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Edgar Emmanuell Garcia-Ponce, Departamento de Lenguas, Universidad de Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico, ee.garcia@ugto.mx

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Effects of Task Characteristics on Learners' Fluency, Complexity and Accuracy during EFL Interactions: Implications for Speaking Practice

Edgar Emmanuell Garcia-Ponce [1]

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ABSTRACT

Following the claim that tasks impact qualitatively and quantitatively on learner talk, a growing body of research has explored the effects of tasks on learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy (i.e., oral performance). However, this research has been mostly conducted in experimental and second language settings, leaving considerably unexplored the effects of tasks on oral performance in EFL classrooms. In response to this, the present study examined learners' oral performance during speaking practice in EFL classrooms. In exploring uncontrolled teacher- and learner-led speaking practice at three proficiency levels, the findings indicated that fluency can be accompanied by either complexity or accuracy, but not all three dimensions. These findings raise intriguing questions as to the effectiveness of speaking practice to promote oral performance and thus competence. In an attempt to enhance these interactions, the study suggests some pedagogical implications involving interactional behaviour, post-tasks, and task manipulation which may promote the three dimensions.

The present study aims to determine the extent to which the characteristics of tasks have an impact on learners' oral performance, indicated by fluency, complexity and accuracy levels, during interactions in which English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers and learners practise speaking in a university in Mexico. The motivation for this study firstly lies in empirical research which has demonstrated that task characteristics significantly shape learners' oral performance. Secondly, a search of the literature revealed few studies which investigated learners' oral performance in foreign language classrooms, and no studies conducted in Mexico. Therefore, this study aims to make a major contribution to language educational

[1] Departamento de Lenguas, Universidad de Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico, ee.garcia@ugto.mx

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research by demonstrating how learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy are dependent on task characteristics during EFL classroom interactions.

The article begins by discussing research into learners' oral performance and attentional resources during task performance. After describing the study, participants, data collection, processing and analysis, it then presents and discusses the findings into learners' oral performance during teacher- (TLIs) and learner-led (LLIs) interactions at basic, intermediate and advanced levels. It concludes by suggesting some pedagogical implications which may be beneficial for promoting learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy during speaking practice.

2. Learners' Oral Performance During Task Performance

Because of a recent advocacy towards learner-centred teaching approaches, learners have been given a more agentive role in promoting language development. This reconceptualised role has required them to develop an awareness of the importance of their participation, affordances and L2 learning opportunities. When learners participate, they make a significant contribution to language development which, according to Foster and Ohta (2005) and Skehan (2009), is manifested by an increase of:

1. *Fluency*, i.e., the capacity and production of language in real time without pausing or hesitation (Ellis, 2012). According to Foster and Skehan (1996), fluency reflects the primacy of meaning.
2. *Complexity*, i.e., learners' preparedness to use more elaborate language, as well as a wide range of syntactic patterning (Ellis, 2012). High levels of complexity are commonly associated with forms closer to the cutting edge of interlanguage development (Foster & Skehan, 1996).
   Accuracy, i.e., "learners' belief in norms, and performance which is native-like through its rule-governed nature" (Skehan, 1996, p.46). In other words, how well learners produce the target language relation to its rule system.

However, learner participation has been found to be influenced by instructional factors (see Ellis, 2012). For example, tasks, as instructional materials, shape learner participation and talk as to its quantity and quality since their design and methodological aspects determine learners' cognitive demands and processes needed in order to perform the tasks, having an impact on learners' oral performance (Walsh, 2002). This has been recently corroborated by an emerging body of research (Foster & Skehan, 1996, 2013; Larsen-Freeman, 2009; Skehan, 1998, 2003, 2009), which has found that learners' attentional resources during task performance are limited for attending to fluency, complexity and accuracy simultaneously. That is, learners attending to one dimension might cause lower performance in the other two (Skehan, 2003, 2009). These findings are consistent with the Trade-off Hypothesis (Skehan, 2009), which argues that there is a tension between form (complexity and accuracy) and meaning (related to fluency) in which, "committing to one area, other thing being equal, might cause lower performance in others" (Skehan, 2003, p. 511). However, as raised by Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki and Kim (1998), these trade-off effects may not apply to all language classrooms since learners' oral performance is conditioned by the linguistic teaching and learning environment, implying that tasks should be performed and studied in relation to the context where interactions are carried out.

Despite the importance attributed to tasks as instructional materials that have an impact on learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy, previous published studies on learners' oral performance has been conducted in second language classrooms (e.g., Foster & Skehan, 1996; Skehan, 1998; 2003; 2009; Skehan & Foster, 1997a, 1997b, 2001), leaving considerably unexplored learners' oral performance in foreign language classrooms. Therefore, drawing on data collected from recorded classroom interactions, this study aims to develop a qualitative understanding of learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy

during interactions in which teachers and learners carry out speaking practice in EFL classrooms, as suggested in the research questions (RQs) below.

> RQ1 How accurate, fluent and complex are learners' contributions in teacher-led and learner-led classroom interactions, and across different activity types and proficiency levels?
> RQ2 To what extent do the characteristics of interactions and tasks have an impact on the learners' fluency, complexity, and accuracy?
> RQ3 What are the implications for designing more effective classroom interactions during which learners' oral performance is promoted?

In attaining the above, the study aims to provide teachers and learners with context-sensitive pedagogical implications which may assist them in promoting the three dimensions during TLIs and LLIs for speaking practice.

3. The Study

The nature of this study is twofold. It is firstly exploratory and naturalistic since the primary aim of the study is not to test hypotheses, but to explore and interpret the extent to which the tasks that are commonly performed in this EFL context impact on the learners' oral performance. Secondly, it is a qualitative study. It is difficult to define qualitative research since it could mean a variety of things for a variety of people. For the purpose of this study, we adopt Denzin and Lincoln's (2000) definition of qualitative research as investigations that are multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. The rationale that lies behind this twofold nature is that our experience as language teachers and researchers has enabled us to realize that experimental and quantitative views of the research that has investigated oral performance do not always show an accurate picture of what is really happening in the language classroom. Instead, the exploratory, naturalistic and qualitative approach adopted in this study can be more useful for understanding better how tasks impact on learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy in these EFL classrooms.

