARCS model can improve students' speaking performance in hospitality learning. This increase can be seen in students' greater confidence during role plays, less doubt when starting conversations, and a more spontaneous ability to interact. The classroom atmosphere has also changed – what initially tended to be passive, slowly became more interactive with more natural two-way discussions and responses. Students are no longer completely dependent on memorized dialogues; they are beginning to develop more flexible communication skills tailored to the service situation. Thus, hospitality-speaking learning becomes more communicative and contextual, reflecting the real communication needs of the tourism and hospitality industry. This study shows that motivation-based learning designs, such as the ARCS model, are highly recommended for teaching speaking, especially in hospitality vocational education. This approach helps lecturers create activities that are interesting, relevant, and actively engage students. In addition, the ARCS model can be implemented flexibly in a variety of vocational institution contexts that emphasize professional communication competencies. For further research, it is recommended to use experimental designs to measure the effectiveness of the model more comparatively, involve a larger sample count to improve the generalization of findings, and integrate the ARCS model with other approaches, such as Willingness to Communicate (WTC), to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the development of hospitality students' speaking skills.

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