The impacts of motivation and task types on L2 oral fluency development in higher education in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: oral fluency, task types, motivation

This study was conducted to investigate the impacts of motivation and task types on the development of L2 oral fluency in higher education in Vietnam. The quantitative method was employed to achieve this goal. The participants were thirteen teachers and thirty second-year students at the university. Questionnaires with close items for students and instructors and semi-structured interview questions for instructors were employed as data collection instruments. The results suggested that teachers consider that a student would be successful with proper motivation and the task success is just being motivated. In addition, the findings reveal that performance is, in general, statistically more fluent in dialogue but also indicate that performances in the two modes are not different. This article is a part of my dissertation project, which examines teachers and students' perspectives on the factors influencing the oral fluency of L2 students in universities in Vietnam.

Introduction

A language is a form of communication that allows people to exchange ideas, information, and feelings with one another. In this respect, English is the language that links everyone from many cultures, beliefs, and countries together. "English is increasingly being used as a medium for interactions among nonnative speakers," Brown and Lee (2015, p. 163). Speaking, believed by Chastain (1988), is "a vital factor in developing each language competence and imparting culture knowledge" (p. 271). Thus, speaking appears to be the most significant of the four language skills in communication (Candilas, 2021; Pabro-Maquidato, 2021; Su et al., 2021; Teh, 2021; Tran, 2021; Zaremba, 2006). Similarly, Kormos and Dénes (2004) indicate that the primary objective of a foreign or second language learner is to communicate and transmit the target language fluently and accurately (Chau, 2021; Teh, 2021). Given the importance of accuracy, more emphasis is placed on fluency in attaining

communicative goals in interactions.

In some senses, fluency in English as a foreign language refers to a single, apparently isolatable aspect of oral skill. Beardsmore (1972) defined "oral fluency is understood to imply a 'communicative competence' requiring an ability to formulate accurate and appropriate utterances of more than one sentence in length" (p.10). This means that oral fluency goes hand in hand with accuracy. On the other hand, according to Richards (2006), fluency is the use of naturally occurring language by a speaker when engaging in and maintaining meaningful communication. Despite limitations in one's verbal competence, this dialogue would be understandable and continuous.

Given that the higher education level is more like to be the final stage of the L2 learning in one's life, particularly in the EFL courses where English language subject is officially learned, the findings of this study hope to highlight the specific factors influencing L2 oral fluency that the L2 learners could have in the process of the learning stage. It attracts many researchers around the world to conduct an investigation (Chau, 2021). Additionally, the results might empirically demonstrate how far learners have been affected by possible factors in learning spoken English.

Literature Review

Motivation in language learning and speaking fluency

Motivation is believed as a property of the learner, but it is also a controversial concept. Also, it has been good evidence to support that L2 motivation could refer to the various purposes, not least of which is part of learning a second language. In broad terms, L2 motivation can be described as any stimulus that constitutes successful second-language speakers by planting in them the seeds of self-confidence and escalating momentum of sustaining the long-term learning process (Dörnyei, Z, 1998; Abda, 2017). Alternatively, Gardner (1985, p.10 cited in Dörnyei, Z, 1998) states that L2 motivation is defined as "the extent to which individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity." Arising out of this, L2 motivation is made up of three elements: motivational intensity, a desire to learn the language, and an attitude toward the process of learning the language. Otherwise, its most universal acceptance is divided into extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Lewis, 2002), which should be conceptualized as contributing to the essential role in stimulating students to fix on their learning process.

According to the logical theory that things are changing in their intrinsic motivation, Heyun (1999) described LOF growth from self-willed motivation based on Levelt's speaking model, Anderson's Adaptive Control of Thought, and de Bot's second language model. The study explored the connection between self-willed motivation and a few other characteristics. Finally, the author stated that self-willed motivation is an original motivation in oral fluency and learning a second language. In addition, Le (2001) added that it is worth considering that "learners' needs vary, depending on external exposure to the target language and personal

motivation" (p.35). In other words, students who are motivated to talk are more effective in increasing their speaking skills, and students who are not motivated are less successful in achieving their speaking skills. As a result, one of the factors affecting students' English speaking skills in the classroom is motivation.

