Factors Influencing English Conversational Interaction Between Teachers and Students in High Schools in Dong Nai Province

Ly Ngoc Toan, Ph.D
Ho Cho Minh City University of Law, Vietnam
lntoan@hcmulaw.edu.vn

Abstract

The main goal of this study is to improve the ability of teachers and students to converse in English in high schools in the province of Dong Nai. The study framework is based on the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky, with additional contributions from Long's interaction theory and Brown's communicative language teaching methodology. The research findings show that belonging, expectation, relationship, and motivation are four factors that have a positive and statistically significant impact on the conversational English-language interactions between teachers and students in this educational context. These findings were obtained through a survey of 148 English teachers in three high schools located in Dong Nai and subsequent data analysis using SPSS 20 software. The study's findings led the researchers to suggest a number of workable methods for improving teachers' ability to converse with learners in English. The aforementioned undertaking signifies a deliberate attempt to further progress language learning in Vietnam.
Key words: Conversational interaction, belonging, expectation, relationship, motivation

Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio es mejorar la interacción conversacional en inglés entre profesores y estudiantes en escuelas secundarias de Dong Nai. La teoría sociocultural de Vygotsky, la teoría de interacción de Long y la metodología de enseñanza del lenguaje comunicativo de Brown enmarcan este estudio. Los resultados de la investigación muestran que pertenencia, expectativas, relación y motivación son cuatro factores que tienen un gran impacto en los intercambios en inglés entre profesores y estudiantes en este contexto educativo. Estos hallazgos se obtuvieron mediante una encuesta a 148 profesores de inglés en tres escuelas secundarias de la provincia y un posterior análisis de datos utilizando el software SPSS 20. Los hallazgos llevaron a los investigadores a sugerir una serie de métodos viables para mejorar la habilidad conversacional en inglés entre docentes y estudiantes en un intento deliberado de seguir avanzando en el aprendizaje del idioma en Vietnam.
Palabras claves: Interacción conversacional, pertenencia, expectativas, relación, motivación

Introduction

In order to remain competitive and meet international standards, Vietnam has made significant strides in improving the quality of education and training in the modern period of globalization (Prime Minister, 2008). Enhancing employees' and students' English language skills has become a critical goal. Therefore, English is required in all educational settings, from elementary schools to colleges. Differences in the starting language competency levels of

teachers and students have been found, despite the National Foreign Language Project (2008–2020) being implemented, which did not produce the expected results. A number of factors have been suggested as the cause of this discrepancy, including inadequate focus on language acquisition techniques, differences in teachers' language proficiency, restrictions in the curriculum and instructional materials, and a lack of consistency among participating schools.

This study's main objective is to improve the English conversational interaction skills between teachers and students in high schools in the province of Dong Nai, Vietnam. This study integrates Brown's (2000) communicative language teaching methods and Long's (1983) interaction hypothesis, which are both based on Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory. This research seeks to promote foreign language education and enable better learning outcomes by identifying and assessing the elements impacting English-language conversational interactions. Noticeably, the current study takes a pragmatic approach, emphasizing the critical role of teachers, as opposed to earlier research that mostly focused on student engagement. In addition, this study project represents a concerted attempt to advance language education in Vietnam by addressing a gap in conversational English usage in classroom settings (Bonvillain, 2014).

The dynamics of conversational interactions in teaching and learning situations have been the subject of several academic investigations. Leading scholars on this topic include VanPatten and Williams (2014), Lantolf and Thorne (2007), and Saville-Troike (2012). But the main emphasis of this research was on the involvement of the learners in the process. Empirical studies have provided a significant understanding of the concrete benefits of using conversational interaction activities in English language instruction since they lead students to actively use the language in the classroom, encouraging natural and spontaneous language use (Savaşçı, 2013). However, there are difficulties in the development of such activities. These include the inadequate English proficiency of the students (Airey, 2011), their timid nature (Machan, 2011), and cultural differences (Bonvillain, 2014). As for teachers, differences in language ability and methods of education have created challenges for efficient English instruction (Simbolon et al., 2017).

Although prior research has enhanced our comprehension of conversational exchanges in language acquisition, there are several constraints associated with these studies. First of all, much research describes the experiences and viewpoints of the students, largely ignoring the crucial role that teachers play in influencing this relationship. Second, the majority of research that has been done so far has taken a theoretical or conceptual approach and has not included empirical data from real-world educational environments. Thirdly, generic language learning concepts have received much attention, with little attention paid to the particular difficulties and subtleties that arise in various cultural and social contexts, like Vietnam.