The study is part of larger research project which was conducted to investigate several aspects of interactions between EFL teachers and learners in a university in Mexico. The explorations of the classroom interactions were conducted in three English courses: basic, intermediate, and advanced levels. Courses at basic and intermediate levels involve six hours of English study per week, where three hours are centred on learning the language form (theory) and the other three on practising the language. In English courses at advanced levels, learners study the language form for two hours per week, and practise the language for three hours per week. According to the curriculum (UAEM, 2010), the argument that lies behind the decision to reduce the number of hours after semester VI (Year 3) is that learners will study the language independently as part of a self-learning programme encouraged by the university (UAEM, 2010).

3.1. The Participants

In total, 17 at the basic level (5 males and 12 females), 26 at the intermediate level (2 males and 24 females), and 20 at the advanced level (3 males and 17 females) participated. They were originally from Mexico, their age ranged from 18-24 years old, and shared Spanish as an L1. The majority of the learners had educational backgrounds from state schools where exposure to the language is normally 5 hours per week. Other learners, though not many, came from private schools where exposure to English ranges from 15 to 20 hours per week. Three female teachers participated, were originally from Mexico, and spoke Spanish as a first language.

3.2. Data Collection and Processing

The recorded interactions were carried out in two sessions of 100 minutes approximately at each proficiency level. In line with the suggestion that research should be conducted in undisturbed and intact classrooms (Foster, 1998; Kumaravadivelu, 2001), the teachers' teaching style, structure and length of the instructions, tasks, number of learners were not modified during the data collection. In total, 600 minutes of classroom interactions were recorded, and transcribed in their entirety.

For analysis purposes, the transcribed data were segmented into teacher-led interactions (TLIs), defined as discussions led by teachers which serve the purpose of practising speaking, and learner-led interactions (LLIs), described as interactional discourse constructed by learners in pairs or, in a few instances, in trios to practise speaking. Some of these interactions were found to follow Bygate, Skehan and Swain's (2001) definition of tasks, i.e., "activities which require learners to use language, with emphasis on *meaning*, to attain an objective" (p. 11). However, due to the fact that no classroom variable was controlled, it was also found that other interactions at the three proficiency levels were focused on *form*, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Focus of interactions at the three proficiency levels

	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
Meaning	5	9	6
	(2 TLIs, 3 LLIs)	(3 TLIs, 6 LLIs)	(6 LLIs)
Form	6	1	2
	(3 TLIs, 3 LLIs)	(1 TLI)	(2 TLIs)

Therefore, interactions requiring learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective were classified as following a focus on *meaning*, whereas interactions during which learners practised specific (grammar or vocabulary) forms were classified as following a focus on *form*. Moreover, due to the fact that no classroom variable was controlled, the interactions were found to serve different purposes, requiring learners to:

- practise vocabulary (TLIs 2-4 and LLIs 4-6 at the basic level; TLI 1 at the intermediate level; TLIs 1 and 2 at the advanced level)
- negotiate choices and defend an opinion (LLIs 4-6 at the intermediate level; LLIs 1-3 at the advanced level)
- describe pictures (TLI 4 and LLI 1 at the basic level)
- discuss personal information (TLI 5 and LLI 2 at the basic level; 6 at the advanced level)
- talk about experiences, opinions, and perceptions (TLIs 2-4 and LLIs 1-3 at the intermediate level; LLIs 4 and 5 at the advanced level)

3.3. Data Analysis

The learners' oral performance in this study was explored through metrics which index fluency, complexity, and accuracy. The following tables describe these metrics, starting with the fluency measures:

Table 2.
Measures for fluency levels

Measure	Calculation

Mean Turn Length (MLT)	Calculated by counting the number of learners' words, and dividing them by the learners' total number of turns.
Words per AS-unit	Calculated by counting the total number of words in learners' AS-units per the total number of learners' AS-units.
Words per clause	Calculated by counting the total number of words in the learners' clauses per the total number of learners' clauses (either main, subordinated or coordinated).

Consistent with Wolfe-Quintero et al. (1998), the above length-based measures were included as indicative of fluency since the number of words per unit (turn, clause, AS-unit) was found to index the learners' ability to construct the length of their utterances in an articulate way during speaking practice.

The learners' complexity was indexed by clausal complexification, subordination and coordination which are commonly associated with the idea that "more (complexity) means better" (Foster, Tonkyn & Wigglesworth, 2000, p. 355). The following table shows the complexity-based metrics included in this study:

Table 3.
Measures for complexity levels

Measure	Calculation
Clauses per AS-units (Phrasal elaboration)	Calculated by the total number of learners' full clauses per the total number of learners' AS-units.
Dependent clauses per total clauses (Subordination)	Calculated by adding up the total number of subordinate clauses in learner talk per the total number of clauses (independent and dependent) (Norris & Ortega, 2009).
Coordination Index (Coordination)	Calculated by dividing the number of learners' coordinated clauses per the total number of learners' coordinated and subordinated clauses.

The Coordination Index, proposed by Bardovi-Harlig (1992), was included following Norris and Ortega's (2009) recommendation that learner talk at basic proficiency levels, which was the level of the basic learners in this study, should be measured in terms of coordination since this metric is predictive of and sensitive to determining the amount of clausal complexity achieved at early stages of language learning.

Prior to analysing the learners' accuracy, I needed to establish what constituted an error. The following criteria were then coded for identifying and counting errors in order to measure the learners' levels of accuracy:

- Errors in word selection
- Errors in morphology
- Errors in syntax
- Errors in pronunciation
- False starts, hesitations and self-corrections were excluded

After identifying and counting the learners' errors, two metrics were used to determine the learners' accuracy levels, as shown below. These two measures have been widely used as holistic measures of accuracy (Skehan & Foster, 1999).

Table 4.
Measures for accuracy levels

Measure	Calculation
Error-free clauses	Calculated by identifying the number of learners' error-free clauses, divided by the total number of clauses produced by learners, and multiplying the result by 100.
Errors per 100 words	Calculated by counting the total number of learners' errors in the oral interaction, divided by the number of words produced by learners, and multiplying the result by 100.

