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The Impact of Performance-Based Assessment on University ESL Learners' Motivation

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The Impact of Performance-Based Assessment on University ESL Learners'

Motivation

By

Kadidja Koné

A thesis submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

of Master of Arts

In

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Minnesota State University, Mankato

Mankato, Minnesota

May, 2015

The Impact of Performance-Based Assessment on University ESL Learners' Motivation

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This thesis has been examined and approved by the following members of the student's committee.

Dr. Glen T. Poupore, Advisor

Dr. Karen E. Lybeck, Committee Member

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my late mother, Assa Koné, my friend and beloved husband, Dr. Ibrahim Haidara, my dear children Hawa and Mohamed Haidara, my father, Soumana Koné, my youngest sister and my friend Aminata, and my in-laws: Hamidou Haidara, Hawa Diarra, Aissata, Housseini, Youssef, and Didi Haidara. These people made sacrifices so that I could complete this Master's program.

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The Impact of Performance-Based Assessment on University ESL Learners' Motivation

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M.A. English: TESL

Minnesota State University, Mankato

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Abstract

This thesis examines the impact of performance-based assessment on university ESL learners' motivation. To reach this aim, data were collected from 21 international ESL students taking an intensive oracy course for non-native speakers. Online motivation questionnaires were used in order to find out how these learners responded emotionally and motivationally to performance-based assessment, specifically an oral presentation project both before and after the project. The results revealed that the students responded positively to this type of project. However, their motivational and emotional states varied across time depending on their experience with the oral presentation, their performance, and the cohesion of their group.

Key concepts: Performance-based assessment, motivation, emotion, oral presentation project, alternative assessment

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Chapter I

Introduction

Assessment is an essential component in the process of language teaching and learning. When an assessment is not done appropriately or if it does not meet the requirements and the expectations of both students and teachers, it may impede the process of learning. To make assessment beneficial for the learners, researchers and language teachers have been trying to find optimal ways to measure their students' knowledge, competence, and performance since the emergence of language testing. The field of language assessment has been influenced by different methods of language teaching and learning and early on it was particularly influenced by the *behavioral psychology of learning*. These behaviorists considered learning as repetition, imitation, and habit formation. In other words, the students learned the target language passively. As a result, only language knowledge in relation to grammar, phonetics, and vocabulary was assessed using decontextualized multiple choice questions, true or false questions, matching questions, and sometimes translation from the first language (L1) to the target language (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). With this form of assessment, however, learners' communicative skills such as oral and written production, oral interactive activities, and problem solving are not taken into account.

Other weaknesses of decontextualized assessment include a lack of emphasis on real-world situations and a lack of quality feedback given to the learners. (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). As a result, this specific kind of assessment might not be

sufficient in order to measure more authentically a full range of language skills such as writing, reading, speaking, and listening.

One of the main goals of learning another language consists in communicating with the community who speaks that language, so the behavioral theory of learning and assessment, and Chomsky's (1965) *linguistic competence*, which prioritized grammatical accuracy at the expense of function and interaction, are in many ways insufficient. Consequently, the latter half of the twentieth century witnessed a revolution in the field of language teaching with Canale and Swain's (1980) *communicative approach*. These advocates of communicative language teaching (CLT) assumed that learning, teaching, and assessing a language should also emphasize real-world situations and not only decontextualized conditions. As asserted by Clark (1972):

Indirect tests of proficiency do not provide an opportunity for the student to try out his language competence in realistic communication situations. Although they correspond in a statistical sense to direct tests of proficiency, paper-and-pencil tests, tape-recorded listening and speaking tests, and similar measures cannot have the same psychological value for the student or the same instructional impact. For this reason alone, administration of a direct test of communicative proficiency at one or more points in the student's language-learning career would be a very worthwhile undertaking. (p. 132)

These indirect tasks, therefore, may not have the same impact as contextualized tasks which allow a teacher to assess the learners' real abilities and performance. They may have some statistical relationship, but this correlation does not necessarily indicate causality. An indirect test of writing may correspond statistically to a direct test of

writing such as essay writing, but a teacher may have difficulty providing some beneficial feedback to the students.

These views of assessment in combination with the emergence of communicative language teaching consequently lead to the notion of *performance-based assessment* (PBA) which is sometimes used interchangeably with the notion of task-based language assessment (TBLA), (Yu, 2014). Yu defines PBA as the measurement of skills or performance that reflect real-world situations and require the students to develop their original responses explaining the processes followed in order to achieve those results. Darling-Hammond (1994) also argues that performance-based assessments “engage students in ‘real-world’ tasks rather than multiple-choice tests, and evaluate them according to criteria that are important for actual performance in a field of work” (p. 5). In addition, according to Brown and Hudson (1998), performance-based assessment, which is also referred to as authentic assessment or performance assessments, “require students to accomplish approximations of real-life authentic tasks, usually using the productive skills of speaking or writing but also using reading or writing or combining skills” (p. 662). In short, those skills involve written and oral production, oral interactive activities, experiments, group discussions, and projects done in small groups (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Following these definitions, PBA includes three requirements: (1) The test takers should perform a task, (2) the task should be as authentic as possible, (3) and the task should use qualified assessors to grade the performance (J.D. Brown & Hudson, 1998). Referring to the term *task*, it is considered as an activity reflecting real-world situations (Shehadeh, 2012). According to this researcher, *Task Based Language Teaching* (TBLT) is organized around the different activities that the students perform in

order to use the language for communicative purposes. Thus, assessment should also reflect the type of activities that the students are performing in the target language (TL) instead of being organized around grammar and vocabulary. Furthermore, learners are supposed to perform authentic tasks with the target language as noted by Gorp and Deygers (2014):

Since TBLA relies heavily on meaningful, real-world language performance, authenticity is a vital task component. Ideally, task-based assessment should directly reflect the tasks and interactions that learners are expected to perform (i.e., interactional authenticity) in real-life situations (i.e., situational authenticity) within a particular domain. (p. 579)

To sum up, PBA intends to assess as directly as possible and according to Norris (2009), it fulfills three essential roles: (1) Giving formative or diagnostic feedback to the learners and teachers, (2) allowing summative decisions that indicate the targeted language-learning outcomes, (3) and increasing the awareness of the learners.

One of problems related to TBLA is that some of its opponents think that using it in large classrooms might be problematic. Contrary to this perspective, Gorp and Deygers (2014) reported that PBA was used successfully by test designers of the Certificate of Dutch as a Foreign Language (CNaVT) although this test was used on a large scale. Other examples of large scale tests that use PBA are standardized tests such as the Test of English as a Second Language (TOEFL) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) which all contain a section for speaking, listening, and writing in addition to the traditional sections for reading, grammar, and vocabulary. Grammatical accuracy is significant, but a language lives and survives in a society (Ahearn, 2012).

Therefore, the users should learn and be assessed in an environment that reflects this authenticity.

The aim of this thesis is to measure the impact of PBA on the motivation of university learners of English as a Second Language (ESL). I was driven to work on this topic due to the situation prevailing in my home country of Mali. Assessment is viewed there as a way to compare the learners with one another and to point out their weaknesses. The whole educational system is organized around midterm exams, final exams, and national exams. The learners are authorized to move to the next class based on the results of these *summative assessments* done at the end of a teaching unit, a semester, or an academic year. As most of the classes are large with at least 60 to 80 students at the university level, specifically in the English department, the only way for the teachers to ease their labor consists of using decontextualized multiple choice questions with the students. This type of assessment may not offer the learners the opportunity to use the language for real needs and may also demotivate them. In this way, learners of English in Mali may consider the language as a mirage that is out of their reach.

When determining the focus of my thesis, I was therefore curious to know more about PBA and also how learners themselves respond to this type of assessment, especially from a motivational and emotional perspective. Is PBA a means to motivate learners of English as a second language? Indeed, the principal aim of this thesis revolves around this query. More specifically, this paper seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are university ESL students' motivational and emotional responses to a

performance-based assessment, specifically an oral presentation project done in small groups both before and after the project?

2. Is there a difference across time?
3. Is there a difference between those students who have less experience and those who have more experience with performing an oral presentation group project?

Organization of the Thesis

The second chapter of this study focuses on the historical background of motivation and assessment. First, I present the different motivation theories which have influenced the field of language learning and teaching. Then, I outline the elements of PBA, including its features, benefits, challenges, and criticisms. I conclude chapter two with a summary of the research on the effects of PBA on learning and motivation. The third chapter, meanwhile, is organized around the methodology which focuses on the description of the setting and the participants, the oral presentation project, the methods that were used to collect the data, and the methods that were used to analyze the data. The fourth chapter provides the results and the discussion. The last chapter is comprised of the conclusion which outlines the pedagogical implications, the limitations of the study, and suggestions for further studies.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Theories of L2 Motivation

Motivation, a key element in second language (L2) learning, is defined as a person's willingness to engage in an action, make effort, and persist in achieving this action (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). The field of L2 motivation has been influenced by four periods: (1) social psychological period, (2) cognitive-situated period, (3) process-oriented period, and (4) socio-dynamic period.

Social psychological period. This theory was mainly influenced by Gardner and Lambert's (1972) research. After conducting studies in Canada, Gardner and Lambert argued that the more positive attitudes a learner had towards the TL and its culture, the more motivated such a learner might be to learn this language. In other words, when a learner accepts to identify themselves with the TL community, learn their traditions and values, and interact with them, these attitudes might be conducive to successful L2 learning. This type of motivation is referred to as *integrative motivation*. As the social psychological period was oriented more towards the learners' identity, the TL culture, and values, there was a shift towards a cognitive-situated period that emphasized motivation related to the classroom context in the 1990s (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

Cognitive-situated period. This theory aimed at analyzing motivation related to the classroom environment and explaining how this type of motivation might have a strong positive impact on L2 learning (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Therefore, the four variables developed by Keller (1983) in order to explain classroom motivation were considered as good examples of motivational research and were later developed by other

researchers such as Dörnyei (1994) in order to measure the L2 learners' classroom motivation. These variables were centered on *interest*, *relevance*, *expectancy*, and *satisfaction*. The first element of interest is concerned with a learner's desire and curiosity to know or discover more about their L2. Relevance is explained as the degree to which a student considers the L2 to be relevant or useful for their personal needs, values, and goals. The third element of expectancy refers to the success, effort, or attention that a learner might give to the L2 or classroom activities. This element also includes the difficulties and challenges related to the completion of classroom tasks. The last element, satisfaction focuses on the praise, good grades, and enjoyment that L2 learners might obtain after fulfilling a task.

These variables will later be used in this present study in order to measure the participants' motivation. The rewards and the degree of success related to the completion of the classroom tasks, the learners' individual needs, the task difficulty, and the relevance of classroom tasks might have a positive or negative impact on learning. As a result, learners' motivation might not be static or fixed since it keeps on changing depending on the relevance of the classroom materials, the type of assessment, and the rewards. To better explore this change, the process-oriented period was launched.

Process-oriented period. This theory was focused on the premise that motivation was not static and it kept on changing based on the individual learner's interest, personality, classroom activities, including assessment, and the teacher's personality (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). In support of this assumption, Dörnyei and Otto (1998) developed a process-oriented model that views L2 motivation as a dynamic process fluctuating over time. Their process-oriented model consists of two dimensions: *action*

sequence and *motivational influences*. Action sequence incorporates initial wishes, hopes, and desires that will later be transformed into goals. Goals also change into intentions.

The final phase of this dimension is outcome evaluation. The motivational influences, on the other hand, include success expectancy, result attribution, and other types of rewards such as praise and grades. This model may be adapted to L2 motivation due to its temporal axis which correlates with L2 learning that may also span over a long period of time. In other words, motivation is complex and may vary during the L2 learning process.

