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Guided Speaking Task Repetition Approach for Non-English Majors: A Conceptual Framework

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ABSTRACT: *A second attempt at a speaking task may be easier, yet improvement on rehearsed content does not establish broader speaking development. This conceptual paper proposes a framework for guided task repetition in university English courses for non-English majors. A targeted narrative synthesis brings together research on speech processing, task repetition, corrective feedback, and practice schedules. The framework links five instructional functions: brief preparation, an initial performance, selective feedback, a revised performance, and a subsequent task with changed content. Its central argument is that repetition should retain enough familiarity to support language retrieval while varying content sufficiently to examine whether the benefits extend beyond a rehearsed response. A classroom illustration places the 35-minute sequence within routine university schedules. The paper distinguishes empirical findings from psycholinguistic inferences and untested proposals, identifies conditions under which the framework may fail, and presents three testable propositions with guidelines for evaluation.*

Keywords: *task repetition; oral fluency; non-English majors; speaking instruction; skill transfer.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

A second language learner may explain an idea adequately on a second attempt, then struggle with a new question on the same topic. This presents teachers with a diagnostic problem. Does smoother speech reflect language development, or familiarity with a rehearsed response? Task repetition offers a useful setting for examining that distinction. Learners can revisit a communicative problem instead of moving on immediately after their first attempt.

Research on task repetition warrants interest and methodological caution. Repetition has consistently been associated with immediate gains in oral fluency, but the pattern of change varies across performance dimensions and practice schedules. Fluency also needs a precise definition. Tavakoli and Hunter (2018) observe that teachers frequently equate it with overall speaking proficiency, which can obscure the instructional decisions needed to develop temporal speech control. Here, fluency refers specifically to the temporal organization of speech: speaking rate, pausing, and overt repair. Communicative adequacy and grammatical accuracy are treated separately.

This paper considers how short, structured speaking sequences can be designed for non-English majors in university English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses. The intended setting is a class of approximately 30-40 students at upper-elementary to intermediate proficiency levels (CEFR A2-B1). These are design assumptions, not empirical descriptions of university populations. The instructional question is how preparation, corrective feedback, repetition, and content variation can be coordinated without turning speaking practice into script rehearsal.

The paper sets out the relationships, intended cognitive mechanisms, and conditions of failure across five instructional stages. It does not claim to have invented task repetition or established its unprecedented effectiveness. Instead, the framework specifies how the instructional value of repetition could be examined empirically in classroom settings.

II. CONCEPTUAL APPROACH AND SCOPE

The framework is developed through a targeted narrative synthesis, following Jaakkola's (2020) guidance on conceptual article design. Jaakkola calls for an explicit design and a justified choice of theoretical sources. Each strand of literature has a distinct role here. Psycholinguistic models explain why an additional speaking attempt becomes less cognitively demanding. Task repetition studies identify performance benefits and their qualifications. Research on oral corrective feedback informs the revision opportunity, while work on practice schedules helps distinguish immediate gains from retained learning.

Sources were identified through targeted searches on task repetition, oral fluency, corrective feedback,

time pressure, spacing schedules, and conceptual methodology. Bibliographic details and reported findings were checked against publisher platforms and institutional repositories. Selection was purposive rather than exhaustive, focusing on 11 primary peer-reviewed empirical studies, established theoretical monographs, and a recent systematic review. No database-wide systematic search, formal screening protocol, PRISMA flow diagram, quality-scoring procedure, or meta-analysis was undertaken. Where only a publisher abstract was accessible, claims were limited to findings explicitly reported there.

The synthesis examined what each source could justify about task design and where questions or disagreements remained. The resulting framework is a reasoned pedagogical proposal. It establishes neither causal classroom effects nor an optimal repetition count, and the complete sequence has not been empirically validated. These limits shape the research propositions and evaluation priorities presented below.

III. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

1. Defining the Instructional Problem

A speaking task is understood here as a classroom activity in which learners use language to communicate meaning toward a functional outcome, such as recommending an option, explaining a procedure, or resolving a practical problem. Producing a prescribed grammatical structure is not sufficient. This definition draws on Ellis (2009), who explains how task-based teaching can accommodate form-focused instruction while keeping meaning central. The framework is intended to supplement an existing university EFL course without requiring a wholesale redesign of its syllabus.

Exact repetition and repetition with changed content need to be distinguished. Exact repetition retains the same communicative problem, information, and situation. A subsequent task with changed content preserves the communicative procedure and structural demands but introduces new information or a different scenario. The two formats serve different purposes. Exact repetition reveals how performance changes as a message becomes familiar. Changing the content provides a stricter test of whether learners can use their language resources when that familiarity is removed.

Guidance means bounded support: helping learners organize ideas, identify a manageable number of repairable language problems, and choose a revision target for the next attempt. It does not involve supplying a complete answer to memorize. Fluency concerns the temporal features of speech, including rate, pause frequency and location, and self-correction. Communicative adequacy concerns fulfillment of the task outcome; linguistic accuracy concerns grammatical correctness. A rapidly delivered response that omits the required recommendation is fluent, but does not complete the task successfully.