4. Findings

In order to address RQ1 (i.e., how accurate, fluent and complex are learners' contributions in teacher-led and learner-led classroom interactions, and across different activity types and proficiency levels?) and RQ2 (i.e., to what extent do the characteristics of interactions and tasks have an impact on the learners' fluency, complexity, and accuracy?), this section discusses the results of learners' oral performance with the aim of understanding the extent to which learners' fluency (Section 4.1), complexity (Section 4.2) and accuracy (Section 4.3) were benefitted during classroom interactions at the three proficiency levels. Overall, the results indicate that the kind (TLI or LLI) and focus (meaning or form) of the interactions and other task characteristics had an impact on learners' oral performance at the three proficiency levels. Specifically, the results show there was a tension between complexity and accuracy during speaking practice across proficiency levels, compromising one of these two dimensions.

4.1. Fluency

The following two tables summarise the learners' fluency levels in the TLIs and LLIs at the basic level.

Table 5.
Learners' fluency levels in the TLIs (basic level)

Length	1 min 24 s	5 min 20 s	7 min 20 s	5 min 13 s	2 min 45 s	
Focus	Meaning	Form	Form	Form	Meaning	
Kind	TLI 1	TLI 2	TLI 3	TLI 4	TLI 5	Average
MLT	8.5	3.5	4.2	4.1	6.3	5.32
Words per AS-unit	8.1	3.7	4.2	4.1	5.8	5.18
Words per clause	6.0	5.0	4.4	4.5	6.3	5.24

Note. TLI=Teacher-Led interaction; MLT=Mean Length of Turn.

As shown in Table 5, the results of the three metrics vary widely across the different TLIs. However, a dominant pattern across the measures is that the meaning-focused TLIs involved learners generating more words, indicating greater fluency than in the form-focused interactions (for example, an

MLT of 8.5 in TLI 1 and 6.3 in TLI 5 compared to a range of MLT of 3.5 to 4.2 in TLIs 2-4). This pattern can also be seen in Table 6.

Table 6.
Learners' fluency levels in the LLIs (basic level)

Length	3 min 20 s	5 min 47 s	2 min 53 s	9 min 03 s	9 min 03 s	9 min 03 s	
Focus	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Form	Form	Form	
Kind	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
MLT	4.0	4.7	7.6	5.1	3.2	4.9	4.91
Words per AS-unit	3.3	2.8	4.4	4.5	4.2	3.9	3.85
Words per clause	4.1	6.2	6.3	5.4	5.7	6.1	5.63

Note. LLI=learner-led interaction; MLT=Mean Length of Turn.

Again, Table 6 shows that all three measures vary significantly across the different LLIs. However, as in the TLIs, the dominant pattern in the three measures is that the meaning-focused LLIs motivated a higher number of learners' words, indicating greater fluency than in some form-focused LLIs (for example, a range of MLT of 4.0 to 7.6 in the meaning-focused LLIs 1-3 compared to a range of MLT of 3.2 to 5.1 in the form-focused LLIs 4-6). In comparing the learners' fluency levels in the TLIs and LLIs, the averages are also varied, indicating a trend of higher fluency levels in the TLIs than in the LLIs. The varied figures at the basic level can be explained by the focus of the TLIs and LLIs on either meaning or form. In the form-focused interactions, the tasks were seen to require learners to drill ready-made phrases to provide suggestions, which increased the number of words, AS-units and clauses and in turn influenced the results. However, the learners in these interactions were not observed to produce freer and more fluent utterances as in the meaning-focused interactions since they needed to display knowledge of structures that were expected by the teacher.

As at the basic level, the intermediate learners' turns also involved greater fluency in the meaning-focused than in a form-focused TLIs and LLIs, as detailed in the following two tables below.

Table 7.
Learners' fluency levels in the TLIs (intermediate level Table 5

Length	6 min 16 s	7 min 20 s	12 min 55 s	5 min 21 s	
Focus	Form	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	
Kind	TLI 1	TLI 2	TLI 3	TLI 4	Average
MLT	3.6	9.6	9.1	15	9.32
Words per AS-unit	3.3	6.7	7.8	9.1	6.72
Words per clause	6.4	6.1	7.1	6.4	6.5

Note. TLI=Teacher-Led interaction; MLT=Mean Length of Turn.

As at the basic level, Table 7 shows that the three metrics vary widely across the four TLIs. However, a pattern of higher fluency levels is evident in the meaning-focused TLIs 2-4 than in the form-focused TLI 1. In comparing the basic and intermediate TLIs, it is apparent that the intermediate learners produced more fluent turns than the basic learners. In the case of the LLIs, all the interactions were found to be focused on meaning, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8.
Learners' fluency levels in the LLIs (intermediate level)

Length	8 min 31 s	8 min 31 s	8 min 31 s	13 min 02 s	13 min 02 s	13 min 02 s

Focus	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	
Kind	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
MLT	18.4	18.2	17.5	31.7	21.2	16.6	20.6
Words per AS-unit	6.5	8.0	7.7	8.2	8.1	7.3	7.63
Words per clause	7.3	7.4	6.1	7.5	7.0	6.6	6.98

Note. LLI=learner-led interaction; MLT=Mean Length of Turn.

As in the TLIs, Table 8 shows that the metrics vary widely across the six LLIs. In comparing the learners' fluency levels in the TLIs and LLIs at the intermediate level, the averages of the three measures indicate that the learners' fluency levels were considerably higher in the LLIs than in the TLIs. These figures contrast with the basic learners' fluency levels which showed a trend of higher fluency levels in the TLIs than in the LLIs. Across proficiency levels, the intermediate LLIs whose task characteristics required the learners to discuss, negotiate choices and reach agreements show the highest fluency levels. As we shall see, these task characteristics (in the six intermediate LLIs and advanced LLIs 1-3) were seen to motivate not only high fluency levels, but also complexity levels.