Poupore (2013) also conducted a study with 38 South Korean English learners in order to analyze how different variables such as task attraction, effort expectation, success expectation, task enjoyment, task relevance, task difficulty, emotional state, group work dynamic, and task conditions interact together in order to shape or influence L2 learners' task motivation. As a whole, Poupore (2013) operated under the assumption showing that those variables constituting task motivation need to be considered as a whole in order to understand how learners' motivation functions and varies across time. This researcher collected data using questionnaires, namely pre and post-task questionnaires, and interviews. After analyzing the data and focusing on two tasks that demonstrated a decrease in learners' task motivation across time, it was concluded that the decrease in motivation was a result of different combinations of motivational variables acting together rather than in isolation. While some variables such as task enjoyment and degree of effort maintained a relative stability, other variables such as success expectation, perceived task difficulty, emotional state, and perceived group work dynamic, in conjunction with certain task conditions, demonstrated fluctuations during the task and therefore interacted together to push learners' motivational responses

downward. In this way, L2 learners' task motivation is complex and not stable. This idea stating that motivation is made of some variables that maintain stability while others show variability gave birth to a new period in L2 motivation theory called the socio-dynamic period.

Socio-dynamic period. This period focused on explaining not only how motivation is changeable and complex but also how it could be influenced by social factors.

In classroom contexts, for instance, learners' motivation might be influenced by the relevance of classroom tasks, task difficulty, proficiency, and group-related factors such as group cohesiveness and group norms. Group cohesiveness is the extent to which each individual learner identifies themselves with the group (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997). The group norm, in its turn, refers to the rules that determine the required behavior in order to maintain efficiently the functionality of the group (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997).

In line with the assumption stating that L2 learners' classroom motivation might be affected by group-related factors, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1994) collected data from 301 grade 11 students from Budapest, Hungary, in order to examine the correlation that might exist between group cohesion and motivation. After analyzing the data elicited using questionnaires, these researchers noticed that group cohesion was associated with positive evaluation of the learning environment.

In addition to this study, Chang (2010) investigated how group processes such as cohesiveness and norms would influence individual EFL learners' L2 motivation. Data were collected from 152 participants who were all English majors from the Department of Applied English at a National Technology University in Kaohsiung County, Taiwan. A

questionnaire and interviews were used to elicit data from these participants. The questionnaire aimed at measuring the respondents' motivation, group cohesiveness and norms. The interviews, on the other hand, were used to obtain more information and understanding of the relationship between group processes and individual learner's motivation. The quantitative data indicated that a correlation existed between both group cohesiveness, group norms, and individual learners' motivation. The qualitative data also showed that 9 out of the 12 interviewees who mentioned that their groups were cohesive with positive group norms commented highly on their level of motivation although they also mentioned determination as another factor affecting their individual motivation. In other words, these participants felt comfortable and seemed to have a good relationship with their group peers. According to Chang (2010), this positive climate motivated these subjects to study hard in order to keep up their group performance.

Furthermore, Dörnyei and Kormos (2000) examined different affective variables including attitude and socio-dynamic variables relating to L2 learners' performance in oral argumentative tasks. Their study included 46 Hungarian secondary school students aged 16 to 17 years old. Their level of English was intermediate. These researchers used two self-report questionnaires to collect data. The first questionnaire was focused on motivational issues. The second questionnaire was centered on group cohesiveness and the participants' willingness to communicate. The results showed that affective variables such as attitude and socio-dynamic factors including the learners' social status and interrelationship had a significant impact on these participants' willingness to engage in communicative tasks.

In summary, these studies revealed that L2 learners' motivation may be affected

by group-related factors such as group cohesiveness and group norms. These factors according to Dörnyei and Malderez (1997) should be taken into account while measuring L2 motivation: “We should not underevaluate the power of the group: it may bring significant pressures to bear and it can sanction –directly or indirectly– those who fail to conform to what is considered acceptable” (p. 70). When positive, these factors might be a stimulus to a learner’s autonomy and motivation to study hard. A non-cohesive group that lacks positive group norms, on the other hand, might demotivate its participants. As a result, they might not perform at a higher level. For example, participants in Chang’s (2010) study who evaluated their group as non-cohesive and lacking positive group norms affirmed not to be autonomous or motivated to work hard. Instead, they claimed that they could do better if they had a solid relationship with their group peers. Therefore, in this present study, group related-factors need to be taken into consideration while interpreting the participants’ qualitative data, especially since the oral presentation project was completed in small groups. This interpretation aims at finding out if group-related factors such as cohesiveness and group norms affect these participants’ motivation to carry out their oral presentation project.

Performance-based Assessment

As stated earlier in Chapter I, second language and foreign language (FL) assessment was influenced by different theories and approaches of teaching and learning. While language assessment was long dominated by behaviorist theories of language learning, the emergence of CLT as a methodological approach to language teaching lead to alternative forms of assessment, including performance-based assessment.

As one of the goals of learning another language is interaction with those who can

communicate in the target language according to the proponents of CLT, it was necessary to switch to another type of assessment reflecting this authentic use of the language. As a result, PBA was initiated in order to respond to the learners' needs and desire to interact in the TL.

Features of PBA. PBA, which aims at assessing, measuring, and appreciating a learner's performance while carrying out a task or a project, requires that a teacher develops activities that they can observe and assess as directly as possible. Gorp and Deygers (2014) explain that these activities must be a way of highlighting what a learner can do with the TL instead of being a summary of their abilities only. Thus, learning is organized around tasks that Shehadeh (2012) defined as activities engaging the students in the real use of the TL. In other words, those activities embed the teaching outcomes and offer teachers the opportunity to assess their learners while they are using the TL. In assessing the tasks or projects, the teachers need to evaluate not only the final product, but also the process to be sure that the learners are not being diverted.

Activities such as oral interactive tasks, open-ended questions, group projects, writing, and speaking in the TL are options that can be applied so that the learners can use the TL for communicative purposes. According to Pena-Florida (2002), *nontraditional or alternative assessment (AA)*, a reaction to the *conventional paper-and-pencil tests* (traditional assessment) and in many ways a form of PBA, is another option that allows the learners to use the TL for communicative purposes. AA offers teachers the opportunity to assess the process and the final product. Most of the tests included in traditional assessment (TA) assessed speaking and writing indirectly in contrast to AA which provides other possibilities to assess the TL without depriving it of its social and

authentic use (Pena-Florida, 2002). The students are required to produce creatively instead of recalling or reproducing what was taught previously (Coombe, Purmensky, & Davidson, 2012). Besides, the teacher can give them individual feedback as can be seen in Table 2.1 that shows some differences between AA and TA.

Table 2.1

Traditional and Alternative Assessment

Traditional Assessment	Alternative Assessment
Standardized exams	Continuous long-term assessment
Timed, multiple-choice format	Untimed, open-end responses
Decontextualized test items	Contextualized communicative tasks
Scores suffice for feedback	Individualized feedback
Norm-referenced scores	Criterion-referenced scores
Focus on discrete answers	Open-ended, creative answers
Summative	Formative
Oriented to product	Oriented to process
Noninteractive performance	Interactive performance
Fosters extrinsic motivation	Fosters intrinsic motivation

Brown and Abeywickrama (2010, p. 18) adapted from Armstrong, 1994, and Bailey, 1998, p. 207.

In this regard, Sommer (1989) explained AA as an opportunity for the teacher to know who a student is and what they can do with the TL besides their abilities about the knowledge of that language. Coombe, Purmensky, and Davidson (2012) also noted that AA initiates the learners in problem solving through cooperation, negotiations, project work and facilitates second language acquisition. According to these researchers (Pena-Florida, 2002; Coombe et al., 2012), AA is composed of journals, portfolios, conferences and interviews, rubrics, observation, and self -and- peer assessment. These alternatives allow the teachers to assess and to be aware of the true value of their students' writing

and speaking abilities and performance in the real-world situations without only using timed traditional tests which might be more stressful (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Weigle, 2012).

Rubrics. Rubrics are an important component of PBA. As assigning grades is often part of assessment, rubrics are tools designed to evaluate open-ended oral interactions, projects, and writing tasks (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Rubrics can be *holistic* and *analytical* depending on the need of the evaluation. According to Green and Hawkey (2014), analytical rubrics are more detailed due to the specific descriptors for each criterion and the levels of performance. Holistic rubrics, on the other hand, offer a more general description of each criterion without providing a particular illustration for the levels of performance (Green & Hawkey, 2012). Crusan (2014) mentioned another type of rubric called *primary trait* rubric. This third variety of rubric highlights one aspect of the writing. For example, it can be used to assess the use of transition words in the ESL learners' writings.

Self-and-peer assessment. Another important component of PBA and AA is self-and- peer assessment which involves the learners in the assessment of their learning processes (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; J. D. Brown & Hudson, 1998; Oscarson, 2014). This does not mean that the learners are going to design their own tests and give themselves grades. Instead, the teachers give the students the opportunity to check if all the required elements are included in their responses or whether their answers have reached the goals set for the tasks. Peer-assessment also allows the learners to review or give feedback to their classmates about projects such as oral presentations and writings. The students can do this work using checklists, rating scales, and questionnaires.

Benefits of PBA. PBA and AA therefore allow learners to engage in open-ended and authentic activities which require them to use the language for communicative purposes. These contextualized communicative activities which are assessed through PBA have high (1) *washback*, (2) *validity*, and (3) *authenticity* in regard to the principles of assessment (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Rubrics, when well-designed, can also contribute to the success of PBA.

Washback. Washback is the positive or negative impact of assessment on the learning and teaching process. PBA offers the teachers an opportunity to give the learners comments that they can use in order to get prepared for future courses or to improve their work in process (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). In short, positive washback allows the students to discuss the feedback and the grades that the teachers gave to them. It promotes cooperation between the students and their teachers and makes the class atmosphere enjoyable and more cohesive (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010).

Validity. Messick (1996) defined validity as the degree to which the results of the assessment are appropriate and meaningful while used in the perspective of the assessment. An assessment is said to be valid when it measures what it intends to assess and can be used for communicative purposes. Besides, the decisions taken by the teacher should reflect the true abilities of the learners and be deprived of unrelated factors such as the learners' knowledge or familiarity of the topic or the personality of the grader (Weigle, 2012). For instance, a valid test of speaking requires the test takers to speak so that their speaking abilities can be evaluated. *Content validity*, an element of validity, is needed while assessing the classroom tasks. This type of validity requires the teachers to connect the test with the topics that they had already covered during the course (Weigle,

2012). To sum up, content validity can be particularly high with PBA if classroom tasks involve the learners in communicative speaking and writing.

Authenticity. Authenticity is the extent to which a task reflects real-world situations. Authenticity is particularly high with PBA because of the integration of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) when learners are working on their project or trying to solve open-ended question problems. Therefore, the teachers should design tasks that motivate the learners to use the language for real situations (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). For example, an authentic task demands the learner to have the same use of the language as that of the target community. Authenticity also includes pragmatics, a field defined by LoCastro (2012) as “the systematic study of the relations between the linguistic properties of utterance and their properties as social action” (p. 5). For instance, tasks such as writing job applications, interviews, booking air tickets online, greeting, making suggestions, refusing or accepting an invitation are speech acts or actions that contextualize assessment and the language use. These activities can be done as a project that may span over a long period of time.

Project Work. Project work is defined by Hedge as “an extended task which usually integrates language skills work through a number of activities” (p. 276). Being an integral part of performance-based assessment, project work exposes learners to planning, outlining, brainstorming, collecting information from books or face-to-face interviews, negotiations with group peers, designing PowerPoints, reporting the final product to the class in written or oral form, and evaluating its outcome. These various processes contained in project work are

lifelong and authentic skills that learners need in order to function socially and become autonomous learners. In brief, project work may increase the authenticity of PBA and initiate learners to be creative and critical thinkers in relation to real life experiences.

Use of rubrics. As grades show effort, progress, and students' level, rubrics can help the learners comprehend the skills that the teacher wants to assess and get prepared accordingly. At the same time, rubrics play a significant role in PBA. For example, a well-designed analytical rubric may mitigate some of the weaknesses of authentic assessment such as low intra and inter-rater reliability. As found by Andrade and Du (2005), rubrics decreased the anxiety of the learners while dealing with the assignments and helped them improve their work in order to obtain better grades. For instance, the analytical rubrics showed the learners their strengths and weaknesses, and made them conscious of their progress. Consequently, these rubrics may have a positive impact on learning and assessment. Primary trait rubrics, meanwhile, can help the students concentrate their effort on the performance that the teacher intends to evaluate. As noted by Crusan (2014): "students appreciate the freedom to focus on one feature in their writing to the exclusion of others as it frees them from worry and raises awareness of that one issue and ways to combat it" (p. 211).