2. Theoretical Rationale and Literature Synthesis

2.1. Speech Processing and Message Formulation

Speaking in a second language requires learners to coordinate message conceptualization, lexical and syntactic formulation, articulation, and monitoring. Kormos (2006) provides a psycholinguistic account of these demands. The inference for task repetition is that message plans and formulations developed during an initial attempt need not be reconstructed entirely on an immediate second attempt. Bygate and Samuda (2005) place repetition within integrative planning: the first performance provides material for subsequent planning, rather than functioning solely as an assessment endpoint.

Empirical research confirms that familiarity with task content affects temporal fluency. Lambert et al. (2017) examined repeated monologues across three task types with 32 Japanese EFL learners at different proficiency levels. Immediate repetition led to significant fluency gains at all levels studied. The measures did not change together, however. Speech rate increased most rapidly over the first three attempts, mid-clause pauses decreased up to the fourth, and overt self-repairs decreased only after the fourth. These findings show that immediate rehearsal affects fluency measures differently; they do not support a universal repetition count.

2.2. Fluency Development Versus Content Rehearsal

Does faster delivery reflect more efficient processing, or quicker articulation of a memorized script? Thai and Boers (2016) examined this issue with 20 Vietnamese EFL students who repeated monologues under different time constraints. The shrinking-time 4/3/2 condition produced marked increases in speaking speed, with no significant gains in syntactic complexity or grammatical accuracy. Constant-time repetition yielded smaller speed gains alongside modest improvements in complexity and accuracy. The comparison argues against treating increasing time pressure as the default when revision and accuracy are central teaching goals.

De Jong and Perfetti (2011) provide evidence concerning retention beyond immediate performance. Adult ESL learners improved their fluency during practice in both repetition and non-repetition conditions. Only those who repeated their tasks maintained the gains on delayed posttests. This finding indicates that repetition can support proceduralization, but it does not validate every classroom repetition activity or establish the effectiveness

of the complete framework proposed here.

2.3. Feedback Integration and Practice Schedules

Corrective feedback helps direct attention to form during task-based practice. In their meta-analysis of classroom Second Language Acquisition (SLA) studies, Lyster and Saito (2010) found large, durable gains in target language development, with larger effects for prompts than recasts. Their analysis covered varied classroom interventions. It therefore cannot establish that a brief feedback interval between speaking attempts will automatically improve fluency or accuracy. Feedback is included here as an opportunity for revision; its contribution to the sequence needs to be tested separately.

Practice schedules impose further limits on what can be expected from repetition. Suzuki and Hanzawa (2022) found that massed repetition improved some immediate fluency measures while worsening others, with negligible schedule effects on a delayed novel task. In a systematic review, Rogers and Li (2025) concluded that the literature lacks strong theoretical rationales and standardized reporting for repetition intervals. These findings caution against assuming that massed practice, or any particular interval, is inherently superior.

IV. PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1. The Guided Task Repetition Framework

The framework links five instructional functions: brief preparation, an initial performance, selective feedback, a revised performance, and a subsequent task with changed content. It distinguishes improvement supported by message familiarity from performance when that familiarity is varied. Table 1 sets out the intended mechanisms, related evidence, theoretical inferences, implementation requirements, and possible failures for each component.

Framework Component	Component analysis
5.1 Brief Preparation (4 minutes)	**Intended Cognitive Mechanism:** Reduces the cognitive demands of message formulation and lexical retrieval. **Related Empirical Evidence:** Kormos (2006); Bygate & Samuda (2005). **Psycholinguistic Inference or Proposal:** Theoretical inference: Outlining ideas eases conceptualization without encouraging script memorization. **Implementation Conditions:** 4 minutes, keywords and a short phrase bank only, no full-sentence scripts. **Potential Failure Conditions:** A2 learners struggle to generate ideas, or learners write full scripts to read.
5.2 Initial Performance (6 minutes)	**Intended Cognitive Mechanism:** Elicits language production that reveals processing difficulties. **Related Empirical Evidence:** Ellis (2009); Lambert et al. (2017). **Psycholinguistic Inference or Proposal:** Pedagogical proposal: An uninterrupted attempt allows observation of independent message management. **Implementation Conditions:** 6 minutes, 2 per speaker and 2 for peer questions; the listener has a communicative task. **Potential Failure Conditions:** The task exceeds the learner's capacity, causing communication to break down.
5.3 Selective Feedback (6 minutes)	**Intended Cognitive Mechanism:** Directs attention to repairable language or communication problems. **Related Empirical Evidence:** Lyster & Saito (2010). **Psycholinguistic Inference or Proposal:** Untested proposal: Retaining one success and repairing one error balances cognitive workload. **Implementation Conditions:** 6 minutes, teacher sampling or peer checking, one manageable target feature. **Potential Failure Conditions:** Peers give incorrect grammar advice, or the learner cannot understand the error.