A similar pattern of greater fluency in the LLIs than in the TLIs was found at the advanced level whose results are summarised in the two tables below:

Table 9.
Learners' fluency levels in the TLIs (advanced level)

Length	1 min 50 s	5 min 40 s	
Focus	Form	Form	
Kind	TLI 1	TLI 2	Average
MLT	4.6	3.6	4.1
Words per AS-unit	4.6	3.6	4.1
Words per clause	4.7	4.7	4.7

Note. TLI=Teacher-Led interaction; MLT=Mean Length of Turn.

As shown in Table 9, in these two TLIs, the advanced learners produced less fluent utterances than the learners in the basic and intermediates TLIs, suggesting that the advanced TLIs, during which tasks required learners to define verbs, did not promote the learners' fluency. However, a different pattern is shown in the following table:

Table 10.
Learners' fluency levels in the LLIs (advanced level)

Length	11 min 42 s	11 min 42 s	11 min 42 s	6 min 20 s	6 min 20 s	6 min 20 s	
Focus	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	
Kind	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
MLT	21.5	15.3	13.3	17.2	6.6	8.8	13.78
Words per AS-unit	8.5	7.7	6.6	5.3	4.6	5.6	6.38
Words per clause	6.2	6.4	6.3	5.2	5.1	6.2	5.9

Note. LLI=learner-led interaction; MLT=Mean Length of Turn.

The results indicate that the three metrics vary considerably. However, it is apparent that the learners' fluency levels were higher than in the two form-focused TLIs. As at the intermediate level, LLIs 1-3, which required the learners to consider new information, evaluate it, and then defend an opinion,

motivated higher fluency levels than LLIs 4-6. In comparing the figures of the six advanced LLIs with the other two proficiency levels, it can be seen that the advanced LLIs motivated higher fluency levels than the basic LLIs. However, the intermediate learners' fluency levels in the LLIs proved superior to the advanced learners' fluency levels. It is possible that the meaning-focused LLIs at the intermediate level, following task characteristics which required the learners to discuss, negotiate choices and reach agreements had an impact on the highest fluency levels across the data.

So far, we have seen that the learners' fluency levels in the TLIs and LLIs across proficiency levels were varied. However, a pattern found in the figures was that the meaning-focused interactions tended to raise the learners' fluency levels. In the case of the form-focused interactions, learners' turns were constructed with fewer words, indicating lower fluency levels than the meaning-focused interactions. At the intermediate and advanced levels, the learners' fluency levels were higher in the LLIs than in the TLIs, suggesting that the meaning-focused LLIs provided learners with opportunities to produce more fluent utterances than the TLIs. Interestingly, the six intermediate LLIs and advanced LLIs 1-3, whose task characteristics encouraged learners to consider new information, evaluate it, and then defend an opinion, appeared to raise fluency levels even higher than other meaning-focused interactions across the data.

4.2. Complexity

Similarly to the learners' fluency, the complexity levels appeared to be influenced by the focus (meaning or form) and kind (TLI or LLI) of the interactions and other task characteristics, as discussed below. The following two tables outline the learners' complexity levels at the basic level:

Table 11.
Learners' complexity levels in the TLIs (basic level)

Length	1 min 24 s	5 min 20 s	7 min 20 s	5 min 13 s	2 min 45 s	
Focus	Meaning	Form	Form	Form	Meaning	
Kind	TLI 1	TLI 2	TLI 3	TLI 4	TLI 5	Average
Clauses per AS-unit	1.3	0.5	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.84
DC per TC	0.5	0	0.1	0.03	0.2	0.16
Coordination Index	0.2	0.1	0	0	0.3	0.12

Note. TLI=Teacher-Led interaction; DC per TC=Dependent Clauses per Total Clauses

Table 11 shows that the learners' complexity levels, as indicated in the three measures, vary considerably in TLIs 1 and 5 compared to TLIs 2-4. A pattern found in this table is that the meaning-focused TLIs motivated higher levels of complexity than the form-focused TLIs (for example, 0.5 and 0.2 dependent clauses per total clauses in TLIs 1 and 5 respectively compared to a range of 0 to 0.1 in TLIs 2-4). This thus indicates that the meaning-focused TLIs at the basic level motivated higher levels of both fluency and complexity than the form-focused TLIs. A similar pattern of higher complexity levels in meaning-focused interactions than in form-focused interactions is seen in the LLIs, as detailed below.

Table 12.
Learners' complexity levels in the LLIs (basic level)

Length	3 min 20 s	5 min 47 s	2 min 53 s	9 min 03 s	9 min 03 s	9 min 03 s	
Focus	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Form	Form	Form	
Kind	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
Clauses per AS-unit	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.53
DC per TC	0.2	0.07	0.2	0.1	0.01	0.1	0.11
Coordination	0	0	0	0.04	0	0.2	0.04

Index
Note. LLI=learner-led interaction; DC per TC=Dependent Clauses per Total Clauses.

Table 12 shows that the learners' complexity levels vary considerably across the LLIs. However, as in the TLIs, the dominant pattern is that the meaning-focused LLIs involved learners contributing with more AS-units and clauses, indicating greater complexity than in the form-focused LLIs 5 and 6. From the above two tables, it can be seen that in the TLIs the learners produced more complex turns than the LLIs. However, as discussed in the basic learners' fluency levels, it should be noted that there is a considerable number of form-focused interactions whose activities required learners to drill ready-made phrases, increasing the learners' fluency and complexity levels, but without much opportunity to practise freer and more complex utterances as in the meaning-focused interactions.

As at the basic level, the intermediate learners' complexity levels tended to raise in the meaning-focused interactions and, particularly, in the meaning-focused LLIs as shown in the two following tables.