Challenges and criticisms of PBA. While PBA may be high in authenticity, validity, and washback, it may be low in practicality, reliability, and objectivity.

With regard to rater-reliability, Green and Hawkey (2012) evoked the difficulties that the raters may face while rating open-ended questions. According to these researchers, these questions can have more than one correct answer and it is not

guaranteed that the rater takes into account all of the possible answers. This issue may push the raters to use their intuition. As a result, their scoring may suffer from unfairness and inconsistency. This lack of fairness decreases reliability and validity. As explained by Green and Hawkey (2012) “if individual markers are allowed to award points based on their intuitions, the reliability and validity of the test will inevitably suffer” (p. 300). However, these problems may find their solution in the use of rubrics such as holistic, analytical, and primary traits rubrics. Designing well-detailed analytical rubrics with specific descriptors increases reliability and makes the scoring more valid. Besides, they help the raters focus on the targeted performance and offer some feedback to the learners (Green & Hawkey, 2012).

Although Green and Hawkey (2012) favored the use of analytical, holistic and primary trait rubrics, they criticized *impressionistic scoring*. As proof, they mentioned again the inconsistency and unfairness of the scoring. With impressionistic scoring, each rater can have their own interpretation of the standards representing the different scores. For instance, 16 out of 20 can be the highest score for one rater whereas another may propose 19 out of 20 for the same performance. In addition to this issue, the raters can also focus on different performances. To sum up, impressionistic scoring may decrease inter and intra-rater reliability and make the scoring unreliable.

With respect to assessing writing, Crusan (2014) found that assessing writing in an authentic way is time and energy consuming. If it is done on a large scale, furthermore, it would increase the cost.

Howell, Bigelow, Moore, and Evoy (1993), moreover, claimed that the scoring of writing might not be deprived of examiner bias in spite of the use of rubrics. Their

research included 147 educational professionals whose role was to score the students' writing related to a prompt. The researchers found that the scorers could be influenced by the students' backgrounds even though they were given rubrics. For example, the researchers mentioned that the scorers lowered their expectations once they noticed that the students were from a minority group. The teachers' incapacity of assisting the learners appropriately during the drafting process also impeded the learners' performance. Although this issue is considered by Howell et al. as a challenge in authentic assessment, the use of trained and qualified raters using an analytical rubric may increase the reliability of the raters and help them focus on the criteria and domains targeted by the designer of the rubric (Green & Hawkey, 2012).

O'Sullivan (2012), in his research about assessing speaking tasks, also noted that training teachers before using a rubric increases their reliability. Once the raters are familiar with the rubric, it helps them make a clear distinction between the different levels and the descriptors. O'Sullivan (2012) further suggested that the raters could work together and train themselves about the use of a rubric and then let another colleague assess the learners' speaking skills in order to avoid any possible bias towards or against a student with whom the teacher is acquainted. This may deprive the scoring of examiner bias as found by Howell et al. (1993) in spite of the use of rubrics.

The effects of PBA on learning and motivation. Learning an L2 in a classroom setting involves both the students and their teachers and requires more than sitting in a well-managed classroom and listening to a well-planned lesson. Each learner needs a certain level of motivation in order to reach the goals that they have set for learning the language. If motivation is not maintained, learners may feel that they are not capable of

learning the language. The type of motivation addressed in this paper is related to the classroom context. Thus, motivation is defined as the extent to which a learner is determined to perform the classroom tasks or projects and pursue them in order to reach the goals set for learning (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). It also incorporates the emotional and cognitive states that preparing and performing those tasks or projects can engender. The teachers, in their turn, should prepare materials, activities, and appropriate types of assessment that will arouse the learners' curiosity and interests and encourage them to learn an L2 for its own sake (Dörnyei, 2014).

To reach this type of classroom-based motivation that can increase the learners' motivation while performing an authentic task or a project, Dörnyei (2014) offers a motivational teaching practice framework which is outlined in Figure 2.1.

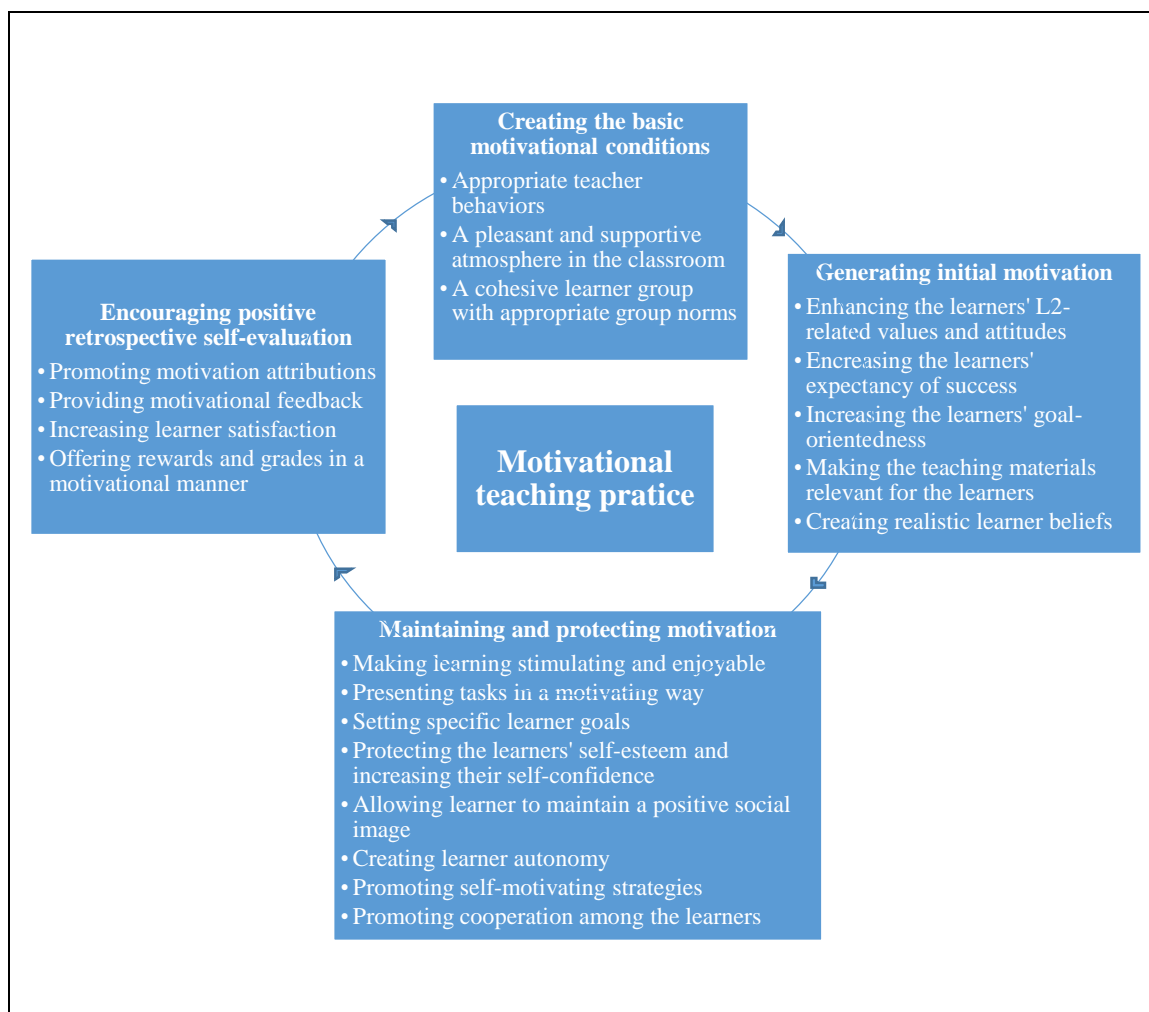


Figure 2.2 Main components of motivational teaching practice adapted from (Dörnyei, 2014 p. 524)

Dörnyei's (2014) motivational teaching practice is relevant for L2 classroom assessment in the sense that it incorporates elements that affect learners' perceptions of their performance, their attitude towards the course, and therefore their motivation to perform the classroom tasks. Among these elements, there are the teachers' ways of offering the grades, the types of assessments, and the materials used to assess the learners' performance. According to Dörnyei (2014), assessment should not be limited to paper-and-pencil tests. Instead, it should be fair with specified success criteria not showing only learners' level but also their progress, and opportunities for learners to express their

opinions. All those suggestions are integral parts of PBA because of its continuous-process, authenticity of the assessment materials, autonomy, and the use of rubrics to assess the performance. Analytical rubrics, for instance contain a clear description of each criterion and a section for the assessor to provide some comments related to learners' strengths and weaknesses. This type of rubric, furthermore, shows students' progress and may help them set new goals for their learning if they are trained to use it. In other words, the use of rubrics might decrease L2 learners' anxiety related to assessment (Andrade & Du, 2005).

PBA also develops learners' autonomy and involves them in the evaluation process. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), the greater the learners' autonomy is, the more enhanced is their motivation. In line with this statement indicating that PBA might have a positive impact on learning and motivation, Nier, Silvio, and Malone (2014) investigated the students and the instructors' beliefs about their knowledge of assessment and language learning. These researchers used questionnaires and interviews in order to elicit data from nine instructors of Arabic who were all native speakers and 13 students who were learning Arabic in a foreign language setting (United States). Nier et al. found that there was a mismatch between what the students and their instructors thought of the focus of teaching and assessment. The students expected their teachers' assessment to be oriented towards real-world language situations and needs and not grades. In other words, they would have liked that their teachers design their own assessments that would take into account the teaching and learning goals so that they could be more motivated. The teachers, on the other hand, insisted on orienting their classes towards the curriculum

goals and adapting tests from standardized tests without seeking to satisfy the learners' desire to use the language for communicative purposes.

The mismatches revealed by this study may therefore push the learners to interpret the classroom activities differently so that they can meet their expectations. As Oscarson (2014) states: "If learners find that there is a mismatch between the two, they are likely to attempt to sway classroom activities in a direction which better meets their interest and perceived needs" (p. 713). The use of PBA may remedy this issue since learners are involved in goal setting and in the accomplishment of different tasks. Based on the conclusion of this study, PBA empowers the learners and gives them the opportunity to decide on the focus of their learning in collaboration with their teachers. Once this confidence is established, the students are driven by their goals and the teachers' role consists in helping them to achieve these objectives.

Operating under the same perspective that PBA might motivate L2 learners to carry out their classroom tasks or projects, Brookhart and Durkin (2003) conducted a case study with 96 students from an urban high school in an L1 classroom setting in the United States in order to investigate the students' perceptions of the different classroom tasks and how they achieved those tasks by taking into account the types of assessments that the professor used to evaluate those activities in a social studies class. The study showed the relevance and the benefits of performance-based assessment at the expense of paper-and-pencil tests. With performance assessment, the learners learnt for the sake of learning and in addition, they wanted to learn from their classmates or help them learn. Students in this study further reported that with performance assessment, they were trying hard for the performance but not for the test or the grades. Finally, this study confirmed

that the choice of the tasks and the types of assessment can have a positive impact on learners' motivation to carry out a task. However, the authors suggested deeper analysis in order to better understand how classroom assessments are related to motivation and effort variables.

Stefanou and Parkes (2003) also conducted a study with 79 fifth grade science students in an L1 setting in the United States in order to examine the effects of different types of assessment on learners' motivation. As a result, these researchers selected three categories of assessment: paper-and-pencil tests, performance assessments, and laboratory assessments. The paper-and-pencil test contained multiple choice questions, true or false questions, matching, fill in the blanks, and concept definition essay questions. With regard to performance assessment, learners were asked to work in small groups in order to conduct an experiment and then report their results in a written form. The laboratory assessment which falls in between performance assessment and paper-and-pencil test required learners to follow directions in order to conduct an experiment and report their answers in a written form. Questionnaires and interviews were used in order to know about the participants' preferences in relation to these three types of assessments and their impact on learners' motivation. The numerical data revealed that these students preferred paper-and-pencil tests to performance and laboratory assessments. However, the qualitative data showed that 54 students out of 79 reported to prefer performance assessment, 23 learners preferred paper-and pencil tests, and only two students affirmed to prefer laboratory assessment. During the in-person interviews, the participants who chose paper-and-pencil tests explained that it was easy to get an A. They also mentioned, that they were familiar with this type of assessment and also that the

responses were supplied to them in contrast to performance and laboratory assessments which required deeper thinking and analysis in order to come to a conclusion. Referring to the students who preferred performance assessment, they state that conducting the experiment on their own was more motivating, intellectually challenging and engaging, and that they could obtain help from their group peers. Finally, when grades were removed, the majority of these learners selected performance assessment due to the authenticity of the experiments.

