International Journal of English Language, Literature in Humanities

Indexed, Peer Reviewed (Refereed) Journal

UGC Approved Journal

T. Akki Raju,

Research Scholar (Ph. D),

Dept. of English,

Acharya Nagarjuna Univ.

Prof. K. Ratna Shiela Mani,

 Dept. of English,

Acharya Nagarjuna Univ.,

Guntur.

Task Repetition to Improve Fluency and Accuracy: A Case Study

Abstract

The paper is an attempt to study the impact of task repetition on the spoken fluency and accuracy of Telugu medium I year graduation students from a Govt. Degree College in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. Task repetition is one of the focused variables in Task-Based Language Teaching. The previous research shows both positive and zero impact of task repetition on the learners' spoken performance. The sample consists of 24 students. The impact was studied with the help of Assessment Rubric and *T*-test. The findings show the positive impact of task repetition in improving the learners' fluency and accuracy. In comparison, accuracy is more improved than fluency.

(Key words: task repetition, variable, impact, fluency, accuracy)

***

Introduction

Task-Based Instruction is centered round 'functional tasks' that engage learners primarily in meaning exchange and language use for real-world purposes. As Nunan says, TBLT is characterized by the following features:

- Emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.

- Introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.

- Provision of opportunities for learners to focus both on language and on learning.

- Enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.

- Attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom (279).

Task-Based teaching is acclaimed all over the world today for its fruitful results in an ESL classroom.

Context of the Study

Learners in general academic English class pay little attention to learn English language skills, particularly speaking skills. Though they have a latent desire to speak, they unknowingly develop a lingering fear to speak. This fear and lack of initiation may be handled, applying task-based approach to teach English. Tasks are by nature motivational to learners who can be easily drawn into a comfortable zone wherein they are tempted to make attempts. Groomed properly by an English teacher, the learner comes forward to make sincere efforts. The two requirements for influencing such learners in the Indian English classrooms are motivation and inspiration. The former is given by a suitably-conceived and duly-designed task; and the latter is provided by an English teacher who feels concerned for the betterment of the learners in the acquisition of language skills.

Task repetition is one of the important variables focused in action research on Task-Based Teaching. It provides confidence and clarity to the learner who is set to repeat the task already performed by himself/herself. Hence, researchers have explored the effect of task

repetition on L2 learners' speaking performance in different academic contexts in terms of fluency, accuracy and complexity.

Bygate studied the "Effects of Task Repetition on the Structure and Control of Oral Language" in 2002 by conducting action research on a sample of 84 overseas students at the University of Reading. He compared the performance of the learners in a repeated task with that of those in a new task and noticed that task repetition caused a number of changes in the learners' performance. They displayed greater tendency to self-correct and to increase fluency too.

Hawkes (2012) displayed the benefits of task repetition in post-task phase, whereas Ahmadian (2013) showed the increased impact of task repetition on L2 learners who have working memory capacity. In a comparative study, Kim and Tracy-Ventura (2013) identified the effect of content repetition on the use of lexical features and the influence of procedural repetition on syntactic complexity. Kim's experiment (2013) recognized the impact of procedural repetition on enhancing language-related episodes. Through a comparative study on the effects of task repetition and task sequencing, Ho (2017) reiterated the positive impact of task repetition compared with task sequencing on improving learners' fluency, accuracy, and complexity.

In line with the previous researchers, an attempt was made here to study the impact of task repetition on the speaking performance of graduating students from Telugu medium background.

Methodology

Sample

The sample for the study consists of 24 ESL learners who are pursuing I year graduation in the regional (Telugu) medium at a Govt. Degree College where the researcher is presently working, in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. All the learners are from the same linguistic background (i.e., Telugu). Most of them belong to villages and backward communities.

Objectives

- To verify the impact of task repetition on the speaking performance of I year under-graduate students;

- To encourage learners to self-correct and improve their speaking skill; and

- To make learners understand the benefits of task repetition.