Table 13.
Learners' complexity levels in the TLIs (intermediate level)

Length	6 min 16 s	7 min 20 s	12 min 55 s	5 min 21 s	
Focus	Form	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	
Kind	TLI 1	TLI 2	TLI 3	TLI 4	Average
Clauses per AS-unit	0.3	1.0	1.0	1.3	0.9
DC per TC	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.27
Coordination Index	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.27

Note. TLI=Teacher-Led interaction; DC per TC=Dependent Clauses per Total Clauses

Table 13 shows that the learners' complexity levels vary significantly across the four TLIs. As we might expect, it is apparent from this table that in the meaning-focused TLIs the intermediate learners produced more complex turns than the form-focused TLIs, as also found in the learners' fluency. In comparing Tables 13 and 14, the averages indicate that the intermediate learners tended to produce more complex utterances in the LLIs than in the TLIs, suggesting that the (meaning-focused) LLIs provided the learners with more opportunities to push their utterances towards greater fluency as well as complexity than the TLIs. Interestingly, some metrics indicate that the learners' utterances in some meaning-focused TLIs were similarly or more complex than in some LLIs (see, for example, learners' complexity levels in TLI 4 compared to the LLIs). In Section 6, I provide evidence from the data which suggests that the intermediate teacher, at times, was able to promote the learners' oral production during the TLIs, having an impact on the learners' fluency and complexity levels.

Table 14.
Learners' complexity levels in the LLIs (intermediate level)

Length	8 min 31 s	8 min 31 s	8 min 31 s	13 min 02 s	13 min 02 s	13 min 02 s	
Focus	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	
Kind	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
Clauses per AS-unit	0.8	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.01
DC per TC	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.23
Coordination Index	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.43

Note. LLI=learner-led interaction; DC per TC=Dependent Clauses per Total Clauses.

As with the learners' fluency, Table 14 shows that the intermediate LLIs promoted the highest complexity levels across proficiency levels. Again, this can be explained by the characteristics of the tasks used in these LLIs which required the learners to negotiate choices and reach agreements, influencing high complexity levels. Similar to the intermediate level, the advanced learners constructed a higher number of AS-units and clauses in the LLIs than in the TLIs, indicating greater complexity, as detailed below.

Table 15.
Learners' complexity levels in the TLIs (advanced level)

Length	1 min 50 s	5 min 40 s	
Focus	Form	Form	
Kind	TLI 1	TLI 2	Average
Clauses per AS-unit	0.8	0.5	0.65
DC per TC	0.1	0.1	0.1
Coordination Index	0.5	0	0.25

Note. TLI=Teacher-Led interaction; DC per TC=Dependent Clauses per Total Clauses

Table 15 shows that the learners' complexity levels vary considerably in the two TLIs, and are lower than the basic and intermediate learners' complexity levels in the TLIs. The low complexity levels in these TLIs can be explained by the task characteristics which required the learners to define verbs, not involving more than one clause or AS-unit. However, as in the case of the fluency levels, it is apparent from Table 16 that the learners' turns in the LLIs were constructed with a greater number of AS-units and clauses than in the TLIs, indicating greater complexity. In particular, LLIs 1-3 which required the learners to discuss, negotiate choices and reach agreements motivated not only higher fluency but also higher complexity levels than LLIs 4-6.

Table 16.
Learners' complexity levels in the LLIs (advanced level)

Length	11 min 42 s	11 min 42 s	11 min 42 s	6 min 20 s	6 min 20 s	6 min 20 s	
Focus	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	
Kind	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
Clauses per AS-unit	1.3	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.98
DC per TC	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.26
Coordination Index	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.05	0.2	0.22

Note. LLI=learner-led interaction; DC per TC=Dependent Clauses per Total Clauses.

In sum, the three measures indicated that the learners' complexity levels at the three proficiency levels were varied. However, as in the case of the learners' fluency, the meaning-focused interactions tended to encourage greater complexity than the form-focused interactions. Moreover, the (intermediate and advanced) LLIs, following a focus on meaning, promoted higher levels of complexity than the TLIs. In particular, the six LLIs at the intermediate level and LLIs 1-3 at the advanced level whose task characteristics required the learners to discuss, negotiate choices and reach agreements motivated the highest complexity levels. These findings thus corroborate that the learners' fluency and complexity were influenced by the focus (meaning or form) and kind (TLI or LLI) of interactions and other task characteristics (i.e., tasks to negotiate and defend choices).

4.3. Accuracy

This section discusses the learners' accuracy levels in the TLIs and LLIs by proficiency level. The following two tables show the learners' accuracy levels in the TLIs and LLIs at the basic level:

Table 17.
Learners' accuracy levels in the TLIs (basic level)

Length	1 min 24 s	5 min 20 s	7 min 20 s	5 min 13 s	2 min 45 s	
Focus	Meaning	Form	Form	Form	Meaning	
Kind	TLI 1	TLI 2	TLI 3	TLI 4	TLI 5	Average
Error-free clauses	83.3	72.7	96	93.7	85	86.2
Errors per 100 words	3.9	3.8	1.5	1.9	3.6	2.92

Note. TLI=Teacher-Led interaction.

Table 17 shows that the learners' accuracy levels vary significantly across the TLIs. What is interesting from this table is that the meaning-focused TLIs 1 and 5, which involve learners generating fewer error-free clauses and more errors per 100 words, show lower accuracy levels than the form-focused TLIs. This evidence indicates that the learners' utterances in meaning-focused interactions can be more fluent and complex, but less accurate than in form-focused interactions, suggesting a trade-off effect. However, as we shall see in the remainder of this section, the basic learners' accuracy levels in the above two meaning-focused TLIs appear to be higher than the meaning-focused TLIs and some LLIs at the intermediate and advanced levels. In observing the interactional data, TLIs 1 and 5 at the basic level were seen to be performed after LLIs, suggesting that these TLIs as post-tasks may have enabled the learners to construct utterances that were already rehearsed in the LLIs, having an impact on more accurate utterances. A similar pattern of lower accuracy levels in the meaning-focused LLIs than in the form-focused LLIs is seen in the table below.

Table 18.
Learners' accuracy levels in the LLIs at basic level

Length	3 min 20 s	5 min 47 s	2 min 53 s	9 min 03 s	9 min 03 s	9 min 03 s	
Focus	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Form	Form	Form	
Kind	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
Error-free clauses	30.7	57.1	70	79.0	75.8	82.6	65.9
Errors per 100 words	5.6	6.0	3.9	3.2	3.4	2.2	4.0

Note. LLI=learner-led interaction.