In addition, Scouller (1998) investigated how second-year education university students' preference for assessment methods would relate to their choices of learning strategies for assignment essay writing and multiple choice question (MCQ) exams. The study also explored the students' perceptions of the intellectual abilities being assessed and the performance outcome. For this study, Scouller considered deep strategy and surface strategy as learning strategies. According to Scouller (1998), a deep strategy or deep motive consists in integrating theoretical and practical elements of a course materials in order to comprehend and make sense of them. A surface strategy or surface motive, on the other hand, aims at repeating and practicing course materials in order to reproduce them in the examination and validate the class. Data were collected from 206 participants from Sidney, Australia, using a questionnaire and the results of the subjects' assignment essay and MCQ exam. Scouller found that the students perceived the assignment essay as assessing higher levels of intellectual abilities than the MCQ exam. Results, furthermore, showed that the participants used deep strategies and deep motives when preparing their assignment essay, but they used surface strategies and surface motives strategies with the MCQ exam. Finally, Scouller concluded that these

participants showed a greater preference for their education course to be assessed by assignment essay (135 students out of 195) than by MCQ exam (60 out of 195). Those students who preferred assignment essay reported to use deep strategy when preparing their essay and performed more successfully. The participants who chose MCQ did not report to use deep motives when preparing their examination and they performed less successfully in their assignment essay. Based on this study, it can be deduced that assignment essay writing, a form of PBA engages learners in critical thinking, analysis, comprehension, and problem solving. It may also increase learners' interest and motivation due to its authenticity and real thinking. MCQ, on the other hand, assesses learners' knowledge without engaging them in problem solving or creative thinking.

Bas (2011), moreover, examined the effects of project-based learning on ninth grade students' academic achievements and attitude towards English lessons in EFL context. To reach this objective, data were collected from 60 Turkish English learners when they were dealing with a unit called past activities. The participants' academic achievement test related to the English curriculum and the English lesson attitude scale were used to elicit data from these respondents. English lesson attitude scale measures these participants' attitude towards English lessons. The participants were divided into an experimental group and a treatment group. The experimental group worked on a project that focused on the past activities in small groups. The teacher first explained the guidelines for the projects, and then learners started a process of planning and choosing a topic, collecting information, sharing their findings, and then reporting their outcomes to the class. The control group, in its turn, worked on the same activities, but the teacher was using traditional methods such as presenting the rules, asking students questions that

they answered, and then followed by a series of selected response tests. The results indicated that there was a significant statistical difference between the experimental group achievement ($M = 73.3$, $SD = 12.4$) and that of the control group ($M = 62.3$, $SD = 15.1$) with a t -value of (3.26) based on an independent samples t -test. Concerning their attitude towards English lessons, the findings revealed that the experimental group had a more positive attitude and higher performance than the control group. According to Bas, this difference could be explained by the fact that the experimental group carried out the activities as a project, worked together, and negotiated in order to find solution to the problem. In other words, the project exposed these students to real life skills of collecting information and analyzing it in order to present the outcome to an audience. According to Blumenfeld et al. (1991), project work “engages students in investigation of authentic problems” (p. 369). As a result, it may enhance their motivation and interest to discover novel things and it also integrates the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and the knowledge acquired from other academic disciplines. Again, project work is an initiation to real life and collaboration in order to perform better and reach the objectives set for the project (Blumenfeld et al., 1991).

Muresan (2009) also conducted a study with 72 EFL Israeli students attending 12th grade in order to explore the relationship between integration of project work in English lessons and learners’ motivation and performance. To reach this stated goal, this author used achievement tests, self-and-group questionnaires, and in-person interviews to collect data from these participants. The project, on which these participants were working, was part of the EFL Matriculation Exam. It consisted in writing a written report based on a topic provided by the professor or chosen by the learners and performed in

small groups. Therefore, this researcher divided the subjects into an experimental group (36 participants) and a control group (36 participants). The experimental group's topic was student-generated whereas the control group's topic was chosen by the professor. The objective of this division was to investigate how choosing their own topic for the project affects these participants' motivation. Both groups were engaged in a 45-minute long project work per week over 22 weeks. The results indicated that both groups benefited from project work in EFL classroom. The analysis of the group-reflection questionnaire also revealed that both the experimental group students and the control group students enjoyed working on a project done in small groups. In addition to project enthusiasm, the two groups were motivated to carry on their project, but the experimental group motivation was much higher. This group score was also higher (100% scored above 70) while 72.2% of the control group scored above 70. According to Muresan (2009), this difference may be explained by the fact that the experimental group decided on their topic by themselves. Giving learners the opportunity to choose their own topic may affect positively their motivation since it increases project authenticity, learners' autonomy, interest, enthusiasm, and amount of effort that they put in the completion of the project (Muresan, 2009).

Furthermore, Kobayashi (2003), in a longitudinal study with 3 Japanese focal participants chosen among 80 informants, investigated how L2 learners sharing the same L1 would work on an oral presentation project done in pairs or in a small group of three students in and out of the classroom. The study also aimed at exploring the learning opportunities, performance, and collaboration that accomplishing this project would generate. These focal participants were attending the Keishin-WPU joint program in

Canada and enrolled in a language experience field course. The project consisted in preparing a thirty-minute oral presentation on their experience helping learners of Japanese as conversation partner. Data were collected when these participants met in order to prepare their project using audio-recorded observations of project work, interviews, and the participants' journals. After analyzing the data, Kobayashi found that these participants used their L1 to explain the teachers' guidelines and the expectations of the project. It was also concluded that these participants negotiated and helped each other to reach the goals set for the project as reported by Kobayashi while analyzing the participants' interview data: "with the guidance of their teacher and TA [teacher assistant] and through group collaboration, they had accomplished something which none of them could have accomplished alone, feeling ready for more academic challenges" (p. 357). Based on this study, project work such as an oral presentation done in small groups may increase L2 learners' peer support and motivate them to negotiate the language meaning and form in order to perform well. This was reflected in these participants' desire to select their vocabulary carefully so that their audience could understand their message. In addition, they tried to make a distinction between the oral and written registers of the language. Therefore, it can be understood that preparing an oral presentation project may also encourage the learners to discuss the written discourse. Based on these studies (Bas, 2011; Brookhart & Durkin, 2003; Kobayashi, 2003; Muresan, 2009; Nier et al., 2014; and Scouller, 1998), it can be concluded that PBA, namely classroom projects carried out in small groups could motivate L2 learners to study for its own sake and become autonomous learners. Project work due to its high

authenticity may expose learners to real-life situations and offer teachers an opportunity to assess learners' real performance (Blumenfeld et al., 1991).

All of the theoretical and empirical studies described above have emphasized the positive impact of PBA on learning and motivation in L1, ESL, and EFL settings.

However, this present study adapts a different process by measuring the ESL learners' motivation both before and after performing a performance-based project done in small groups. The participants' experiences with an oral presentation project were also compared in order to investigate whether there were any differences between the high experience students and low experience students. Therefore, this thesis will seek to examine the impact of PBA on university ESL learners' motivation to carry out a performance-based task, namely an oral presentation project done in small groups. To reflect the modern perspective on L2 motivation which views it as dynamic construct, furthermore, the learners' motivation will be measured both before and after the project. To achieve this objective, this thesis seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are university ESL students' motivational and emotional responses to a performance-based assessment project, specifically an oral presentation project, both before and after the project?
2. Is there a difference across time?
3. Is there a difference between those students who have less experience and those who have more experience with performing an oral presentation project?

Chapter III: Methodology

This chapter outlines the description of the participants and the setting, the oral presentation project that was assigned to the participants, the data collection instrument and its administration, and the data analysis procedures.

Participants and the Setting

For the present study, a convenience or opportunity sampling was used to select the targeted participants. As a result, data were collected from 21 participants enrolled in an Advanced Oracy for Non-native Speakers course at Minnesota State University, Mankato. This course aimed at developing the students' listening and speaking skills through informal and formal oral presentations, discussions, debates, and listening to video-recorded lectures. The formal presentations are organized and graded by the teacher while the informal presentations act as training for the formal presentations. Other skills developed through this course include turn-taking, note-taking, speaking in the form of a monologue through the use of audio journals, and oral responding to listening materials.

The participants came from two different classes taught by different instructors who followed the same curriculum and syllabi for the course. The classes met twice a week for 2 hours each. Six of the participants were female and 15 were male. The mean age of the students was 20.6 years. Their age ranged from 18 to 26. The participants' level of English was high intermediate based on TOEFL iBT and IELTS scores. The 21 participants came from 11 different countries including Bangladesh, India, Israel, Ivory

Coast, Japan, Nepal, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and South Korea. They spoke 11 different native languages as can be seen in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Native Languages of the 21 Participants

Native Languages	Female	Male	Total	
Arabic	-	1	1	5%
Bangla	-	3	3	14%
Hindi	1	-	1	5%
Hebrew	-	1	1	5%
French	-	1	1	5%
Japanese	1	-	1	5%
Nepali	-	1	1	5%
Norwegian	1	-	1	5%
Pushto	-	1	1	5%
South Korean	3	5	8	38%
Yoruba	-	2	2	8%
Total	6	15	21	100%

These participants were selected based on the class that they were taking knowing that an oral presentation, a PBA project, was an integral part of the class activities.

Oral Presentation Project

These 21 participants carried out a formal oral presentation project, specifically a romantic film project done in small groups of 3 or 4 students (seven groups) when the data were collected. This oral presentation project was the participants' first formal presentation in this class although they had been doing some informal presentations that were not graded by the teacher. These short informal presentations (two to five minutes) aimed at preparing the students for their formal presentations which were done in groups

and graded. For this first formal presentation, there were 16 films as seen in Table 3.2 and each group chose one film from this list provided by the teacher, and then prepared a 15-minute oral presentation depicting the love theme contained in the selected film.

Table 3.2.

Titles of the Films used for Romantic Film Project

- Titanic	- Jerry Maguire
- Before Sunrise	- Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind
- Moulin Rouge	- Legends of the Fall
- Breaking Dawn (Part 1)	- The Notebook
- Vanilla Sky	- Lost in Translation
- Pretty Woman	- The Scarlet Letter
- The Notebook	- Bridges of Madison County
- When Harry Met Sally	- A film of your own choosing based on Instructor's approval

This project aimed at developing the participants' analytical, cooperative, and oral presentation skills that are often required in university academic studies. The oral presentation included a presentation of the different characters, the setting, the different stages of love, the method used by the characters to attract each other, the difficulties met by the couple, the presenters' favorite clip, and a comparison of the love theme depicted in the film with the students' own culture based on personal opinions.

For the evaluation criteria, the learners' communicative skills such as coherence, speech rate, pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, and eye contact with the audience were assessed. They were given an evaluation sheet explaining the performance required for each criterion and the score allotted to it before they started working on their oral presentation project (see Appendix A).

Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected using two online questionnaires composed of four-response option Likert scale and open-ended questions. According to Dörnyei and Tagushi (2010), questionnaires, as a data collection tool, can be administered to a considerable number of participants in a limited time and enable the collection of a large amount of information. The online questionnaires for this study were composed of pre and post-project motivation questionnaires. In order to measure pre- and post-project motivation and emotional state, the study adapted the sub-variables proposed by Dörnyei (1994), Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), and Poupore (2013). For the construct of motivation, these researchers suggested the sub-variables of task attraction, effort expectation, and success expectation in order to measure pre-project motivation, and the sub-variables of task enjoyment, reported effort, and result assessment to evaluate post-project motivation and the matching sub-variables. Concerning the emotional feeling before and after the project, the sub-variables consisted of being at ease, a sense of worry, nervousness, and confidence. Project difficulty and a sense of balance between one's skills and the level of challenge posed by the project were also added as affective variables. The questions contained in the original questionnaires (see Appendix B and C) were adapted to reflect the specific needs of this present study.