Task types and oral fluency

Regarding task type, according to much recent research, tasks have an essential role in our knowledge of second language performance as well as the effectiveness of education. That way, task types would contain everything needed for sustained second language development (Skehan, Xiaoyue, Qian, & Wang, 2012). Considering the great importance of task types to the learners' speaking performance, Skehan (2009c) offered a different perspective on the impact of interactive tasks on performance, claiming that speaking with an interlocutor may make it more crucial for the speaker to use exact language and avoid making mistakes. In other regards, the involvement of an interlocutor helps to provide more specific information may result in increased fluency and accuracy. Similarly, the study by Bosker et al. (2014) measured fluency in terms of topic. According to their findings, a speaker's ability to talk fluently is influenced by the topic they choose. In fact, they discovered that a more challenging topic encourages people to communicate more eloquently.

In second language acquisition (SLA) research, Dörnyei (2002) proposed that task motivation might not just be a composite of relatively stable trait and state task-related motivation but also a dynamic process called motivational task processing. With the help of this task processing system, L2 learners analyze the provided learning task, perform it, and employ action control mechanisms to help them regulate their performance.

Vesal & Tavakoli (2015) examine how task type affected the characteristics of complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF) in Iranian EFL applicants' oral production in the IELTS Speaking test. According to the results, task type had a significant impact (p 0.05) on the complexity, correctness, and fluency of IELTS applicants' oral production during the speaking test. This research has theoretical and practical consequences in the disciplines of testing, education, and learning.

Neira (2019) utilized a mixed-method approach to investigate how knowledge gap activities affected young EFL learners' oral fluency. The information gap activities used the communicative method and task-based learning. The results show an increase in oral fluency as well as a positive attitude toward the intervention technique.

The influence of classroom-based fluency training on intermediate-level German learners' ability to produce more fluent utterances on a Picture Story description test and a monologue task is investigated by Kopnická and Calgary (2016). The results suggest that training had no impact on learners' fluency and that monologue performance outperformed Picture Story performance. Fluency assessments given by native German speakers were linked to speech rate, filled non-lexical pauses, filled lexical pauses, and repeats. The findings have significance for L2 classroom fluency instruction.

Karpovich, Sheredekina, Krepkaia, and Voronova (2021) looked at how academic achievement in this type of language activity might be improved. By working with monologue speaking activities, this study adds to the problem of first-year students' academic performance in the context of studying a foreign language. To gather and analyze data for the study, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was used. A qualitative content analysis of monologue speaking tasks was included in the study. The study's findings suggest that using monologue speaking activities combined with peer engagement and peer assessment can help first-year students enhance their English skills.

Tavakoli (2016) compares monologic versus dialogic task performance to investigate current models of assessing second language fluency and provides a new view into measuring the interactive features of dialogic performance. The findings reveal that dialogue is more fluent in terms of speed, length of the pause, and repair measures. They also show that the number and position of pauses are not different between the two modes. According to the examination of the dialogues, the interactive components of fluency impact the results of fluency assessments.

Like the previous researchers, Os, Jong, and Bosker (2020) looked at characteristics of turn-taking behavior as part of the fluency construct. They studied whether these aspects influenced perceived fluency evaluations of native and nonnative speech differently. As a result, the findings suggest that acoustic aspects of the dialogue are considered part of fluency.

Research Questions

Studies suggest various tasks focused on fluency improvement, but only a few of them have been tested. Moreover, regarding the problems L2 speakers face in developing their speaking fluency, this article looked into the effects of motivation and task types in increasing English speaking fluency for L2 speakers. Thus, this article is designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the role of the motivation and task types on developing speaking fluency for L2 speakers?

2. How are the motivation and task type factors correlated with developing speaking fluency for L2 speakers?

Methods

Participants

The participants in the study were 30 major English students and 13 English language instructors from Da Nang Foreign Language University. The participation of EFL teachers and students was considered essential to reflect independent, possibly differing, perspectives on the same impact of speaking fluency. These participants were chosen as participants because they are the most directly involved in daily EFL teaching and learning, and hence the

most closely linked to the topics addressed in this study. EFL teachers were invited to participate in the study, and their students were asked to fill out a survey. Among EFL teachers, ten were female, and three males, aged 27 to 55, between 5 and 25 years of teaching experience, were awarded the habilitation required for EFL teachers at the tertiary level in Vietnam.