To address the identified gaps in previous research, this study proposes an innovative approach by examining conversational interactions from the perspective of English language teachers in high schools across Vietnam's Dong Nai region. Employing a quantitative research design inspired by Krashen's (1988) work, this study aims to empirically test research hypotheses and generalize findings to a broader population (Newman & Benz, 1998). Notably, the study incorporates affective elements highlighted by Ni (2012) that influence foreign language learners' input and intake rates, focusing on four key factors: Belonging (B), Expectation (E), Relationship (R), and Motivation (M). This leads to the proposed equation: $CI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 B + \beta_2 E + \beta_3 R + \beta_4 M + \mu$, where CI represents the conversational interaction between teachers and students. By adopting this comprehensive approach, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the

dynamics of English language instruction in Vietnamese classrooms, potentially bridging gaps in existing literature and offering practical implications for enhancing teacher-student interactions.

Through a thorough examination of these constraints and a novel approach, this research might yield significant knowledge and useful recommendations for improving English language conversational exchanges in the Vietnamese classroom. The results have the potential to enhance the creation of curriculum, teacher training programs, and successful pedagogical practices that are customized to the distinct cultural and social dynamics of Vietnam. Furthermore, this research's empirical design will serve as a basis for future studies, expanding our knowledge of this important facet of language instruction.

Literature review

Theoretical framework

Insights into successful pedagogical strategies are provided by discussing theoretical frameworks for conversational engagement in English language instruction. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Long's interaction hypothesis, and Brown's communicative language teaching (CLT) theory are the three frameworks. The main ideas behind these theoretical frameworks are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Theoretical framework

Framework	Content	Methods
Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory	Social interaction, cultural influences, cognitive development, interpersonal communication	Classroom interaction, real-world contexts
Long's Interaction Hypothesis	Meaning negotiation, comprehensible input, feedback, output adjustment, knowledge co-construction	Cooperative discourse, interlocutor interaction
Brown's Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)	Communicative competence, real-world communication, target language use, learner roles	Interactive activities, group projects, facilitation

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory

According to Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, social contact and cultural influences are crucial for supporting language acquisition and cognitive development. In order to promote learning, this idea highlights how important it is to have conversations and use language in real-world contexts. Specifically, interpersonal communication is crucial for moving from a state of unfamiliarity to one of familiarity with the language, according to Lantolf and Thorne's (2007, p. 201) assertion. As such, teachers need to provide a lot of opportunities for students to interact with each other in the classroom.

Numerous studies devoted to second language instruction and acquisition demonstrate the broad influence the sociocultural theory has had. Johnson (2006) emphasizes how our views of the qualities of a second language may be altered by a deep comprehension of social culture,

especially for English teachers. This emphasizes the importance of theory in understanding the underlying ideas guiding English communication between educators and learners in the classroom setting.

By offering a framework for understanding intricate social phenomena and by combining pertinent definitions, structures, and propositions, social and cultural research significantly contributes to the field. Through the integration of these components, social and cultural study provides a methodical comprehension of complex social dynamics. Within this research, teacher-student interactions in the social environment of the classroom are the main emphasis. These interactions are influenced by a variety of elements, including cultural, social, educational, and cognitive ones.

Through a thorough examination, this study aims to illuminate the complex dynamics influencing teacher-student relationship, thus advancing our understanding of the fundamental mechanisms operating within the educational setting. Resorting to sociocultural theory, this research attempts to offer a useful framework for comprehending the rules guiding English communication between teachers and students in the classroom.

Long's interaction hypothesis

Long's interaction hypothesis focuses on the function that meaning negotiation plays in promoting language learning. According to Mackey and Goo (2007), learners' comprehension of information is facilitated by the negotiation of meaning, which includes confirmation checks, clarification questions, and comprehension checks. It also helps learners notice the language elements necessary for effective communication. This negotiating process, which is supported by conversational exchanges, helps learners accept feedback and make changes to their output in addition to helping to make input understandable (Gass, 2003). As a result, negotiation of meaning can help learners become more proficient in language by enabling them to identify knowledge gaps and take steps to fill them.