Pre-project motivation questionnaire. This questionnaire was composed of five parts. A four-response option Likert scale was used although most of the research that informed the questionnaires (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Poupore, 2013) were based on a five-response option Likert scale. This decision was based on the fact that some researchers prefer using an even number of response options because of the possibility that some respondents might select the middle or neutral category to avoid making a real

choice (Dörnyei & Tagushi, 2010). Prior research, furthermore, has shown the validity of using two, three, four, six, and seven-response options (Dörnyei & Tagushi, 2010). The first part of the questionnaire dealt with seven questions that ranged from “Not at all...” to “Very...” as shown in the following example:

How enthusiastic are you to start this oral presentation project?

Not at all enthusiastic

Not enthusiastic

Enthusiastic

Very enthusiastic

In this first part, there were two items targeting project attraction, two items related to effort expectation, and two items measuring success expectation which measured total pre-project motivation. The sub-variable of project attraction measured the enthusiasm and enjoyment related to the oral presentation project. The effort expectation variable was related to the attention and the effort that the participants were going to devote to the project. The sub-variable of success expectation, meanwhile, measured the student’s sense of how well they expected to perform the task in terms of achievement and giving themselves a grade. These six items were used to appraise pre-project motivation. As recommended by Dörnyei and Tagushi (2010), the items were presented randomly so that the items measuring the same variable were not displayed back to back. According to these researchers, this random ordering may prevent the respondents from simply repeating the same responses. The last question of the first part focused on students’ sense of project difficulty. The answers to this question were also on a four-response option Likert scale ranging from “Not at all difficult” to “Very difficult”.

As a whole, three sub-variables were used to evaluate the construct of motivation with two questionnaire items measuring each sub-variable as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Pre-Project Motivation Variables

Sub-variables	Items	
Project Attraction	How enthusiastic are you to start this oral presentation project?	How enjoyable do you expect to find this oral presentation project?
Effort Expectation	How much effort do you expect to put into this oral presentation project?	How much focused attention do you expect to put in this oral presentation project?
Success Expectation	How well do you expect to do on this oral presentation project?	If this oral presentation were graded, what sort of grade would you expect to get for this oral presentation in comparison to your classmates?

The second part of the pre-project questionnaire was concerned with one item, namely the challenge-skill variable. The responses were on a four-option Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree as seen in this example:

When performing this project it may be challenging, but I believe my skills will allow

me to meet the challenge.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

The third part of the pre-project questionnaire was composed of four items focused on the emotional state of the students before starting the oral presentation project and after receiving instructions for it. A four-response option Likert scale was used to evaluate the participants' emotional feeling composed of the following elements: feeling of ease, worry, nervousness and confidence. These sub-variables were considered as

components of emotional state based on Poupore (2013). They measure the students' level of anxiety and how comfortable they are with the oral presentation project before completing it.

The fourth part was centered on five open-ended questions (see Appendix B) in order to allow the respondents to give their opinions and explanations about their choices. With regard to the open-ended questions, they allowed the researcher to find out some information that was not anticipated or targeted by the Likert scale questions (Dörnyei & Tagushi, 2010). The last question of the open-ended questions permitted the participants to indicate the number of formal oral presentations that they had performed prior to the one they would perform in the Advanced Oracy course. The response to this question was used in order to divide the participants into a group of high experienced students with an oral presentation and a group of low experienced students. This division also allows to calculate the difference between the two groups from the pre-project to the post-project oral presentation stages.

The last part of the pre-project questionnaire was related to the participants' demographic information (see Appendix B).

Administration of the pre-project motivation questionnaire. I first discussed the questionnaire with three graduate teacher assistants and after this step, five ESL students who were not taking the Advanced Oracy course were selected to pilot it. After this piloting phase, I changed the time that I had previously set for the completion of the questionnaires (45 minutes) since these participants completed the questionnaires in less than 20 minutes. Three students completed them in 14 minutes and two did it in 16 minutes. Concerning the items contained in the questionnaires, the selected participants

for the piloting phase did not report any misunderstanding or issues related to its completion. The three graduate teacher assistants were also satisfied with the two questionnaires and did not make any further suggestions. I also visited the two classes that were targeted in order to explain to the participants how to complete each part. Therefore, the pre-project questionnaire was administered by the two teachers after the participants had chosen their film and received the instructions related to the romantic film project using an online questionnaire survey tool called Qualtrics. As it was part of the subjects' course management system, they could access it easily. It took the participants from 15 to 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Post-project motivation questionnaire. This questionnaire measured the same variables as the pre-project questionnaire, but there were three new open-ended questions related to the oral presentation difficulty and the aspects of the oral presentation that the participants liked or disliked. As a result, this questionnaire was comprised of five parts and the first part consisted of seven questions. A four-response option Likert scale was also applied with the answers ranging from "Not at all..." to "Very..." In the first part, two items measured project enjoyment, two items were related to reported effort, and two items for result assessment which measured total post-project motivation. The project enjoyment variable measured the interest and the enjoyment related to the completion of the project. Reported effort evaluated the effort and attention that the participants gave to the oral presentation project. The result assessment variable, meanwhile, was related to students' sense of achievement and the grade they would give themselves for the project. One item in this first part also measured project difficulty. Like in the pre-project motivation questionnaire, three sub-variables were used to measure the construct of

motivation with two questionnaire items measuring each sub-variable as seen in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

Post-Project Motivation Variables

Sub-variables	Items	
Enjoyment	How interesting did you find this oral presentation project?	How enjoyable did you find this oral presentation project?
Reported Effort	How much effort did you put into this oral presentation project?	How much focused attention did you give while doing this oral presentation project?
Result Assessment	How well did you do on this oral presentation project?	If you could grade yourself, what sort of grade would you give yourself for this oral presentation in comparison to the rest of your classmates?

The second part of the post-project questionnaire consisted of one item that was related to the challenge-skill variable that measured whether there was a balance between the challenge of the project and students' skill level. For this question, the four-response option Likert scale ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Like the pre-project questionnaire, the third part centered on the students' emotional state following completion of the project and again measured their feelings of ease, worry, nervousness, and confidence.

The fourth part of this questionnaire was about seven open-ended questions (see Appendix C) that allowed the participants to give more details about some of their responses. The last part focused on the participants' demographic information (see Appendix C).

Administration of the post-project motivation questionnaire. The post-project questionnaire was administered using the online survey tool, Qualtrics after the whole class (the 21 participants) had finished doing their oral presentation related to the romantic film project, but the administration was done the same class day by the two teachers. This questionnaire was also part of the subjects' course management system. Completing this online questionnaire also took between 15 to 20 minutes.

Internal consistency reliability analysis. Item reliability analysis using SPSS 20 software was done in order to measure the item internal consistency expressed by Cronbach alpha coefficient. This analysis aims at determining whether the items selected for the two questionnaires (pre and post-project) were measuring the variables that they were targeting. According to Dörnyei and Tagushi (2010), an optimal reliability coefficient should exceed .70 with short scales of three or four items and the minimum should be at least 0.60. Based on this view, it can be concluded that these items were measuring the construct of motivation and affective variables both before and after the oral presentation project as can be seen in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5.

Item Reliability Analysis for Pre and Post-project Motivation and Emotion Variables

Variables	Cronbach alpha coefficient	
	Pre-project	Post-project
Motivation (6 items)	.67	.82
Emotion (4 items)	.88	.62

Procedure and Data Analysis

A quantitative analysis of the closed-ended responses was done using SPSS 20 software. The data analysis was mainly guided by the frameworks developed by Dörnyei

and Tagushi (2010), Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), and Poupore (2013), although some slight modifications were made to reflect the purposes of this present study. Descriptive statistics in the form of means and standard deviations were used to calculate scores for the motivational and affective variables while inferential statistics in the form of independent and paired samples t-test were used to measure differences between groups (amount of experience with oral presentations) and across time (pre-project stage versus post-project stage). The participants' responses to the open-ended questions, meanwhile, were analyzed qualitatively by identifying and interpreting patterns in the data. Patterns were identified based on their number of references. Features which were commonly referred to in the responses of the 21 participants were used in order to explain the participants' choices. This decision was motivated by Dörnyei and Tagushi (2010) who suggested an analysis based on the number of references in the data in order to reliably report and interpret what the participants said like in these sample comments from two of the 21 participants:

- “First of all, I am not good at speaking English. Secondly, I am not familiar with making an oral presentation.
- My English speaking skill isn't perfect and I am not familiar with speaking in front of others”

Therefore, the number of references for the category ‘non-familiarity with oral presentation’ as a cause of nervousness would be counted as two in this case. Although all the responses were taken into account in order to determine the number of references, only one or two sample comments were used to illustrate each category identified in the data. Those sample comments were selected based on their relevance and their clarity.

For the quantitative analysis, a numerical code was given to each scale, 1 was used for “Not at all...” and 4 was applied for “Very...” The sub-variables of pre-project attraction, effort expectation, and success expectation were combined in order to obtain pre-project total motivation for each participant. The emotional state sub-variables of feeling at ease, nervousness, worry, and confidence were also added together in order to determine the participants’ pre-project total emotional state. Reverse scoring was used for the nervousness and worry items since they imply a negative emotional state. Concerning the ‘challenge-skill balance’ variable, 4 was used for strongly agree and 1 was used for strongly disagree. The same calculation was done with the post-project sub-variables.

Chapter IV: Results and Discussion of the Findings

This chapter of the study describes the results obtained after analyzing the data elicited from the 21 participants and it also discusses the findings.

Results

The results are reported and discussed in six subsections:

1. Motivational variables
2. Challenge-skill balance and project difficulty
3. Emotional state
4. Differences between low experience students and high experience students
5. Open-ended questions
6. Summary of the findings

Motivational variables. After analyzing the data of the 21 participants based on the four-response option Likert scale with 4 as the highest point and 1 as the lowest point, the results pointed out that the students were motivated to carry out the romantic film project oral presentation as can be seen in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Motivational Responses to the Oral Presentation Project

Variables	Pre-Project		Post-Project		Pre/post difference	Sig. at $p < .05$		
	M	SD	M	SD		$t(20)$	p	η^2
Attraction / Enjoyment	3.00	0.57	2.98	0.68	-0.02	NS		
Effort Expectation / Reported Effort	3.21	0.66	3.21	0.56	0.00	NS		
Success Expectation / Result Assessment	3.41	0.65	3.03	0.70	-0.38	2.77	.01	.28
Total Motivation	3.21	0.50	3.08	0.53	-0.13	NS		

N = 21; results based on a four-point Likert scale; NS = non-significant result

Pre and post-project motivation variation. A paired-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the variation from the pre-project to the post-project stages. As Table 4.1 indicates, there was a statistically significant decrease in the participants' success expectation at the pre-project stage and their result assessment at the post-project stage. However, there were no significant differences for total motivation, effort expectation/reported effort, and success expectation/result assessment.

Challenge-skill balance and project difficulty. As shown in Table 4.2, the project was viewed by the participants to be slightly difficult and they believed that their skill allowed them to deal with the challenges related to the completion of the project. Variations from pre- project to post project were not significant statistically.

Table 4.2.

Project Difficulty and Challenge

Variables	Pre-Project		Post-Project		Pre/post difference	Sig. at $p < .05$	
	M	SD	M	SD		$t(20)$	η^2
Project Difficulty	2.58	0.98	2.48	0.88	-0.10	NS	
Challenge-Skill Balance	3.33	0.65	3.00	0.77	-0.33	NS	

N = 21; results based on a four-point Likert scale; NS = non-significant result

Emotional state. Based on the mean scores, the 21 participants were relatively in a positive emotional state at both stages as can be seen in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Emotional Responses to the Oral Presentation Project

Variable	Pre-Project		Post-Project		Pre/Post difference	Sig. at $p < .05$		
	M	SD	M	SD		$t(20)$	p	η^2
Emotional State	2.58	0.97	2.95	0.71	+0.37	-2.75	.01	.27

N = 21; results based on a four-point Likert scale

Pre and post-project emotional variation. Table 4.3 demonstrates a statistically significant increase in a positive emotional state which indicates that the participants were more at ease, less worried and nervous, and more confident after the oral presentation project.