Design of the Study

The study design is a mixed-methods technique, using two sources of data: surveys and a semi-structured interview. In other words, this methodology involves collecting, analyzing and integrating quantitative and qualitative research.

Data collection & analysis

Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data for this study. Firstly, the closed questionnaires were delivered to thirteen instructors and thirty students to answer research questions: "What are the role of the motivation and task types on developing speaking fluency for L2 speakers?"

To get answers for the second research question, "How are the motivation and task type factors correlated on developing speaking fluency for L2 speakers?" we sent the semi-structured interview to five English language teachers.

This study attempted to examine the impacts of motivation and task types on the development of l2 oral fluency in higher education in Vietnam. The data collected from students through questionnaires were quantitatively examined using frequency counts and percentages. On the other hand, three processes are involved in analyzing the qualitative data gathered during the interview. First, listen to the interview via online recording and write down the thoughts expressed for each question; second, read all statements and categorize each interviewee's responses; third, examine all replies offered for each topic. To summarize, the researcher has carefully studied the data acquired through questionnaires (Appendix 1, 2, 3 and 4) and interviews with respondents to deduce significance in light of the study questions.

Results and discussion

Teachers' attitudes on viewing the students' motivational factors

Table1. Student's motivational factors from teachers' perspectives

Motivational factors	Scales	Teacher's response - Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Strong disagree	2	3.07%
	Disagree	4	6.15%
	Neutral	15	23.07%
	Agree	31	47.69%
	Strong agree	13	20%
Total		65	

Table 1 demonstrates the results of the student motivational factors from the teachers' perspective. Teachers were questioned about their thoughts on what motivates students to speak a second language and how that affects oral speaking. As shown in Table 1 above, for theme 2. 20 percent said they strongly agree, 47.69 percent said they agree, 23.07 percent said they have no opinion, 6.15 percent disagreed, and 3.07 percent severely disagreed. Hence, it is reasonable to conclude that the majority of teachers (47.69 percent) consented to this aspect, which is supported by the literature review. By the same token, this conclusion is consistent with the fact that motivation in the L2 has been found to be important for fluency development (Heyun, 1999; Loukriz, 2013; Dore, 2015; Nzanana, 2016; N. Segalowitz, 2016a. Selvia Lestari (2018) discovered that a student's motivation to study a foreign language has an impact on their speaking fluency. "Has shown that motivational techniques are the correct technique for enhancing learners' motivation for language use and oral classroom participation, which in turn affects learners' oral proficiency," according to (Loukriz, 2013).

In the same way, the evidence suggests that target language learners may be motivated to acquire English to become fluent in speaking. It is likely that the learner must concentrate on cognitive mechanisms and practice widely to finish the oral procedure without delay. Furthermore, students also believe that their teacher's use of motivational strategies to talk is necessary. It also attempts to offer some insight into the significance of the process as seen through the teacher's eyes. Loukriz (2013) noted that developing speaking skills and oral fluency includes several aspects that cover that the students and the teacher are the most critical factors. Modern teaching methods of foreign languages involve the use of different motivational strategies and activities that support such a development.

This result indicates that motivation is one of the most significant elements affecting students' oral fluency. It is far too easy to conclude that someone's ability to complete tasks is attributable solely to their motivation. It is easy to say that if a student is

motivated enough, they will learn a second language. As a result, one characteristic that influences learners' English speaking ability and fluency is motivation. Table 2 shows that teachers' attitudes on viewing the students' task types factors.