Furthermore, Long's interaction hypothesis is consistent with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which highlights the significance of social contact in the process of cognitive development. The interaction hypothesis, as explained by Lantolf and Thorne (2007), emphasizes the value of cooperative discussion and the co-construction of knowledge between students and more experienced interlocutors, such as peers or teachers. In their zone of proximal development (ZPD), learners can progressively increase their linguistic competence through these interactions as they assimilate new language forms and functions (Ohta, 2000). The significance of conversational encounters in promoting language acquisition and cognitive development is further reinforced by the convergence of Long's hypothesis with sociocultural theory.

Thus, Long's interaction hypothesis has made a substantial contribution to our knowledge of language teaching approaches by highlighting the critical roles that meaningful interactions, meaning negotiation, and cooperative discourse play in supporting language learning. The significance of giving students access to understandable information, chances for feedback and output adjustment, and exposure to language elements required for effective communication are emphasized. Furthermore, as suggested by sociocultural theory, the hypothesis supports the importance of social interaction and joint knowledge building for language acquisition and cognitive growth. These theoretical foundations have shaped

communicative language education methodologies, which place emphasis on enhancing communicative competence through real-world and interactive activities in the target language.

Communicative language teaching (CLT)

CLT method is widely accepted in language schools worldwide. Brown (2000) posits that the central idea of CLT is to develop students' conversational expertise by exposing them to real-life, functional communication activities in the target language. This approach denotes a notable departure from past techniques that stressed repetitive recital of grammar rules to a more interactive and meaningful process of acquiring language.

Brown stipulates several key features of CLT. The first one underscores communicative competence over mere linguistic knowledge; it encourages students to have effective use of language in real situations. Second, CLT advocates for usage of genuine materials and real-life situations in the classroom settings. Third, this methodology combines all four skills i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing as opposed to treating each area separately. Fourthly, instead of stressing on only fluency or accuracy; CLT looks at errors as normal part of learning process where accuracy goes hand in hand with fluency Lastly, it pushes for learner-centered classrooms whereby teachers act as facilitators rather than being in a dominant role.

Littlewood & Yu (2011) point out the major principle behind CLT is to maximize the use of the target language (TL) and minimize that of the first language (L1). It posits that active engagement and participation in communicative tasks are better suited for language acquisition than direct instruction. Owen et al. (2019) further stress on the fact that CLT fosters different levels of interaction and communication which allows learners practice language skills by taking on various roles during communication activities.

Several advantages are associated with CLT research primarily in EFL contexts. Akram & Mehmood (2011) note an increase in confidence level among learners, their linguistic competence, interest and comprehension about target language use. Active involvement when participating in interactive classroom exercises helps students improve not only their ability to use another language but also deepen their cultural understanding about it (Rahman, 2015). As such cooperative learning thereby enhances positive meaning negotiations and respect among learners to sustain healthy relationship between teachers and students. However, both teachers and students need to embrace new perspectives and methodologies if CLT is to be successful in practice. In order for teachers to effectively manage communicative activities as well as offer constructive feedback, they require training while learners must adapt to a more interactive, learner-centered environment, which may be difficult for those who have only been exposed to traditional teacher-fronted instruction.

Conceptual framework

Teacher's and student's belonging

Belonging encompasses a person's sense of comfort, fitting in, and connection to a community or organization (Yuval-Davis, 2011). It is a psychological state comprising both affective and cognitive components, arising when an individual feels accepted, validated, and positively connected within a specific environment.

According to Tovar and Simon (2010), a sense of belonging relates to a distinct feeling of relatedness or connectedness with a group or community, compensating for emotional interactions. In this context, "relationship" refers not just to simple connections, but to meaningful, positive bonds between an individual and their surroundings, including feelings of

acceptance, respect, and significance within that community. This concept of belonging is closely tied to addressing the fundamental human need for self-actualization and personal growth, emphasizing the importance of positive relationship in fostering a sense of belonging in settings such as classrooms or schools.

Krashen (1988) posits, through his affective filter hypothesis, that negative emotional factors, such as anxiety and stress, can hinder language acquisition. When learners feel comfortable and confident, their affective filter is low, allowing for more effective language input. Conversely, negative emotions create a barrier, reducing learning capacity. This hypothesis emphasizes the importance of a positive, low-stress environment for optimal language acquisition. If students feel they belong, they will be open to learn, ready to participate and willing to interact.