Hypothesis H$_0$

The following null hypothesis is formed to verify the impact of task repetition on improving the learners' spoken fluency and accuracy in accomplishing the given task.

- There is no significant improvement from first task to repeated task in terms of the learners' spoken fluency and accuracy.

Procedure

A task is like a sport for the inactive learners whose spark of interest can be ignited with its help. A Self-Introduction Task was performed by the students while it was audio-recorded; and the audio clippings were played back to the students in the next class; the learners were left to judge themselves and self-correct to improve themselves in terms of fluency and accuracy. With a gap of two days, the same students were asked to perform the same task so as to test the effect of task repetition on their performance.

Task Design

Task type: *Self-Introduction*

Arrangement: *Individual Task*

Target Skill: *Speaking*

Approach: *Integrated Approach*

Time: *45+45+45 minutes*

No. of learners: *24*

Material required: *Rough Sheets for preparation*

The learners were given instructions on how to proceed with the task: they come to the stage one by one and introduce themselves to the class, focusing on personal and educational details. A period of 45 minutes is allotted for the first performance. Another period of 45 minutes is used for playing back the audio recordings of the learners' first performance. For the repeated performance, a period of 45 minutes is arranged. Willis's task cycle is followed here. Pre-task includes receiving instructions, preparation on rough sheets, seeking clarifications etc. Task cycle covers the actual performance of the task by the learners. In the Post-task, the teacher remarks on the learners' performance, focusing on language aspects. For the accomplishment of the task twice, the same division of time and work is used (i.e., pre-task for 10 minutes, task cycle for 30 minutes, and post task for 5 minutes).

Research Tools

The research tools used for the study are **T-test** and **Assessment Rubric**. In differential analysis, a *T-test* is used where the sample size is below 30. As the sample size for the present study is 24, *T-test* is employed for statistical analysis.

An assessment rubric was designed by the researcher with two criteria: fluency and accuracy with 5 marks allotted for each. The performance of all the sample students were

assessed and tabulated for both first task and repeated task. Later, the differential analysis was carried out, using *T-test* to find out the effect of task repetition on second performance.

Content Analysis

The speaking performance of the learners in both the first task and the repeated task is evaluated and the quantified performance details are provided in Table 1. The criterion-wise scores along with the task-wise scores, showing overall difference between the two performances are also given.

Table 1

Learners' Scores Criterion-wise and Task-wise

Sl. No.	Names of Learners	Gender	First Task			Repeated Task		
			Fluency	Accuracy	Total	Fluency	Accuracy	Total
1	Ch. Neelima	F	3	3	6	4	1	5
2	E. Gowthami	F	3	2	5	3	4	7
3	GVRN. Krishna	M	3	1	4	3	1	4
4	K. Jagadeswari	F	2	3	5	3	3	6
5	M. Avinash	M	2	2	4	3	3	6
6	Sk. Nazma	F	3	3	6	3	4	7
7	R. Suvarna Raju	M	3	3	6	2	3	5
8	J. Kavya	F	3	2	5	4	4	8
9	K. S. Ashok	M	3	1	4	4	4	8
10	K. Rajakumari	F	2	2	4	3	4	7

11	N. Puja	F	3	2	5	5	5	10
12	K. Nageswari	F	3	3	6	3	4	7
13	L. Durga Prasad	M	3	1	4	2	4	6
14	P. Simhachalam	M	3	2	5	3	3	6
15	R. Saikiran	M	4	1	5	4	1	5
16	Sk. Jareena	F	3	2	5	4	3	7
17	R. Navya Sai	F	3	1	4	3	3	6
18	N. Naga Divya	F	2	2	4	2	3	5
19	S. Kavya	F	3	2	5	2	2	4
20	B. Rajesh	M	3	1	4	3	2	5
21	T. Sanjana	F	4	2	6	4	4	8
22	K. Rajkumar	M	2	3	5	2	3	5
23	G. Rajesh Babu	M	3	2	5	4	3	7
24	E. Johnson	M	3	3	6	4	3	7
Mean			**2.88**	**2.04**	**4.92**	**3.21**	**3.08**	**6.29**
S.D.			**0.54**	**0.75**	**0.78**	**0.83**	**1.06**	**1.43**