Table 2. Task types factors from teachers' perspectives

Task type factors	Scales	Teacher's response - Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Strong disagree	2	3.07%
	Disagree	14	21.53%
	Neutral	34	52.30%
	Agree	12	18.46%
	Strong agree	3	4.61%
Total		65	

Table 2 represents the findings of the teachers' viewpoints on attitudes towards task types of students. Teachers were asked whether task types such as monologue, dialogue, and narrative decrease oral fluency. Only 4.61 percent highly agreed, 18.46 percent agreed, 52.30 percent had no opinion, 52.30 percent disagreed, and 21.53 percent strongly disagreed. With 18.46 percent of people agreeing, it seems that the type of speaking activity likely has little impact on fluency.

Regarding this result, none of the 13 teachers who took part in the study significantly disagreed that the dialogue task is the most challenging. This notion is consistent with Skehan (2009c), who claims that a dialogic task influences performance. While one person has the floor in a conversation, another has more time to think about and analyze what he will produce shortly. To put it another way, he has time to recover, plan, and prepare the suitable ground for the following message, which helps to perform the task much more accessible.

In contrast, only 4.61 percent of the teachers polled agreed that task types contribute to fluent language. This opinion is also following Tavakoli and Foster (2008) and Yahay and Kheirzadeh (2015), who "explained that a monologue task places greater demands on attentional resources than an interactive task, and thus, this demand can reduce fluency." Their findings suggested that the success of oral presentations on improving learners' speaking accuracy and fluency could be attributed to the learners' possibility to repeat the job. "Dialogue is better than monologue," said Professor Hu Zhianglin at the Fourth International Conference on ELT in China in 2004. In brief, if the teacher creates a type of task that is acceptable and appropriate for the learners' language learning levels, the knowledge can be recalled quickly and fluently. Table 3 presents the students' attitudes towards motivational factors.

Table 3. Student's motivational factors from students' perspectives

Motivational factors	Scales	Students' response - Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Strong disagree	11	7.33%
	Disagree	15	10%
	Neutral	37	24.66%
	Agree	45	30%
	Strong agree	42	28%
Total		150	

Table 3 demonstrates the results of the student motivational factors from the students' perspective. Students were questioned about their thoughts on what motivates students to speak a second language and how that affects oral speaking, as shown in Table 3 above, for motivational factors. Twenty-eight percent said they strongly agree, 30 percent said they agree, 24.66 percent said they have no opinion, 10 percent disagreed, and 7.33 percent severely disagreed. Hence, it is reasonable to conclude that the majority of students (30 percent) consented to this aspect, which is supported by the literature review. However, there was a difference between the teachers' and students' opinions on the motivational factors. The figure for students is lower than that of the teachers, at 30% and 47.69% respectively. This conclusion is consistent with the fact that motivation in the L2 has been found to be the third factor for fluency development (Abda, 2017). According to the findings, the main element affecting teaching speaking skills is a lack of exposure, pedagogical factors, and personality factors. Lack of motivation, risk-taking, and self-confidence are all personalities that significantly impact developing speaking skills.

As a result, it can be determined that most students, roughly 30% percent, learn English to speak fluently. For this reason, the literature suggests that target language learners may have a motivation that implies they learn English to achieve speaking fluency. To summarize, the student must focus on cognitive mechanisms and practice extensively to complete the oral process without delay. As noted by N. Ellis (1996). "Although the intention to learn is not always crucial to learning, attention to the material to be learned is." Students with robust and self-willed motivation can focus on target language learning for extended periods and greater accuracy. Just on the opposite, the learner lacks self-willed motivation, and any outside subject can quickly distract his attention. More restructures and qualified procedures are obtained by practicing locking on a specific target language. They improve oral fluency by accelerating up the processing in both formulator and vocal mechanisms. Table 4 presents the students' attitudes towards task types factors.

Table 4: Task type factors from students' perspectives

Task types	Scales	Teacher's response - Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Strong disagree	3	2%
	Disagree	26	17.33%
	Neutral	77	51.33%
	Agree	32	21.33%
	Strong agree	12	8%
Total		150	

Table 4 represents the findings of the students' viewpoints on attitudes towards task types of students. Students were asked whether task types such as monologue, dialogue, and narrative decrease oral fluency. Only 8 percent highly agreed, 21.33 percent agreed, 51.33 percent had no opinion, 17.33 percent disagreed, and 2 percent strongly disagreed. With 51.33 percent of learners having no opinion, it seems that the type of speaking activity likely has little impact on oral fluency.