Differences between low experienced students and high experienced students.

An independent samples t-test was done to find out how high experience students would differ from the students who had less experience with an oral presentation project done in small groups. Five students' data were not taken into account in this analysis due to the

fact that their experience with an oral presentation was not clear. These participants did not mention the exact number of the oral presentations that they had made prior to the one used in this study. As a whole, 16 of the participants' data (high experience group: 8, low experience group: 8) were used for this analysis. The participants who had made five presentations or more prior to the one used in this study were considered as part of the high experience group while those whose experience was below five were put in the low experience group.

Pre-project. Table 4.4 shows significant differences at levels of project attraction, total motivation, and total emotional state. High experience subjects showed a statistical significant higher project attraction than low experience participants. They also demonstrated a statistical significant greater motivation than low experienced students. Referring to their emotional state, high experience students significantly differ from low experienced students. For project difficulty, the low experience group thought that the completion of the project would be more difficult in contrast to high experience group and the results showed a statistical significant difference. However, the results did not show any statistical significant difference for the challenge-skill balance variable. The high experience students were also more at ease, confident, and less nervous and worried than low experienced students.

Table 4.4

Differences between Low and High Experience Participants' Pre-Project Variables

Variables	Low experience group (n = 8)		High experience group (n = 8)		Sig. at p< .05			
	M	SD	M	SD	df	t(14)	p	eta ²
	Project Attraction	2.75	0.38	3.37	0.64	0.62	-2.37	.03
Effort Expectation	2.94	0.49	3.50	0.71	0.56	NS		
Success Expectation	3.06	0.77	3.62	0.44	0.56	NS		
Total Motivation	2.92	0.31	3.50	0.57	0.58	-2.54	.02	.31
Project Difficulty	3.00	0.92	2.00	0.92	-1.00	2.16	.04	.24
Challenge-Skill Balance	3.62	0.52	3.37	0.74	-0.25	NS		
Total Emotion	2.03	0.86	3.06	0.97	1.03	-2.24	.04	.26

N = 8; results based on a four-point Likert scale, NS = non-significant result

Post-project. As can be seen in Table 4.5, at the post-project stage, the more experienced group showed a significantly greater motivation for the oral presentation and also a significantly higher level of emotional state than the less experienced group. With regard to result assessment, the low experience group had a statistical significant sense of success in relation to the project. Concerning the challenge-skill balance variable, the high experience group's results significantly differ from the low experience group. The high experience students considerably believed that their skill allowed them to carry out the oral presentation project.

Table 4.5

Differences between Low and High Experience Participants' Post-Project Variables

Variables	Low experience group (n= 8)		High experience group (n= 8)		Sig. at p< .05				
	M	SD	M	SD	df	<i>t</i> (14)	p	eta ²	
	Project	2.81	0.84	3.31	0.37	0.50	NS		
Enjoyment									
Reported Effort	3.06	0.49	3.37	0.64	0.31	NS			
Result Assessment	2.56	0.78	3.37	0.44	0.81	-2.57	.02	.32	
Total Motivation	2.81	0.60	3.35	0.34	0.54	-2.22	.04	.26	
Project Difficulty	2.75	1.03	2.12	0.64	-0.63	NS			
Challenge-Skill Balance	2.50	0.75	3.37	0.74	0.87	-2.33	.03	.27	
Total Emotion	2.41	0.53	3.34	0.66	0.93	-3.10	.01	.40	

N = 8; results based on a four-point Likert scale, NS= non-significant result

Open-ended question responses. Below I display some sample responses to the open ended-questions that were relevant to the understanding of the respondents' choices. These qualitative data were interpreted based on the patterns that emerged from participants' responses.

Pre-project open-ended question responses. The participants were asked four questions which are outlined below:

1. What are some of the reasons why you feel nervous before starting this oral presentation project?

2. What are some of the reasons why you do not feel nervous before starting this oral presentation project?
3. Why do you think you will do well on this oral presentation project?
4. Why do you think you will not do well on this oral presentation project?

Being nervous. With regard to the data elicited from the pre-project open-ended questions, Table 4.6 demonstrates that the 16 participants who responded to this question commonly mentioned anxiety related to speaking fluently and low experience with an oral presentation. The number in parentheses refers to the number of times that these participants mentioned that specific feature.

Table 4.6

Being Nervous

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Anxiety related to speaking fluently and accurately in front of the classmates (12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know exactly what it is but I feel like having butterfly in my stomach and go to the restroom a lot before an oral presentation. • I feel so nervous before an oral presentation because I always worry about whether I will commit mistakes or not.
Non-familiarity or low experience with oral presentation (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My English speaking skill isn't perfect and I am not familiar with speaking in front of others. Also, this oral presentation requires me formal and correct grammar and mistakes will not be allowed. • First of all, I am not good at speaking English. Secondly, I am not familiar with making an oral presentation.

Not being nervous. The five participants who answered this question reported not to be nervous and mentioned their level of experience with oral presentations and group peers' support in order to explain why they were not nervous as shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7

Not Being Nervous

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Experience with oral presentations (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not feeling nervous before starting this presentation because it has become part of me due to the fact that I am used to doing it in my former school. • I don't feel nervous because I did many oral presentations and back home I was an English parliament member. I had experience in speaking front of a huge audience.
Group peers' support (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is reliable that we do presentation in group.

Doing well. Concerning their success expectation, the data collected from the pre-project open-ended questions shown in Table 4.8 indicate that 16 out of the 21 participants believed that they would do well on the presentation and the patterns that emerged the most in order to explain their success expectation were the personal effort that they would put into the completion of the project, the support that they would receive from their group peers, confidence, and the individual goals that they set for the project.

Table 4.8

Doing Well

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Personal effort such as working hard and practicing (11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will prepare and practice over and over. • I have practiced for the presentation, so most of the thing will be in my mind.
Confidence (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The confidence and belief that I have in myself let me think that I will do well in this oral presentation. • I think I will do well because I believe I will be able to perform at my best.
Personal goals (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am doing my best to score high in the exam. • I want to develop my oral presentation skill whether I will do it with Korean or another person, moreover, I am going to put a lot of effort on preparing this project. • I want to learn to have good eye contact with the audience and by practicing in front of a mirror I can make it.
Support from group members (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because my partner will help.

Not doing well. Only five participants thought that they would not do well and they evoked the performance of their group peers as a factor influencing their grade or performance and nervousness related to speaking as shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9

Not Doing Well

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Nervousness (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It makes me nervous.
Group peers' performance (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since it is a group work I do not trust the speaking skill of the members of my group. It can reduce our grade.

Post-project open-ended question responses. For the post-project open-ended questions, the respondents were asked seven questions targeting their emotional state, project enjoyment, and project difficulty. They had the choice between question 1 and 2, question 3 and 4, but they were all supposed to answer to questions 5, 6, and 7.

1. What are some of the reasons why you feel nervous after doing this oral presentation project?
2. What are some of the reasons why you do not feel nervous after doing this oral presentation project?
3. Why do you think you did well on this oral presentation project?
4. Why do you think you did not do well on this oral presentation project?
5. What aspects of this project did you like and why?
6. What aspects of this project didn't you like and why?
7. What aspects of this project were difficult to achieve and why?

Being nervous. The two participants who answered this question explained that they were nervous after the oral presentation project. They reported that speaking in front of an audience accurately and fluently for seven minutes without committing mistakes made them nervous as can be seen in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10

Being Nervous

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Anxiety related to speaking in front of the peers accurately and fluently (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel a little nervous because I did some grammatical mistakes. • The time was too much for two students (15 minutes). I think it is too much for Frenchmen.

Not being nervous. After analyzing the data, it was noticed that the majority of the participants (19 out of 21) were not nervous because they were satisfied with their performance as result of the effort that they put into the completion of the oral presentation project. Some participants also mentioned their high experience with an oral presentation project in order to explain their emotional state as shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11

Not Being Nervous

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Satisfaction with their performance (8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was not much nervous because I performed well. • I practiced this presentation a lot so I didn't feel nervous. • My partner and I did pretty well on this presentation as we practiced so, I was very satisfied with what we did and I did not feel nervous after this oral presentation project.
High experience with an oral presentation (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't feel nervous because I'm used to talking in front of a group.

Doing well. Table 4.12 indicated that several participants referenced practice and their performance to explain their result assessment. As a whole 18 participants answered

this question, but 13 of them explained why they thought they did well and 5 participants only mentioned that they did well without stating the reasons.

Table 4.12

Doing Well

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Practice and performance (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I made the whole PowerPoint. I practiced my part a lot. • I did well in the presentation because I performed well. • I think I did well because I performed pretty well this time and I was more confident. I also think I improved my eye contact and posture.

Not doing well. Three participants answered this question. These participants who reported not doing well mentioned not being able to speak fluently as shown in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13

Not Doing Well

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Speaking fluently (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was nervous so I spoke with a lot of pauses. • I am not good at presenting. • Because of my pronunciation and because I did not make sentences well.

Liking aspects of the project. These participants referenced the topic, and group peers' support as aspects of the project that they liked as shown in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14

Liking Aspects of the Project

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Topic (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like the presentation because it was a general topic which everyone has, moreover at the end, we had to compare the culture of our country and American culture.
Group peers' support (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like group work because if I can't think of the answer of the question, my group members can advise me with the question and I had a good team work

Disliking aspects of the project. With regard to the aspects of the projects that they did not like, some participants mentioned the non-cohesiveness of their group, the lack of positive group norms and also speaking in front of the class as can be seen in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15

Disliking Aspects of the Project

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Non-cohesiveness of group and lack of positive group norms (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I honestly didn't like that it was group work project. I like to work alone. I didn't like team project. Some people participated in the project, but others didn't do much.
Speaking in front of the class (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I didn't like to present because I didn't really like to speak in front of people.

Aspects of the project that were difficult. As can be seen in Table 4.16, the majority of the participants referenced group-related factors and speaking fluently and accurately as difficult.

Table 4.16.

Project Difficulty

Features and Frequency	Sample Comments
Speaking fluently and accurately (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While presenting it was difficult for me to be fluent, to correct my pronunciation and grammar simultaneously. • The thing that I had to speak naturally.
Group-related factors: cohesiveness and norms (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When we have to be cooperative between group members selfishness of each member would be difficult to solve. • Cooperation because students have different cultural backgrounds and personalities.

What is interesting is that these participants did not mention that completing the project as a whole was difficult although they considered that speaking in front of their peers was demanding. This is supported by the numerical data reported above concerning the sub-variable of project difficulty at the post-project level ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 0.88$). However, a few participants revealed that they did not like team work because of their group members' attitudes towards the group or their performance.

Summary related to the results. In summarizing the results of this present study composed of the numerical and qualitative data, it can be concluded that:

- The majority of the 21 participants were motivated to carry out the oral presentation project as shown in the results for pre-project total motivation and post-project total motivation.
- The participants were relatively in a positive emotional state at both stages (pre and post-project stages). They were also less worried, nervous and more confident after doing the oral presentation project. This change was based on statistically

significant numerical data concerning total emotional state at the pre and post-project stages.

- There was a statistically significant decrease in the motivational sub-variable of success expectation/result assessment although the majority of the participants (18) revealed that they thought that they had performed well while answering the post-project open-ended questions. In addition, they thought that their skills allowed them to deal with the challenges related to the completion of the oral presentation project.
- The project difficulty mean value was also slight at both the pre-project and post-project stages which means that it was marginally difficult for the participants to complete the project.
- The participants who had more experience with performing an oral presentation were more motivated than the less experienced subjects. The high experience students were also less worried, anxious, and nervous and more confident than the low experience students.
- Some participants (5 students) also mentioned that working in groups with people from different backgrounds could be demanding because of the group peers' negative attitudes or performance related to their speaking skills. However, a few participants (3 students) found group work and peer support to be helpful in order to improve their speaking skills or deal with difficult questions.