Source: Primary Data

An analysis of the learners' speaking performance shows that most of them improved their scores in the repeated task, displaying the impact of task repetition on their performance. Out of 24, only 3 learners obtained lower scores in comparison with their first performance while there are 3 learners who displayed no change in their scores.
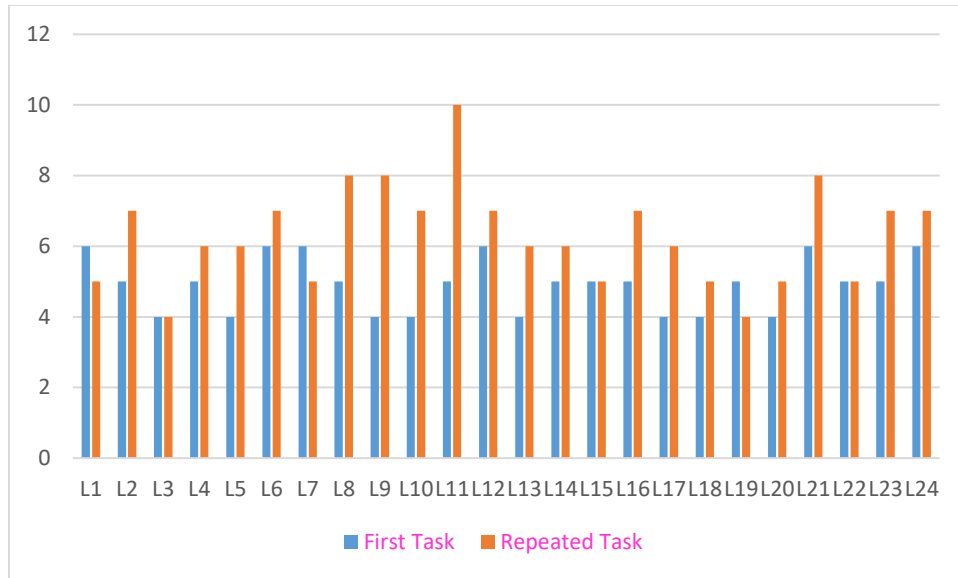
Figure 1. **Comparison of Learners' Performance in Two Tasks**

The impact of task repetition is obvious with 18 learners improving their scores, only 3 learners displaying negative impact and 3 more showing no change in their scores. The three-fold impact is graphically presented in Figure 2.
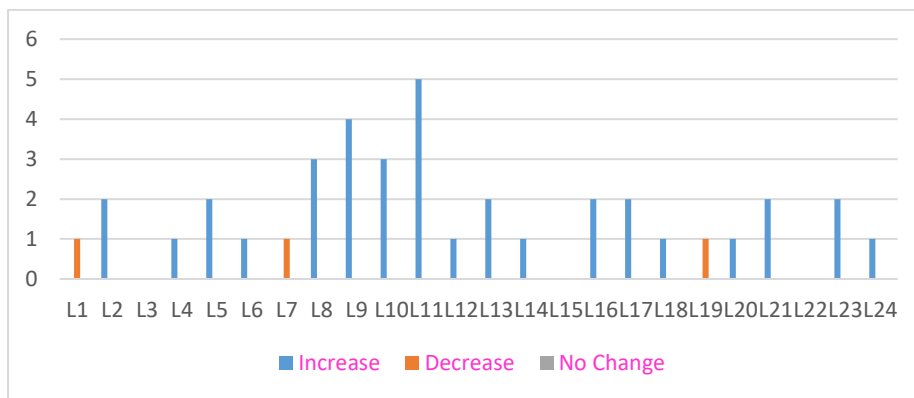

Figure 2. **Impact of Task Repetition**

The time range of the learners' performance is from 20 seconds to 1 minute in the first attempt, whereas in the repeated attempt, it ranges from 35 second to 1.25 minutes. The impact of task repetition on the performance duration is marginal. However, it is noticed that the

learners exhibited more confidence and clarity in the repeated task. On the whole, the following

points were observed to have affected the learners' fluency and accuracy.