Framework Component	Component analysis
5.4 Revised Performance (6 minutes)	**Intended Cognitive Mechanism:** Provides an immediate chance to try a repair under stable task demands. **Related Empirical Evidence:** Thai & Boers (2016), Lambert et al. (2017). **Psycholinguistic Inference or Proposal:** Pedagogical proposal: Constant speaking time supports restructuring rather than compression. **Implementation Conditions:** 6 minutes, equal speaking time, a new partner sustains a communicative purpose. **Potential Failure Conditions:** Listener variability: Improved fluency reflects the new listener's prompts rather than speaker development.
5.5 Changed-Content Task (9 minutes)	**Intended Cognitive Mechanism:** Tests whether retrieved language resources can be used in a new task. **Related Empirical Evidence:** De Jong & Perfetti (2011); Suzuki & Hanzawa (2022). **Psycholinguistic Inference or Proposal:** Untested proposal: Content variation distinguishes proceduralized skill from content rehearsal. **Implementation Conditions:** 9 minutes, the same task structure with new information; within the same or a later lesson. **Potential Failure Conditions:** New content introduces too much unfamiliar vocabulary and excessive cognitive demands.

Table 1. Analytical Breakdown of Framework Components

2. An Illustrative Classroom Sequence

Table 2 shows how the 35-minute sequence can be organized in a university EFL class of 30-40 students working in pairs. Using task cards with short descriptions, students recommend one of two campus study spaces to a visiting peer. The listener identifies the recommended space and asks a clarifying question. This is a constructed teaching illustration, no classroom intervention or empirical trial was conducted for this paper.

Stage	Time	Student Activity and Observable Evidence	Pedagogical Focus
1. Prepare	**4 minutes**	Read the task card, choose a campus space and note two reasons using keywords and the phrase bank.	Reduce conceptualization demands, avoid full sentence writing.
2. Perform	**6 minutes**	Speaker 1 presents a choice (2 min), the listener identifies it and asks one question (1 min). Reverse roles.	An uninterrupted first attempt reveals formulation difficulties.
3. Review	**6 minutes**	Consult the teacher or reference card, retain one successful feature and choose one repairable error.	Selective feedback and workload management through the "1-1" rule.
4. Repeat	**6 minutes**	Change partners, repeat with equal speaking time (2 min per speaker), using the selected repair.	Reuse the speech plan under stable time pressure.
5. Apply	**9 minutes**	Use a new event-venue card, present a choice with new information and similar structural phrasing.	Vary content to test reuse of language resources.
6. Reflect	**4 minutes**	On a reflection slip, record one expression successfully reused and one remaining difficulty.	Awareness of observable changes in performance.

Table 2. Proposed 35-Minute Classroom Sequence

V. DISCUSSION, RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS, AND METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

1. Diagnostic Utility of the Framework

The framework's principal theoretical advantage is diagnostic. Comparing the initial attempt, the revised attempt, and the task with changed content allows teachers to distinguish rehearsal of familiar material, use of targeted feedback, and transfer of language resources to a new problem. These outcomes may diverge. Keeping them separate is methodologically more informative than grouping them under the label "improved speaking."

2. Testable Research Propositions

To guide future empirical evaluations of the framework, three formal research propositions are advanced. These propositions represent testable hypotheses rather than established conclusions.

Proposition 1 (Immediate Fluency Gains under Rehearsal): For upper-elementary to intermediate EFL learners, repeating a communicative speaking task after brief, unscripted preparation will produce greater immediate gains in speech rate and greater reductions in pausing than an unfamiliar task of equivalent difficulty, provided practice duration and preparation time are held constant.

Proposition 2 (Targeted Effect of Selective Feedback): A brief feedback interval focused on one repairable linguistic feature will produce significantly greater accuracy gains on that feature during the revised attempt than repetition without feedback. It will not necessarily increase overall syntactic complexity or speech rate.

Proposition 3 (Retention and Transfer through Content Variation): With total practice time held constant, a guided repetition sequence that includes a task with changed content will produce better retention and transfer of target linguistic structures on a delayed, unpractised posttest than exact repetition alone.

Testing these propositions requires equal instructional time across experimental groups, separate measures of temporal fluency (speech rate, pausing, and repair) and accuracy, and documentation of listener behavior, prior proficiency, and practice outside class.

3. Methodological Limitations and Boundary Conditions

The framework has several limitations. The narrative synthesis draws on a purposive selection of 11 key studies and cannot claim exhaustive coverage of SLA research. The sources also differ in task design, learner populations, intervention length, and outcome measures; their findings cannot be combined into a guaranteed classroom effect. Non-English majors are a heterogeneous group, so the proposed A2–B1 level, timings, and support routines require local validation. Finally, the sequence combines feedback, repetition, and task variation. Any classroom gains cannot be attributed to repetition alone without controlled factorial comparisons.

VI. CONCLUSION

Guided task repetition offers a theoretically sound structure for converting an initial speaking attempt into a meaningful learning opportunity. By integrating brief preparation, an uninterrupted first performance, selective feedback, constant-time repetition, and a content-changed follow-up task, the framework balances content familiarity with task variation. Its ultimate scientific value lies in establishing clear analytical relationships and explicit failure conditions that make repetition researchable and diagnostically useful. Whether this sequence enhances retained, transferable speaking competence for non-English majors remains an open empirical question requiring systematic investigation.

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