Only 2% of the students who took part in the study strongly disputed that the dialogue task is the most difficult. This idea is supported by Skehan (2009c), who contends that a dialogic task has an impact on performance. While one person in a conversation gets to the floor, another has more time to consider and study what he will deliver soon. This is also supported by the teachers' comments, with 0 percent of them disagreeing that task kinds are the most challenging challenge when it comes to speaking smoothly.

On the other hand, just 21.33 percent of the students polled agreed that task types help with language fluency. Tavakoli and Foster (2008), Yahay and Kheirzadeh (2015) indicated that a monologue task exerts greater demands on attentional resources than an interactive task, and consequently, this demand can diminish fluency." According to their findings, the efficacy of oral presentations in boosting learners' speaking correctness and fluency could be related to the learners' ability to repeat the task. Professor Hu Zhianglin, speaking at the Fourth International Conference on ELT in China in 2004, observed, "Dialogue is better than a monologue." In brief, if the teacher creates a type of task that is acceptable and appropriate for the learners' language learning levels, the knowledge can be recalled quickly and fluently.

Teachers' responses concerning the relationship between motivation and task type factors

Regarding the link between motivation and task type factors that affect students' oral fluency in the second language, one of the teachers stated the following:

Motivating students to speak in the classroom is a difficult task faced by a number of language teachers around the world. One of the problems that I think affects the students' desire to talk is task type. I can say that when students come

to the university, they do not have basic language knowledge that enables them to communicate in the language. In their high school, they just focus on the grammar to pass the test in the class and the entrance of the examination. They are not fully concentrated on learning each task type for speaking. For example, they know about a monologue and a dialogue but don't learn the strategies to practice these types of speaking. This leads to demotivating their desire to talk in front of the class.

Another teacher commented on the subject, saying, For me, the elements that determine students' willingness to communicate in the language are:

Poor background knowledge, inexperience, and exposure, for example, students do not have the opportunity to speak English outside of class because they are afraid of making mistakes; most students do not believe in themselves; if they had motivation, they would have spoken and used the language more effectively. Another component is English language teachers' continued support for learners; we all, English language teachers, assist students by offering appropriate strategies for teaching speaking as well as relevant tasks for their levels. So, I believe that this is one of the best ways to encourage students to speak up.

In general, one may conclude from the preceding discussion that the mentioned factors have the most significant influence on students' motivation to communicate in a second language: The first is a lack of appropriate teaching tactics regarding speaking task structure. Due to a lack of basic language knowledge, such as poor grammar and vocabulary, the students lack self-confidence. A lack of practice speaking skills may be the cause of a poor background experience. This factor could also be due to a fear of making mistakes since other students would laugh at them if they do, and this fear of being laughed at leads to a lack of self-confidence. Consequently, these factors contribute to a lack of desire, which has an impact on the development of speaking skills and oral fluency.

Discussion

This section provides a discussion based on the research findings. The discussions present the answer to two research questions related to the role of motivation and task and the relationship of motivation and task type factors on developing speaking fluency for L2 speakers.

The first research question sought to examine the motivation and task types on developing speaking fluency for L2 speakers from the perspective of the teachers and students. According to the quantitative analysis, with 47.69 percent and 30 percent agreement of teachers and students on the motivational factors, it seems that this factor

significantly affects speaking fluency. In contrast, the task type factor was lower at 18.46% for teachers and 21.33% for students. This suggests that task type is not important as the motivation factor.

More specifically, participants also stated that their thoughts of motivating factors were linked to teaching strategies to encourage students to speak up. When it comes to increasing speaking skills, particularly oral fluency, motivation perceptions are crucial. Students are enthusiastic about learning English. According to Harmer (2002), motivation is that some form of internal drive that pushes someone to do things to achieve something. The data also show that encouraging students requires various strategies, both within and outside the classroom. This also agrees with the theory of the conversation from the perspective of Vygotsky (1978, p.189). The theory proposes that learning is, by definition, a social phenomenon in which the acquisition of new knowledge is the result of the interaction of people participating in a dialogue, and learning is a dialectical process in which one individual's point of view contrasts with the other in order to reach an agreement. It may be concluded that a student aspires to speak English because lecturers who instruct her in speaking provide support and encouragement. Also, effective teaching methodologies should be teaching speaking, which paves the way to oral fluency.