In agreement with Krashen's hypothesis, Strayhorn (2008) affirms that students' motivation, engagement, and general well-being depend heavily on their sense of belonging, acceptance, and worth in the classroom. As Strayhorn (2012) points out, within the collective setting, feelings of belonging are closely associated with social reciprocity, the sense of connection, validation, acceptance, care, and respect. According to Ostermann (2000), learners who have a strong feeling of belonging are more likely to have good attitudes, behaviors, and academic accomplishment. Research has repeatedly shown a relationship between students' academic achievement and the availability of conversational exchanges with teachers, which create a feeling of community.

To improve students' learning experiences and general performance, educational institutions must cultivate a sense of belonging. According to Cuellar and Johnson (2016), students who experience a sense of control, welcome, and support are more likely to persist and ask for help when they need it. In order to encourage students' constructive awareness and good learning outcomes, it is essential to provide an emotionally supportive learning environment that fosters a sense of belonging. In order to do this, educational establishments might employ tactics and procedures that support candid dialogue, foster diversity, and stimulate hands-on engagement with the curriculum. Recognizing the pivotal role of belonging in fostering student success, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: *The cultivation of a sense of belonging and emotional well-being in the educational milieu is likely to significantly enhance students' learning endeavors and achievements*.

Teacher's and student's expectations

In the context of learning a second or foreign language, expectations are especially important to the dynamics of the teaching and learning processes. Expectations may be characterized as planned acts or circumstances that involve subjective evaluations of the probability of future events or their non-occurrence (Fauzi & Amirudin, 2019). In education, the way that teachers and students interact with expectations affects the classroom's emotional climate greatly.

Many studies on the acquisition of second languages have shown that learner's and teacher's expectations are important factors that can influence how teaching and learning occur. According to Polat (1994), the atmosphere of the classroom, where conversational exchanges between teachers and students are of utmost significance, has a significant influence on the way that second or foreign language instruction is carried out. As such, the cultural and social

environment of education should not be divorced from it. Cultural differences in the expectations that teachers hold can have a significant impact on their instructional behavior, practices, and interactions with students (Jacobson, 2013). As to the statements made by Kamstra (2020), too high and unreasonable expectations from FL teachers regarding a student's academic standing may lead to detrimental effects on their overall performance. Consequently, it is imperative that educators uphold ambitious yet reasonable standards for student performance.

Just like teachers, second language (L2)/foreign language (FL) students have specific expectations when it comes to dialogue between teachers and students during the processes of instruction, learning, and evaluation. Research from Tergujeff (2013) shows that a lot of students want their lecturers to pronounce words correctly in conversation. Students anticipate their teachers to be more than just information providers—they want them to demonstrate real concern and knowledge, according to qualitative research conducted by Trejo (2007). Moreover, L2/FL students exhibit certain inclinations towards particular instructional approaches and tactics utilized by their teachers. As demonstrated by Lobo and Gurney's (2014) research, students anticipate learning the fundamentals of the language with an emphasis on developing professional and practical English language proficiency.

Hypothesis 2: *Both teachers and students in the L2/FL context hold particular expectations regarding conversational teacher-student interaction, which can significantly impact the language learning process.*

Teacher's and student's relationship

The degree to which both parties exhibit consideration, empathy, and respect in their interactions is referred to as the teacher-student relationship (Gibbons, 2019). It is essential for creating an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and for enabling productive conversation. Students develop positive relationship with their teachers when the teacher acknowledges and communicates respect towards the students, claim Krane et al. (2017). Teachers' understanding of the psychological requirements of their pupils serves to further reinforce this relationship. All students within the classroom participate in a relational process, during which expectations are formed and information is shared, as Frymier and Houser (2000) put it.

In the teaching and learning processes, the teacher-student connection is essential, especially during conversational encounters. Positive relationship improves students' chances of academic success and create a supportive atmosphere for learning. When the teacher-student relationship exerts a positive influence, it enhances students' potential for academic excellence, according to Agyekum (2019). In the context of teaching foreign languages, a good rapport between the teacher and the students reduces fear, boosts motivation, and increases the students' readiness to speak in the language (Al-Hoorie, 2017). Effective teacher-student connections have also been shown to improve students' communication abilities, language competency, and use of efficient learning techniques (Calle, 2019).