As in the TLIs, the results indicate that the learners' accuracy levels vary significantly across the LLIs. However, there is again a trend towards lower accuracy levels in the meaning-focused than in the form-focused LLIs. In comparing the TLIs and LLIs, the learners' turns were more accurate in the TLIs than in the LLIs. The above evidence thus confirms that the focus (meaning or form) and kind (LLI or TLI) of interactions and other characteristics of tasks (interactions functioning as post-tasks) influenced the learners' accuracy levels during speaking practice at the basic level.

As at the basic level, a similar pattern is found in the TLIs and LLIs at the intermediate level the results of which are summarised in the following two tables:

Table 19.
Learners' accuracy levels in the TLIs (intermediate level)

Length	6 min 16 s	7 min 20 s	12 min 55 s	5 min 21 s	
Focus	Form	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	
Kind	TLI 1	TLI 2	TLI 3	TLI 4	Average
Error-free clauses	88.2	72.3	74.7	60	73.8
Errors per 100 words	1.2	4.0	3.6	6.1	3.7

Note. TLI=Teacher-Led interaction.

Table 19 shows that the learners' accuracy levels in the TLIs vary widely. As at the basic level, the dominant pattern is that the learners' utterances were less accurate in meaning-focused TLIs than in the form-focused TLI. Moreover, as in the case of the TLIs 1 and 5 at the basic level, the meaning-focused TLIs 2 and 3 that functioned as post-tasks of LLIs involved more accurate utterances than the meaning-focused TLI 4 and some LLIs (1-3).

Table 20.
Learners' accuracy levels in the LLIs (intermediate level)

Length	8 min 31 s	8 min 31 s	8 min 31 s	13 min 02 s	13 min 02 s	13 min 02 s	
Focus	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	
Kind	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
Error-free clauses	50	74.7	73.2	78.4	89.9	77.5	73.9
Errors per 100 words	6.8	3.3	4.7	3.1	1.3	3.2	3.7

Note. LLI=learner-led interaction.

Table 20 shows that the learners' accuracy levels in the LLIs vary significantly. It is apparent from this table that the learners' oral constructions were more accurate in LLIs 4-6 than in LLIs 1-3. Interestingly, it was observed in the interactional data that the learners in LLIs 4-6 were making use of a written text which may have had impact on greater accuracy levels than in LLIs 1-3 (in Section 6, I return to this discussion, providing evidence from the data which suggests that the written texts may have played a role in raising the learners' accuracy levels in the meaning-focused LLIs 4-6). In comparing the learners' accuracy levels in the TLIs and LLIs, the averages indicate that the learners' utterances tended to be similarly accurate in both kinds of interactions (for example, an average of 73.8 errors per 100 words in the TLIs compared to an average of 73.9 the LLIs). It is thus possible that the characteristics of the tasks in the meaning-focused TLIs 2 and 3 (performed as post-tasks) and LLIs 4-6 (during which written aids were provided to learners) may have benefitted the learners' accuracy.

Similar to the basic and intermediate levels, the learners' accuracy levels in the TLIs and LLIs at the advanced level were influenced by the kind and focus of the interactions, as detailed below.

Table 21.
Learners' accuracy levels in the TLIs (advanced level)

Length	1 min 50 s	5 min 40 s	
Focus	Form	Form	
Kind	TLI 1	TLI 2	Average
Error-free clauses	100	100	100
Errors per 100 words	0	0	0

Note. TLI=Teacher-Led interaction

It can be seen from the above table that the advanced learners' utterances were free of errors in the two TLIs. However, the results in Table 22 indicate that the learners' utterances were considerably less accurate in the LLIs than in the TLIs. Moreover, it is apparent that the learners produced less accurate utterances in the LLIs 1-3 than 4-6. This can be explained by the tasks used in LLIs 1-3 during which negotiations of choices involved a greater cognitive load (Foster & Skehan, 1996), leading to greater fluency and complexity (see Tables 10 and 16) but lower accuracy than LLIs 4-6, during which learners discussed personal information.

Table 22.
Learners' accuracy levels in the LLIs (advanced level)

Length	11 min 42 s	11 min 42 s	11 min 42 s	6 min 20 s	6 min 20 s	6 min 20 s	
Focus	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning	
Kind	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
Error-free clauses	70.2	71.6	71.9	90.5	89.4	77.5	78.5
Errors per 100 words	4.9	4.5	4.5	1.7	2.2	3.3	3.5

Note. LLI=learner-led interaction.

Overall, the above figures indicate that the learners' accuracy at the three proficiency levels was influenced by the focus and kind of interactions and other task characteristics (i.e., post-tasks and written aids to be discussed). Unlike fluency and complexity, the learners' accuracy tended to be lower in the meaning-focused interactions, suggesting a trade-off effect between the three dimensions. However, as suggested in this section, it appears that when learners are provided with opportunities to perform post-tasks or manipulate information of tasks (e.g., written texts), their utterances during meaning-focused interactions can be pushed towards greater accuracy.

5. Discussions

Overall, the results in this research study suggest that the learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy levels were varied during speaking practice at the three proficiency levels, not showing a correlation with the learners' proficiency levels. Instead, the results have revealed that learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy were dependent on the 1) focus (meaning or form) and 2) kind (TLI or PI) of the interactions and other task characteristics, as discussed below.

The learners' utterances were found to be more fluent and complex in the meaning-focused than in the form-focused interactions. This can be explained by the aims of meaning-focused interactions which centred on the learners' oral production, having an impact on high levels of learners' fluency and complexity. In contrast, during the form-focused TLIs and LLIs, the learners were required to practise and/or drill individual vocabulary expressions, verb definitions or grammar structures which did not promote learners' fluency and complexity since these activities were aimed at evaluating and checking the learners' knowledge of forms.