Discussion of the Results

In this study, the data collected from the 21 non-native speakers were analyzed in

order to find out the impact of an oral presentation project on their motivation. Therefore, three research questions were asked:

1. What are university ESL students' motivational and emotional responses to a performance-based assessment project specifically an oral presentation project both before and after the project?
2. Is there a difference across time?
3. Is there a difference between those students who have less experience and those who have more experience with performing an oral presentation project?

In this chapter, I answer these research questions based on the results and relate these findings to previous studies mentioned in the literature review in Chapter II.

What are university ESL students' motivational and emotional responses to a performance-based assessment project, specifically an oral presentation project both before and after the project?

Motivational responses. In keeping with the previous research where Brookhart and Durkin (2003) found that oral presentation projects, as an assessment tool, motivated the learners to carry out their tasks is supported by this present study as can be seen in the participants pre-project total motivation ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.50$) and post-project motivation ($M = 3.08$, $SD = 0.53$) based on a scale from 1 to 4. Based on the qualitative data, a reason for this motivation could be explained by the topic of the oral presentation project (love theme). Some participants considered that this topic existed in all cultures, and they could talk about it without much difficulty. This assertion is supported by the numerical data related to the variable project difficulty at both pre ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 0.98$) and post-project ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 0.88$) stages which indicated a slight level of difficulty.

These participants additionally believed that their skills allowed them to meet the challenges related to the completion of this oral presentation project at both pre ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 0.65$) and post-project ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.77$). This may explain why they were motivated to carry out this project although there were no statistically significant differences between the two stages. The participants also indicated the importance of peer support while working in small groups and the setting of personal goals as positive motivational factors. This finding is supported by Kobayashi (2003) where three focal participants improved their oral presentations skills following their positive relationship with their group peers. This positive relationship helped these participants accept their group peers' feedback without being frustrated while preparing their oral presentation together. Furthermore, the majority of the participants mentioned that they were confident while preparing and performing the oral presentation project which may have also helped their motivation. Based on these reasons, it can be concluded that the oral presentation exposed these participants to real-life situations which added an element of authenticity in addition to the assessment which was more oriented towards the performance instead of the content. This authenticity might increase learners' interest in the oral presentation project and motivate them to give more attention but also to put more effort into their preparation as found in previous studies by Bas (2011) and Muresan (2009) who pointed out the motivating factors of project work and its positive impacts on learners' motivation. This authenticity, according to these researchers, can be explained by the real-life skills included in the project work. For example, the students used the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) while working on their project, practiced listening while watching the film, and practiced speaking while

discussing in groups and presenting in front of peers. Designing Powerpoint is another real-life skill that learners gained while performing the oral presentation project.

Emotional responses. The participants reacted positively to the oral presentation project at both the pre-project stage ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 0.97$) and the post- project stage ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 0.71$) although there was a statistically significant increase at post-project level. This increase could be explained by the fact that the participants gained more confidence after presenting their project and the anxiety related to speaking might also decrease once the oral presentation is over. In addition, these participants thought that their skill allowed them to meet the challenges related to the oral presentation as seen in the pre-project stage ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 0.65$) and the post-project stage ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.77$). This might also explain why their emotional feeling was positive.

Is there a difference across time?

Success expectation and result assessment. The participants in the study had a high success expectation prior to starting the project, but they significantly lowered their result assessment after carrying out the project. Based on the participants' responses to the open-ended questions, one of the reasons relates to group member participation. Other explanations provided by these participants relate to the group peers' speaking skills, selfishness, and the difficulties related to the cooperation between group peers due to their various backgrounds, cultures, and personalities. For example, some of the participants asserted that their group members did not have a positive attitude towards the group or did not contribute positively to the success of the group as exemplified in the following statement: "I didn't like team project. Some people participated in the project, but others didn't do much". This finding is in line with a previous study where Chang

(2010) found that learners' performance and motivation might be influenced by their peers' positive or negative attitudes. Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1994) also found that a cohesive group with positive group norms may be conducive to a positive classroom evaluation by the learners. However, the contrary might harm the classroom climate which, in turn, may have a negative impact on learners' performance, especially if they are working in small groups. Again, this difficult relationship between group members might explain why the participants' result assessment did not match their success expectation.

Emotional state before and after the oral presentation project. Concerning the participants' emotional state, it was at a mid-level at both the pre ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 0.97$) and post- project ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 0.71$) stages. However, there was a statistically significant increase in their emotional state at the post-project level. This positive change could be explained by the fact that the participants gained more confidence after presenting their project and the anxiety related to speaking might also decrease once the oral presentation is over. The open-ended question responses support this variation because the majority of the respondents explained not to be anxious or nervous after their presentation.

Another explanation could be the participants' performance and the effort put into the completion of the project which might correlate with high self-esteem and confidence as asserted by this respondent: "I think I did well because I performed pretty well this time and I was more confident. I also think I improved my eye contact and posture". Once L2 learners gain confidence and pride about their performance, they tend to be less anxious (Oxford, 1999). In addition, the participants' anxiety related to

speaking in this study may be temporary in the sense that there was a statistical significant increase at post-project stage and only two students affirmed to be nervous after performing their oral presentation project. This increase also shows that oral presentations as an assessment instrument in order to assess L2 speakers' speaking skill may be conducive to reducing their anxiety related to speaking so that it cannot become a trait and impede their overall learning.

Is there a difference between high experience and low experience participants? With regard to project attraction, total motivation, project difficulty, challenge-skill balance, result assessment, and emotional state, the results indicated that the high experience participants significantly differed from low experience students at both levels before and after the oral presentation project. This difference could be explained by the fact that the high experience group had a higher self-esteem, and were less anxious in contrast to the low experience group before and after the project. In connection with a previous study, Chang (2010) found that there was a correlation between high self-esteem and motivation. The familiarity or greater experience with an oral presentation also made the completion of the project easier for the high experienced group as stated by this high experience participant: "I did well because I have experience with oral presentation since the primary school". High experience students might have also used the skills that they possessed prior to this oral presentation project in order to mitigate their feelings of nervousness. Another reason could be the experience since the less practiced participants' emotional state was negative before the presentation. Being able to speak in front of their classmates and finishing with the oral presentation might have a positive impact on their emotional feeling after the presentation.

To conclude, these participants were motivated to carry out the oral presentation project at both pre- and post-project stages. However, there were some variations from the pre-project to the post-project levels concerning success expectation and result assessment. This variation was explained by the group-related factors such as group cohesiveness and group norms. Their emotional states also varied from the pre-project to the post-project stages. The participants' emotional state significantly increased after the oral presentation. This increase could be explained by the fact that the participants are done with the oral presentation but also the anxiety related to speaking might decrease once the presentation is finished.

Chapter V: Conclusion

After discussing the results of this present study, it can be said that the 21 participants' motivational and emotional responses were influenced by their performance, anxiety related to speaking in front of their peers, experience with an oral presentation project, and group related-factors. Overall, the participants were motivated and emotionally comfortable in spite of the challenges related to group work and speaking. These findings are in line with previous research studies such as Bas (2011), Kobayashi (2003), and Muresan (2009) where project work was found to be a motivating factor for L2 learners to carry out their classroom tasks. Supporting the notion that motivation is a complex and dynamic phenomena (Dornyei and Ushioda, 2011), this study also showed evidence that project motivation was not static based on results that showed a statistically significant decrease in relation to expectancy of success and a significant increase with respect to emotional state.

Pedagogical Implications

As advocated by Dörnyei (2014), L2 teachers should apply motivational teaching practices such as selecting relevant classroom materials, appropriate assessment tools that take into account the learners' desire to communicate, a cohesive group, and a joyful classroom atmosphere in order to maintain the learners' motivation. A high motivation might help the L2 learners maintain their anxiety at an acceptable level and become more confident and less worried while dealing with speaking tasks. This present study confirms the necessity and usefulness of PBA in the form of group-based oral presentations as a sound motivational teaching practice. However, instructors need to carefully address the group factor since the majority of the participants in this study

indicated that group dynamics was an influence in either helping or preventing them from performing well. Therefore, a teacher needs to create a classroom atmosphere that supports group work and informs the learners of their responsibility towards the group. According to Clément et al. (1994), maintaining the cohesion of the group by explaining to each student that their contributions are relevant and necessary for group success may have a positive impact on L2 learners' motivation and attitudes towards the classroom activities in general and group work in particular. The maintenance of group cohesion, therefore, is a critical component of PBA since performance-based assessments are often carried out in small groups.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study related to the following elements: completion of the post-project motivation questionnaire, the low number of participants, and the use of questionnaires as a data collection tool, and for instance, participants' responses to open-ended questions.

Questionnaire completion. The 21 participants were supposed to complete the post-project questionnaire just after doing the oral presentation, but a few participants (4) took two to three days in order to complete this questionnaire because of some personal reasons which prevented them to be present in order to complete the questionnaire just after their presentation. This delay may slightly affect their responses since the participants were supposed to complete the post-project questionnaire just after finishing their presentation. However, all of the participants completed the questionnaire before receiving their grades.

Low number of participants. This small size (21) may make it difficult to generalize the findings of the study.

Limitations of the questionnaire as a data collection instrument. According to Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) an important limitation with questionnaires is that participants may provide simple or superficial responses compared with in-person interviews. They also argue that questionnaires might be affected by social desirability or prestige bias. For example, informants tend to present themselves in a more positive light than they really are and thus might present opinions, thoughts, and feelings that are not truly representative. A way to mitigate this drawback consists in asking the respondents to be as honest as possible while answering the questionnaires as can be seen in the introductory paragraphs of the pre and post-project questionnaires (see appendixes B and C).

Suggestions for Further Studies

For further studies, researchers can first use a much larger number of participants in order to better generalize their findings to the targeted population and also collect motivational and emotional data while participants are preparing the project, not just before and after the project.

Second, the authors of future research may explore how language learners react motivationally and emotionally to different types of speaking assessment tools such as oral interviews, monologues, role plays, picture-cued storytelling, retelling a story or news events, group discussions, and conversation.

Third, researchers can conduct their studies within specific cultural or EFL

contexts in order to investigate how these learners respond to an oral presentation project done in small groups.

Fourth, researchers can conduct in- person interviews with the participants in order to obtain richer qualitative data related to some of their decisions or choices.

Finally, an ethnographic study using diary report or observation can be used in order to analyze the L2 learners' responses to speaking tasks across time such as over one year or over two semesters.

Applying these suggestions, therefore, can help future researchers to better generalize their findings to the desired population and obtain richer findings in relation to effective assessment practices with L2 learners.

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Appendix A: Oral Presentation Project Guidelines

Romantic Film Project (20%)

Procedure:

1. Students are put into small groups of 3 or 4. Instructor will form the groups.
2. Groups select a film from the list below and watch it in their own time. Each group must select a different film (if groups choose the same film we will do rock, scissors, paper).

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Titanic - Before Sunrise - Moulin Rouge - Breaking Dawn (Part 1) - Vanilla Sky - Pretty Woman - The Notebook - When Harry Met Sally | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jerry Maguire - Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind - Legends of the Fall - The Notebook - Lost in Translation - The Scarlet Letter - Bridges of Madison County - A film of your own choosing based on Instructor's approval |
|--|---|

3. The group analyzes the romantic love that is depicted in the film and prepares a 15 minute oral presentation (3 minute leeway) based on the following:
 - Title of film, year made, name of main actors, and name of main characters (use visual images to show movie poster and pictures of the characters)
 - Briefly explain the setting and situation of the film
 - Describe how the couple first meet and then show the movie clip (the clip must not be longer than two minutes).
 - Describe the different phases of love that the couple experience in the film by

making connections to the ‘Science of Love’ lecture that we listened to in class.

- What methods does each person use to try and attract the other? Which are successful and which are not?
- What problems does the couple experience in their relationship? How do they overcome or resolve them? If they do not, how do you think they could have overcome them?
- How does each person change as a result of the romantic relationship? Do they change in positive ways, in negative ways, or in both positive and negative ways in your view?
- What are the two most impressive verbal expressions of love in the film? Explain why they are impressive to you. [Group must agree and one member explains the group’s different reasons]
- What is your favorite clip in the movie? Explain why. Before presenting the clip you must describe the setting and situation. After showing the clip, explain why you like it. The clip must not be longer than three minutes. [Group must agree and one member explains the group’s different reasons]
- In your opinion, how is the romantic love and relationship that is depicted in the film different from romantic love and relationships in your culture? [Each person from a different culture must present – if more than one person is from the same culture you must present and share speaking time together].