Regarding the task type factor, the results also indicated that this factor is the second factor in facilitating oral fluency, even though not many students and teachers agree on this aspect. However, according to Ellis (2009), the tasks (interactive vs. monologic; monologue vs. dialogue) affect the L2 performance. More specifically, from the previous research, the numerous associations between motivation and task types suggest that the monologue dialogue task harms fluency, whereas performance is statistically more fluent in dialogue but also indicates that performances in the two modes are not different. Besides, Ellis (2009) also proposed that the task is considered the most difficult because the information is unfamiliar and not clearly structured for the learners. As a result, while a task design element that necessitates the structure and type of activities may contribute to motivation assessments, it should not be overlooked while teaching speaking. More importantly, if there is an apparent effect on the structure of their tasks, learners will produce more fluent language on the structured tasks (Tavakoli & Skehan, 2005; Candilas, 2021). As a result, it is recommended that L2 instruction concentrates on putting students in the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1962). A reasonable conclusion is that task types can help learners speak more fluently, which is evident in fluency's temporal and repair dimensions.

The second research question was to examine if the motivation to speak was linked to speaking tasks. Affective responses had a relatively important role in affecting performance fluency in a task where learners are exposed to comfortable and familiar information and structures through a series of dialogues or monologues and the

narrative. This assignment was rated as the least stressful, and participants thought they completed it nicely. However, results differed significantly from tasks, suggesting that teachers should present a diversity of activities since they are likely to influence L2 fluency and, as a result, speech perception in diverse ways. This confirms by Dörnyei (2002), who indicated that task motivation might not merely be a composite of relatively stable trait and state task-related motivation, but also a dynamic process.

Conclusion

Based on the quantitative findings and illustrated qualitative comments, it proposed that teachers consider that a student would be successful with proper motivation and that task success is due to just being motivated. In some ways, students believe that teachers who do not have enough interest to motivate the students in English classes might provoke low perceptions of motivation among some learners. Language practitioners could also consider task engagement an essential measure to better understand task features that promote speaking fluency. In other words, task motivation is the motivation for performing particular learning tasks and has been related to success in second language learning.

In addition, learners in this research believed that motivation is important when talking about improving speaking skills, specifically in oral fluency. That can support the motivational theory that a learner's intrinsic desire can motivate him to overcome various factors that aid in language development, which has a positive effect on oral fluency as well. Real-life language use, on the other hand, rarely caters to what learners can master today. To make progress in learners' language development, they must be challenged, scaffolded, and praised for their efforts to continue taking risks.

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Biodata

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for teachers

No	Motivational factors
2	You believe learners are motivated to speak English fluently.
4	Learners believe their teacher implement motivational strategies to make them talk.
6	You believe motivation is important when talking about enhancing the speaking skill, specifically in the oral fluency.
8	Learners believe motivation in the English language classes is good for them.
10	Learners believe teachers do not have enough interest to motivate the students in English classes.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for teachers

No	Task type factors
12	You believe the most difficult task is a monologue.
14	You believe the most difficult task is a dialogue.
18	You believe the most difficult task is a narrative.
22	You believe the most difficult task is not a monologue.
26	You believe the most difficult task is not a dialogue.

Appendix 3: Questionnaire for students

No	Motivational factors
2	You believe you are motivated to speak English fluently.
4	You believe your teacher implement motivational strategies to make you talk
6	You believe that motivation is important when talking about improving the speaking skill, specifically in the oral fluency.
8	You believe motivation in the English language classes is good for the students.
10	You believe teachers do not have enough interest to motivate the students in English classes.

Appendix 4: Questionnaire for students

No	Task type factors
12	You believe the most difficult task is a monologue.
14	You believe the most difficult task is a dialogue.
18	You believe the most difficult task is a narrative.
22	You believe the most difficult task is not a monologue.
26	You believe the most difficult task is not a dialogue.