The kind (TLI or LLI) of the interactions was also found to shape learners' fluency and complexity during the speaking practice, but with varied results across proficiency levels. At the basic level, the learners' fluency and complexity levels were varied, showing a trend towards higher fluency and complexity levels in the TLIs than in the LLIs. These varied fluency and complexity levels need to be interpreted with caution because the aims of some basic TLIs and LLIs required learners to drill pre-

elaborated suggestions, having an impact on the word count, AS-units and subordinated clauses (units used to measure fluency and complexity). At the intermediate and advanced levels, the (meaning-focused) LLIs motivated higher levels of learners' fluency and complexity than the TLIs. Interestingly, some meaning-focused LLIs were found to raise even higher levels of fluency and complexity than some meaning-focused TLIs (see below), suggesting that LLIs provided learners with a greater interactional space and responsibility over the discourse which in turn had a beneficial impact on the fluency and complexity of their oral constructions (see also Tarone & Liu, 1995; Walsh, 2006). In particular, the task characteristics of some LLIs (namely, the six LLIs at the intermediate level and LLIs 1-3 at the advanced level) that required the learners to negotiate choices and reach agreements motivated the highest complexity and fluency levels as consistent with Foster and Skehan (1996), who argue that speaking tasks to consider new information, evaluate it, and then defend an opinion result in high fluency and complexity levels.

However, learners' accuracy was found to be compromised in interactions (LLIs rather than TLIs; meaning-focused interactions) during which fluency and complexity were promoted, suggesting trade-off effects between the three dimensions during speaking practice. On the one hand, the form-focused TLIs and LLIs, which did not promote fluency and complexity, were found to motivate the highest levels of learners' accuracy across the interactional data. This is explained by the aims of the form-focused TLIs and LLIs at the three proficiency levels which required the learners to practise vocabulary, drill expressions or define verbs which mostly involved error-free clauses, indicating high accuracy levels. However, it is possible that the high accuracy levels in form-focused TLIs and LLIs were not favouring the learners' oral performance since their turns were constructed to provide answers expected by the teachers, involving no more than one clause or AS-unit. On the other hand, the findings indicated that the meaning-focused TLIs and LLIs appeared to promote high fluency and complexity levels, but low accuracy levels. For example, LLIs 4-6 at the intermediate level and LLIs 1-3 at the advanced level whose aims were to discuss and negotiate choices promoted the highest fluency and complexity levels across the data, but low accuracy levels. In line with these findings, Foster and Skehan (1996) claim that the interactional processes during tasks to negotiate choices lead to greater fluency and complexity, but lower accuracy because of the greater cognitive load involved in these tasks. The above findings support previous research into the learners' oral performance, in that they indicate that fluency can be accompanied by either accuracy or complexity, but not all three (Skehan, 2009; Skehan & Foster, 2001). The learners' utterances involving two of the three dimensions are consistent with the Trade-off Hypothesis (Skehan, 2003, 2009), which argues that learners' attentional resources are limited during task performance, which "committing to one area, other things being equal, might cause lower performance in others" (Skehan, 2009, p. 511). This evidence thus raises the need to assist the teachers and learners during which interactions for speaking practice promote the capacity to produce language at a normal rate and without interruption, more advanced language and complexity and higher accuracy (Skehan, 2009).

6. Pedagogical implications

Overall, learner talk during speaking practice at the three proficiency levels:

- tended to be more fluent and complex in the meaning-focused than in form-focused interactions, and more fluent and complex in the LLIs than in the TLIs;
- tended to be less accurate in the meaning-focused than in form-focused interactions, and less accurate in the LLIs than in the TLIs.

This interactional evidence suggests that speaking practice, focused on form or meaning and as TLI or LLI, may not entirely promote learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy simultaneously. Nevertheless, in order to address RQ3 (i.e., what are the implications for designing more effective classroom interactions during which learners' oral performance is promoted?), it is possible that by developing an understanding of (meaning-focused) interactions during which their interactional behaviour (advantaging fluency and complexity) and manipulation of tasks (e.g., teachers and learners performing post-tasks; or learners manipulating information of tasks) (advantaging accuracy) are consciously aimed at promoting the learners' oral performance, the teachers and learners can benefit the three dimensions during speaking practice.

In order to promote learners' fluency and complexity during TLIs, it seems possible that the teachers can remain in control of the interactions, yet still encourage learner involvement, promoting in turn fluency and complexity, when they develop an understanding of their interactional strategies. The following extract illustrates this suggestion:

1. T: Got it? Yes … guys? Right … so that was the reading … uh … what would you say I mean in general for those of you who read it? Are relationships different? [1]
2. L18: //Yeah//
3. T: So … why do you think they're different L18? It's a general question … but just give us- share with us one or two examples … why do you think the relationships in family are not the same all over the world?
4. L18: Hm::: //becau:se [1] so:me people have different ideals … like i::n Ame:rica// … //it says in the text// <>… //a:h … families don't eat together// … //kids can like have their plates// <> //and go and eat in front of the TV// <> … //and the parents will be in the living room and stuff like that//
5. T: […] I think that it's a shame that Britain is becoming much more LIKE THAT right now … so they are mentioning … America /whether/ you say in Britain so: what do you say? Do you think … that's the thing? … or do you think there's something to do about it? [1] like can we save … those people from that situation? … or is it the future of us for that matter?
6. L18: //I think// <> //it could be saved// …<> //because … it all depends// <> //o:n [1] or what we think// <> //or what we want// … //if we want to spend with our family// //if we want to have communication with them// … //we say// <> //that communication is the best for everything// … //so if you don't have communication// <> //you can't really have a good relationship with anybody//
7. T: Exactly! Yes … yes! Yes L1?
8. L1: //Maybe in this one// … //people is not used to communicate with their family// //that's really sad//
9. T:When there's … how do you say *una barrera*?
10. LL: //A wall?//
11. T: A wall! Or a barrier […]
12. L6: Teacher!
13. T: Yes?
14. L6: //It is important to mention// <> //that … in the:se … countries where the culture … is different// … and //in here in Mexico … mothers are … more worried … about all// … //and maybe it's not that// … //these relationships or with the family is that bad// … it's the- it's this- //it's like this//=
15. T: =It's how it works right?
16. L6: //Yes//

T=Teacher; L#=Learner and its number in the interaction; LL=Learners; //=AS-unit boundary; <>=clause boundary.