Purpose:

To develop analytical, cooperative, and oral presentation skills are important in today’s university classrooms.

Evaluation:**Individual Performance: 60%**

- Communicate the content and his/her thoughts in a clear and coherent manner (including the use of appropriate vocabulary expressions) [3x]
- **Uses own words and speaks naturally** (not in a memorized fashion or reading from a text) [2x]
- Has a good **fluency** and speaks in a manner which is **not too fast or too slow** (long pauses/hesitations and without too many **filler words** such as ‘uh’) [2x]
- **Pronunciation** of individual words/phrases is clear (not interfering with comprehension) and uses **variance in intonation patterns** (not speaking in a monotone voice) [2x]
- Uses **correct grammar forms** [2x]
- Makes good **eye contact** with the audience (making wide eye contact with all audience members) [2x]
- **Speaks loudly enough** so that all audience members can clearly hear [2x]
- Demonstrates **enthusiasm for the topic** and appears **relaxed and confident** [2x]

Group Performance: 20%

- Shows evidence of being **well-prepared and well-organized** and is **smooth and well-sequenced** (has a good pace that is not rushed, too slow, or uneven and has well-connected transitions between different parts of the presentation) [3x]
- **All required content** is presented [2x]
- All group members spoke for a roughly **equal amount of time** [1x]

Group stays within the **recommended times** [1x]

Audio-Visual Aids: 10%

- Use of video is effective (clear sound and picture, no breakdowns or time-gaps trying to play the video) [1x]
- Presentation software (PowerPoint or Prezi) has a clear and attractive design with attractive visual images [1x]
- PowerPoint or Prezi is used without information overload and without grammar or spelling mistakes [1x]

Self-Assessment Reflection Form: 10%

- contains reflective comments that are thoughtful and elaborate [3x]
- is fully completed [1x]

~ You will watch a video of your group's teaching presentation and then self-assess and reflect on your performance by filling out a self-assessment reflection form which will be available for download on D2L. You will then send your completed self-assessment form to Instructor's email address before midnight the day after your presentation.

Q & A Session and 'Questions and Comments' Sheet

Following each presentation there will be a short Q & A session. Therefore, those who observe the presentation will be asked to create a 'questions and comment' sheet that will be counted towards their participation grade (based on a completed scale). Observers will simply write down any questions they would like to ask to the presenters or write down any comments they would like to share with the presenters such as things they liked or even provide constructive feedback. Instructor will collect the 'questions and comments' sheet after the presentations.

Reward Points

Based on your group grade ('group performance' grade + 'audio-visual aids' grade out of 30), 20% of that grade will be allocated toward the accumulation of reward points for some members of your group. The idea is to reward students within your group who contributed strongly to the creation of the assignment in terms of ideas, workload, and having a cooperative and positive attitude. Let me give you a simple example so you can see how it works. Let's say for example that your group consists of 5 members and that your group received 25/30 for the group grade. First, we take 20% of 25 which is 5. This means that your group has 5 reward points. Next we divide the 5 points into the number of people in your group (5 people) which is a total of 1 reward point for each member. This now means that each group member has 1 reward point which they then need to give away to either one group member or to two group members (half for one person and half for the other) based on who they think contributed most to the assignment in terms of ideas, workload, and having a positive and cooperative attitude. You cannot give the reward points to yourself and must either give them to one other person in your group or to two other members in your group (or to nobody if you feel that no one deserves it!). The amount of reward points that you receive from your group members will then be added to your total score. You will inform Instructor about who you would like to give your reward points to at the end of the self-assessment reflection form (which will be available for download on D2L).

Appendix B: Pre-Project Motivation Questionnaire

I would appreciate it if you could please complete this questionnaire before you start your oral presentation project. The purpose is to better understand your motivation before you start this oral presentation project. This questionnaire is composed of four parts. Please read each instruction carefully. This is not a test so there are no "right" or "wrong" answers and you do not even have to write your name. I will use the results of this survey only for my research purpose specifically my thesis which is a partial requirement for the obtention of the Master Degree, so please give your answers openly and truthfully. Thank you very much for your help!

Part 1

In this part of the questionnaire, I would like you to read the following questions and select the answer that you feel is the best.

1. How enthusiastic are you to start this oral presentation project?

..... Not at all enthusiastic

..... Not enthusiastic

..... Enthusiastic

..... Very enthusiastic

2. How well do you expect to do on this oral presentation project?

..... Not at all well

..... Not well

..... Well

.....Very well

3. How much effort do you expect to put into this oral presentation project?

..... I don't have to give much effort

..... I have to make a bit of an effort

..... I have to try hard

..... I have to try very hard

4. If this oral presentation were graded, what sort of grade would you expect to get for this oral presentation in comparison to your classmates?

..... Far below average

..... Just below average

..... Just above average

..... Far above average

5. How difficult is this oral presentation project going to be for you?

..... Not at all difficult

..... Not difficult

..... Difficult

..... Very difficult

6. How enjoyable do you expect to find this oral presentation project?

..... Not at all enjoyable

..... Not enjoyable

..... Enjoyable

..... Very enjoyable

7. How much focused attention do you expect to put in this oral presentation project?

..... Not much attention

..... Some attention

..... Much attention

..... Very much attention

Part 2

In this part of the questionnaire, I would like you to select the circle that best indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

8. Please select a circle.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

When performing this project it may be

challenging, but I believe my skills will

allow me to meet the challenge.

Part 3

In this part of the questionnaire, I would like you to simply select the circle that best describes your emotional feeling before starting this oral presentation project.

9. How is your general emotional feeling just before starting this project?

a. Not at ease At ease

b. Not nervous Nervous

c. Not worried Worried

d. Not confident Confident

Part 4

In this part of the questionnaire, I would like you to read the questions carefully and write your responses in the space provided below the questions.

If you feel nervous or a little nervous before starting this oral presentation project, answer question 10.

If you do not feel nervous before starting this oral presentation project, answer question 11.

10. What are some of the reasons why you feel nervous before starting this oral presentation project?

11. What are some of the reasons why you do not feel nervous before starting this oral presentation project?

If you think you will do well on this oral presentation project, answer question 12 and if you think you will not do well on this oral presentation project, answer question 13.

12. Why do you think you will do well on this oral presentation project?

13. Why do you think you will not do well on this oral presentation project?

14. Have you ever done an oral presentation? If yes how many?

Part 5

In this part of the questionnaire, I would like you to fill in this form, please.

Age:

Gender:

Country of origin:

First language:

Major:

Good luck with your oral presentation project!

Thank you for your contribution!

Appendix C: Post-Project Motivation Questionnaire

Now that you have finished with your oral presentation, I would appreciate it if you could please complete this questionnaire. The purpose is to better understand your motivation after doing this oral presentation project. This questionnaire is composed of five parts. Please read each instruction carefully. This is not a test so there are no "right" or "wrong" answers and you do not even have to write your name. I will use the results of this survey only for my research purpose specifically my thesis which is a partial requirement for the obtention of the Master Degree, so please give your answers openly and truthfully. Thank you very much for your help!

Part 1

In this part of the questionnaire, I would like you to read the following questions and select the answer that you feel is the best.

1. How interesting did you find this oral presentation project?

..... Not at all interesting

..... Not interesting

..... Interesting

..... Very interesting

2. How well did you do on this oral presentation project?

..... Not at all well

..... Not well

..... Well

.....Very well

3. How much effort did you put into this oral presentation project?

..... I didn't have to give much effort

..... I had to make a bit of an effort

..... I had to try hard

..... I had to try very hard

4. If you could grade yourself for this oral presentation project, what sort of grade would you give to yourself in comparison to the rest of your classmates?

..... Far below average

..... Just below average

..... Just above average

..... Far above average

5. How difficult did you find this oral presentation project?

..... Not at all difficult

..... Not difficult

..... Difficult

..... Very difficult

6. How enjoyable did you find this oral presentation project?

..... Not at all enjoyable

..... Not enjoyable

..... Enjoyable

..... Very enjoyable

7. How much focused attention did you give while doing this oral presentation project?

..... Not much attention

..... Some attention

..... Much attention

..... Very much attention

Part 2

In this part of the questionnaire, I would like you to select the circle that best indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

8. Please select a circle.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

When performing this project it was
challenging, but I believe my skills
allowed me to meet the challenge.

Part 3

In this part of the questionnaire, I would like you to simply select the circle that best describes your emotional feeling just after finishing doing this oral presentation project.

9. How is your general emotional feeling just after finishing doing this oral presentation project?

- a. Not at ease At ease
- b. Not nervous Nervous
- c. Not worried Worried

d. Not confident Confident

Part 4

In this part of the questionnaire, I would like you to read the questions carefully and write your responses in the space provided below the questions.

If you feel nervous or a little nervous after doing this oral presentation project, answer question 10.

If you do not feel nervous after doing this oral presentation project, answer question 11.

10. What are some of the reasons why you feel nervous after doing this oral presentation project?

11. What are some of the reasons why you do not feel nervous after doing this oral presentation project?

If you think you did well on this oral presentation project, answer question 12 and if you think you did not do well on this oral presentation project, answer question 13.

12. Why do you think you did well on this oral presentation project?

13. Why do you think you did not do well on this oral presentation project?

14. What aspects of this project did you like and why?

15. What aspects of this project didn't you like and why?

16. What aspects of this project were difficult to achieve and why?

Part 5

In this part of the questionnaire, I would like you to fill in this form, please.

Age:

Gender:

Country of origin:

First language:

Major:

Thank you for your contribution!

Appendices D: Consent Form

ONLINE/ANONYMOUS SURVEY CONSENT

You are kindly requested to participate in a **research** study that investigates the Impact of Performance-Based Assessment on English as a Second Language Learners' Motivation. The aim of the study is to examine the impact of performance-based assessment on English as a Second Language learners' motivation to carry out a performance-based task specifically an oral presentation project.

This study is supervised by Dr. Glen Poupore and conducted by Kadidja Kone, a MA TESL graduate student in the Department of English at Minnesota State University, Mankato, USA. You were selected as a potential participant in the study because you are a student in the Department of English as a Second Language at Minnesota State University, Mankato, USA and enrolled in 125 precisely Advanced Oracy for Non-Native Speakers. You will be asked to answer questions about your level of motivation before doing your oral presentation project and after doing your oral presentation project. The survey questionnaire is expected to take approximately 20-25 minutes to complete. If you have any questions about the research, please contact Dr. Glen Poupore at glen.poupore@mnsu.edu or Kadidja Kone at kadidja.kone@mnsu.edu.

Participation is voluntary. You can choose not to participate in this research, and you may stop taking the survey at any time by closing your web browser. Participation or non-participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits and will not impact your relationship with Minnesota State University, Mankato. If you have questions about the treatment of human participants' rights, please contact the Institutional Review Board

(IRB) Administrator, Dr. Barry Ries, at 507-389-2321 or barry.ries@mnsu.edu.

Your responses to the survey will be anonymous, and the records of this research study will be kept confidential. The results of the survey will be kept on a secured laptop. It is also assured that any publications and presentations of the results will not include demographic descriptions of individual participants that are detailed enough to make identification possible. However, as the data collection will use online technology, there might always be the risk of compromising privacy, confidentiality, and/or anonymity. For more information about the specific privacy and anonymity risks caused by online surveys, contact the Minnesota State University, Mankato Information and Technology Services Help Desk (507-389-6654) and ask to speak to the Information Security Manager or email servicedesk@mnsu.edu.

The risks you will encounter as a participant in this research are not more than those experienced in your everyday life.

There is no direct cost or benefit to you for participation in this research. Participation will cost you only time and you will not receive money to participate. However, results gathered from the study might provide a better understanding of effective strategies for English language education.

Submitting the completed survey will indicate your informed consent to participate and your assurance that you are at least 18 years of age.

Please do not hesitate to print a copy of this page for your future reference.

MSU IRBNet ID # for this research: 655121

Date of MSU IRB approval: September 11th, 2014