On the other hand, low teacher-student rapport can be detrimental to students' involvement and performance in the classroom. The absence of verbal engagement between teachers and students has a negative impact on the teacher-student relationship, according to Uysal and Güven (2018). This lack of communication might cause students to withhold their opinions and compromise the orderly atmosphere that is necessary in the classroom. In certain environments, like Vietnam, the strict curriculum and packed classrooms can cause tension in the interaction between teachers and students (Huynh, 2017). In an effort to address these issues,

there has been a push for a learner-centered approach that aims to empower students and encourage their autonomy during the process of learning. Thus, especially when it comes to teaching foreign languages, developing a good rapport between the teacher and the students is essential to fostering a welcoming and productive learning environment.

Hypothesis 3: *Positive teacher-student conversational interactions positively impact learning outcomes and attitudes, while their absence may negatively affect academic performance and engagement.*

Teacher's and student's motivation

The driving force that starts, maintains, and guides goal-oriented action is known as motivation (Woon et al., 2016). Motivation is a key component in the field of teaching and studying foreign languages (FL). Motivation constitutes a significant determinant of learners' academic achievement, according to Dörnyei (1994). Furthermore, Wang (2006) states that motivation serves as a crucial variable in second language acquisition, exhibiting correlations with achievement levels and language proficiency. As motivation affects attitudes toward the target language and language learning outcomes, it becomes evident that motivation plays a crucial role in influencing success in FL learning.

Teachers have a critical role to play in improving student motivation when it comes to English language acquisition in Vietnamese classrooms. A four-part strategy framework is put forth by Dörnyei (2001) and consists of creating favorable learning environments, setting early incentives, fostering and preserving motivation, and encouraging positive self-evaluation. It is possible to create an environment in the classroom that is welcoming and pleasant in order to encourage motivation. Moreover, early incentives may be instilled by creating customized training materials and reiterating ideals and attitudes (Dörnyei, 2001). To sustain motivation, one must encourage learner autonomy and integrate engaging teachings; to cultivate positive self-assessment, one must offer motivated feedback and raise learner satisfaction.

A number of ways have been found to inspire students in FL or English learning situations, in addition to Dörnyei's (2001) paradigm. Students are often motivated by the prospect of a career (Lobo & Gurney, 2014). One way to motivate students is to provide knowledge that is relevant to their future employment possibilities. In addition, humorous teachers can boost motivation by fostering a positive and upbeat environment in the classroom. Kurt & Kurt (2018) emphasize the value of teachers' personal qualities, their professional expertise, and their consistent interaction with pupils. Favorable motivation for learning English as a foreign language may be fostered by creating a comfortable and conducive classroom atmosphere, especially through conversational exchanges between teachers and students (Mutlu & Yıldırım, 2019).

Additionally, as shown by Agezo (2010), teacher motivation has a major impact on their professional practice and pedagogical accomplishments, which in turn affects students' attitudes, motivation, and general learning outcomes in FL. The importance of both components in the language learning process is shown by the reciprocal relationship that occurs between teacher and student motivation (Caruso, 2019).

Hypothesis 4: *Teacher and student motivation in foreign language learning mutually influence each other, and together they impact students' attitudes, language proficiency, and academic achievements.*

Research models and methods

Research models

Creswell (2017) outlines three primary research methods, namely qualitative research, quantitative research, and mixed research, with qualitative research being appropriate for exploring topics in-depth, while quantitative research is used to test predetermined research hypotheses and generalize results from a sample, making it suitable for theoretical testing and generalization to a larger population (Newman & Benz, 1998).

To conduct this study, the researcher adopts a quantitative research approach inspired by Krashen's work (1988) to examine the factors influencing the utilization of English as a teaching tool in high school classrooms in Dong Nai. The study incorporates emotional factors, as highlighted by Ni (2012), which influence the input rate and intake of foreign language learners. To investigate teachers' and students' perceptions of conversational interaction in English, the research model considers four critical factors: Belonging (B), Expectation (E), Relationship (R), and Motivation (M), leading to the proposed equation: $CI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 B + \beta_2 E + \beta_3 R + \beta_4 M + \mu$ (1), with the dependent variable CI representing the conversational interaction between teachers and students.
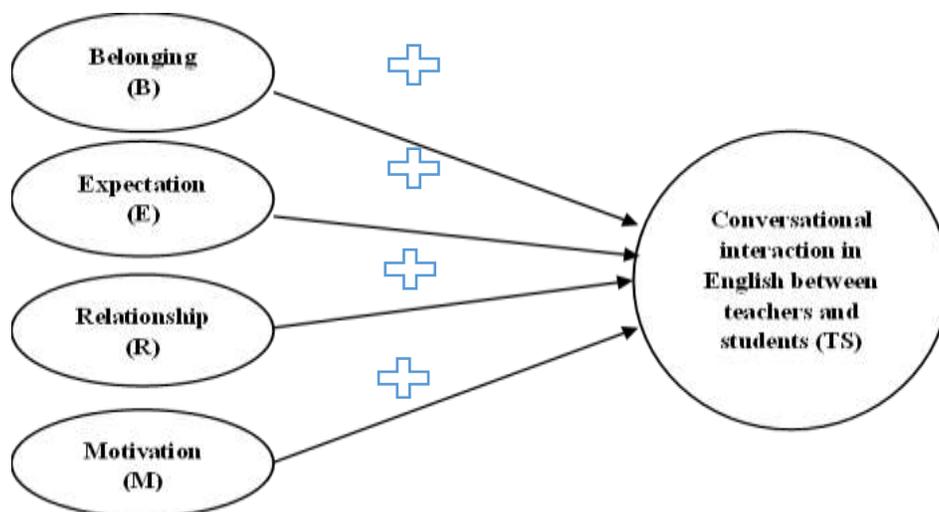
μ: Error