Fluency

- Frequent repetition

- Hesitation and fear

- Memorized presentation

- Pronunciation with noticeable MTI

- Long pauses

- Missing natural flow

Accuracy

- Lack of Subject and verb agreement

- Use of passive verb in place of active verb

- Missing the use of articles

- Ignoring prepositions at required places

- Missing the use of 'be' forms

Statistical Analysis

The *t* value calculated is compared with the *t* value given in the *t*-table at the appropriate

degree of freedom and at required level of significance. When the *t* value calculated is greater

than or equal to the *t* table value, the difference between the two means is considered significant

at the level of significance which is 0.05.

Table 2

Statistical Analysis of Performance in two Tasks

Sl.	Criteria	N			Comparison	Remarks

No.			First Task		Repeated Task		of calculated *t* value with *t* table value	
			M	S.D.	M	S.D.		
1	*Fluency*	24	2.88	0.54	3.21	0.83	2.144≥2.069	Significant
2.	*Accuracy*	24	2.04	0.75	3.08	1.06	4.263≥2.069	Significant
3.	*Overall performance*	24	4.92	0.78	6.29	1.43	4.496≥2.069	Significant

Interpretation of Results

From the paired *t*-test analysis of the data in Table 1, it is proved that the difference between the scores of the learners in the two tasks in relation to the criteria *fluency* and *accuracy*, and overall performance is statistically significant. The learners improved their fluency and accuracy in the repeated task, displaying the positive impact of task repetition. Therefore, the Null Hypothesis H_0 that there is no significant improvement from first task to repeated task in terms of the learners' spoken fluency and accuracy is rejected, and the Alternative Hypothesis H_1 is accepted.

Findings and Conclusion

The findings of the study are consistent with the previous studies, showing that task repetition has positive impact on Telugu medium I year graduation students' spoken fluency and accuracy because the means of the repeated task in fluency, accuracy and overall performance – 3.21, 3.08 and 6.29 respectively – are greater than the means of the first task – 2.88, 2.04 and 4.92. Between fluency and accuracy, the latter received more positive impact than the former. Further, this difference in performance is proved statistically significant. Hence, English teachers can apply task repetition technique to improve students' spoken performance.

***

Works Cited

Ahmadian, M. J. "Working Memory and Task Repetition in Second Language Oral Production."
Asian Journal of English Language Teaching 23.Special issue (2013): 37-55.
<muse.jhu.edu/article/537825>.

Bygate, Martin. "Effects of Task Repetition on the Structure and Control of Oral Language."
Researching Pedagogic Tasks. Second Language Learning Teaching and Testing. Ed. P.
Skehan, M. Swain & M. Bygate. London: Longman, 2002. 23-49.

Hawkes, Martin L. "Using task repetition to direct learner attention and focus on form." *ELT
Journal* 66.3 (2012): 327-336.

Ho, Richard Cheng Ching. "Comparison of Task Repetition and Task Sequencing in Terms of
Their Effects on L2 Students' Oral Performance." *International Journal of Instruction*
10.1 (2017): 307-322. <www.e-iji.net/dosyalar/iji_2017_1_19.pdf>.

Kim, Y, and Tracy-Ventura, N. "The role of task repetition in L2 performance development:
What needs to be repeated during task-based interaction?" *System* 41.3 (2013): 829-840.

Kim, Y. "Promoting attention to form through task repitition in a Korean EFL context." *Second
Language Interaction in Diverse Educational Contexts*. Ed. K. McDonough and A.
Mackey. Vol. 34. John Benjamins, 2013. 3-24.

Nunan, Davd. "Communicative Tasks and the Language Curriculum." *Tesol Quarterly* 25.2
(1991): 279-295.