Figure 1. Extract from TLI 4 (Intermediate level)

In Figure 1, the intermediate teacher leads a discussion about the differences regarding relationships in other cultures. It can be seen from this part of TLI 4 that the teacher controls the interaction by allocating the turns (in turns 7 and 13), asking the questions (in turns 1, 3, 5 and 9), following up the learners' oral contributions (in turns 3, 7, 9 and 15), and extending her turns to share her perceptions (in turn 5). However, the teacher appears to create interactional opportunities for the learners by using interactional strategies such as referential questions (in turns 3 and 5) and follow-up moves (turn 3) which enable the learners to contribute more to the discourse, having in turn an impact on the fluency and complexity of the learners' turns (see the number of AS-units and clauses in turns 4, 6 and 14). Interestingly, L1 and L6 even volunteer to share their perceptions in turns 8 and 12, suggesting that the interactional space is open for learners volunteering oral contributions. This evidence is of particular importance for the present study because it suggests that greater interactional opportunities can be created during TLIs when teachers use the interaction and, particularly, their interactional strategies towards enhancing the interactional space, that is, maximising the interactional opportunities so that learners interact, maintain genuine communication, and contribute more to the teacher-led discourse (Walsh, 2013).

Regarding accuracy which was compromised during meaning-focused TLIs and LLIs, the interactional data indicated that the three dimensions can be benefitted when TLIs or LLIs are performed as post-tasks, or learners are provided with opportunities to manipulate information of tasks. In the first instance, basic TLIs 1 and 5 and intermediate TLIs 2 and 3 were carried out by the teachers to check learners' answers or views that were shared during previous LLIs. Performed after the LLIs, these TLIs functioned as post-tasks in which learners needed to repeat what was discussed in the LLIs. These follow-up TLIs appeared to favour fluency, complexity and accuracy since the previous LLIs provided learners with the opportunity to discuss and 'rehearse' utterances which were later shared in the TLIs. This suggestion is supported by empirical findings elsewhere which have demonstrated that the three dimensions can be encouraged when learners are given opportunities to perform post-tasks related to previous discussions (see Foster & Skehan, 2013; Skehan, 2009; Skehan & Foster, 1997b). In the second instance, learners in LLIs 4-6 at the intermediate level were provided with written texts whose information was essential for the discussions, as shown in Figure 2.

Extract 2 *A part of LLI 4 (intermediate level)*

48. L6: //So … I don't worry … about /that thing/// (2) //'Going abroad'// //'You are 28 years old <> and working for an insurance … company// … //your job … as a sales rep- representative is well-paid <> … and hasn't able- … has enabled you// <> //to take out a mortgage on a smile- on a sma:ll … house <> … where you now live with your two dogs// … //your partner is proud of your success <> … but you now have begun to feel dissatisfied with the very routine <> … but languages have always been your passion <> … and you … have appli- applied to being accepted for work … a::s a:: language teacher in China'// //Oh my God!//
49. L7: Well … //I now identify with this// heheh … I::- //I think tha::t … u::m <> … it's very difficult go abroad <> … becau:se … we're always- it's living another life// … //livi:ng o::ther culture// … <> //specially if you're working as a language teacher// … so:: … //I think <> tha::t- (1) it's a:- … a:- … a challenge? … <> because … you have to … be- … work harder in … that … kind … of style … of life//
50. L6: //Yes// … //one of my dream is going abroad// //but … not alone// … //I would like to go abroad// //but wi::th- … probably with my husband// … a::nd … but when I ha:ve … when- … //when I: have a: work// <> //or enough money to:- to go- to go ahead <> because … at the moment … as a student I don't have enough money to do- to do this thing// … //probably if you go abro- … if you go abroad// as a- … as a::= →
51. L7: =//Study?//
52. L6: //To learn// … //yes// //as a study// … a:nd- … or- or //if you know <> that … you are … going to:: go- are going to go … abroad <> … but you have a:: … work … in- in there … yes in there? In there place?// <> … //probably you go <> … because you: … you have- … you will have a work// <> //and … you wi:lll earn money fo:r- for you// … <> //but … and got more experience=//

T=Teacher; L#=Learner and its number in the interaction; LL=Several learners; //=AS-unit boundary; <>=clause boundary

Figure 2. Extract from LLI 4 (Intermediate level)

In Figure 2, L6 and L7 discuss a situation which was provided by the teacher in a text. In turn 48, L6 reads the hypothetical situation about 'going abroad', and starts discussing the situation in the subsequent turns. During these interactions, it was observed that the learners took some time to read the situations prior to engaging in the discussions, and accessed the information during the discussions to support their opinions. It is possible that these written aids assisted the learners in planning their utterances and performing the discussions, advantaging not only fluency and complexity, but also accuracy. The suggestion that planning opportunities not only promote fluency and complexity but also accuracy is supported by empirical research (Foster & Skehan, 1996, 1999; Skehan, 2009; Tavakoli & Skehan, 2005), which has corroborated that planning conditions impact significantly on learners' oral performance.

7. Conclusions and Further Research

The primary aim of the present study was to investigate learners' oral performance, indicated by levels of fluency, complexity and accuracy, during EFL classroom interactions. In exploring uncontrolled teacher- and learner-led interactions, the study found that the learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy cannot be promoted simultaneously during speaking practice. Specifically, there was a tension between complexity and accuracy during speaking practice. This interactional evidence raises intriguing questions

as to the effectiveness of speaking practice in promoting entirely learners' oral performance and thus competence. However, as suggested by the interactional data, it seems possible that teachers and learners can simultaneously promote fluency, complexity and accuracy during speaking practice when they develop an understanding of their interactional behaviour, tasks and their characteristics, and manipulate their structure (influencing greater accuracy) and information (influencing greater complexity) towards promoting the learners' oral performance.

Nevertheless, the above findings are not conclusive, and further research is still needed. Specifically, the same research study is recommended with more participants to understand better EFL learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy, and determine with greater precision how the characteristics of tasks and interactions have an impact on their oral performance. If trade-off effects are seen to be implicated between complexity and accuracy, the new studies would explore whether teachers' and learners' interactional behaviour and the characteristics and information of tasks can be used towards entirely promoting learners' oral performance. It is hoped that the present study paves the way for future research on learners' oral performance in EFL classrooms in Mexico. More importantly, it is hoped that this study is useful for EFL teachers who are experiencing difficulties in teaching speaking.

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