Figure 1. The proposed research model

The content of the observed variables is presented in Table 1 (See Appendix 1).

The research study employs SPSS 20 data processing software to facilitate data analysis, incorporating various methods including scale reliability assessment, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and linear regression analysis (LRA).

Determination of sample size

In terms of sample size, researchers often hold the belief that larger samples yield more reliable results (Raykov et al., 1995). However, the precise definition of what constitutes a large sample remains ambiguous, and the appropriate sample size relies on the estimation method employed. To ensure representativeness and accuracy in the study, Hair et al. (2010) recommend a minimum sample size of five samples per estimated parameter. Consequently, for the

questionnaire, this implies that a minimum sample of 100 observations is needed for 20 items. To ensure a sufficient response rate and collect comprehensive information, 150 surveys were distributed for this study.

Research context and data analysis.

The study participants consisted of English teachers, having more than 10 years of teaching, from Dau Giay High School, Dong Nai Pedagogical Experimental High School, and Hung Vuong High School in Dong Nai. A convenient sampling method was utilized, and data processing was performed using SPSS 20 software. Contact information, particularly email addresses, was collected through the University's Department of Organization and Administration, and 150 surveys including closed-ended questionnaires and open-ended questionnaires, were distributed via the Google.doc tool and direct survey method (See Appendix 2). Ultimately, 148 responses were received, resulting in a response rate of 98.67%.

Research results

Descriptive statistical results

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation, minimum value, and maximum value, for the variables under investigation. These results affirm that the selected survey sample is representative of the overall study population.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of survey subjects

Request		Quantity	Proportion (%)
1. Education categories			
University		144	97
Post-graduate		4	3
	Total	148	100
2. Ages			
From 22 to < =30		58	39
From 31 to <=40		74	50
Over < 41 or more		16	11
	Total	**148**	**100**
3. Seniority			
1–5 years		52	35
6–10 years		50	34
11–15 years		22	15
Over 15 years		24	16
	Total	**148**	**100**
4. Gender			
Male		43	36
Female		105	64

Total	148	100

Results of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

To assess the reliability of the scales employed in the study, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was utilized. The results, as presented in Table 3, demonstrate that all four scales exhibit satisfactory reliability (Cronbach's Alpha < 0.6; Total variable correlation coefficient of each component < 0.3) (Tho, 2013). Furthermore, the EFA revealed that all four factors were extracted at an Eigenvalue of 2.114, accounting for 71.12% of the extracted variance. The appropriateness of the factor analysis was further confirmed by the KMO coefficient of the Bartlett test, which yielded a value of 0.804 with Sig = 0.000, validating the suitability of the EFA method employed in this study.

Table 3: EFA Results

Item	Component				Cronbach's Alpha
	1	2	3	4	
E1	,937				0,959
E2	,936				
E4	,931				
E3	,911				
E5	,903				
R4		,800			0,819
R2		,792			
R1		,768			
R3		,752			
R5		,687			0,782
B2			,798		
B4			,798		
B1			,760		
B3			,745		
M3				,875	0,821
M2				,842	
M1				,826	

Table 4 presents the results of the EFA conducted on the dependent variable (CI), which comprises three scales. The Eigenvalue result of 2.163, surpassing the threshold of 1, signifies the amount of variance explained by each factor. Notably, the factor labeled "draw" exhibits the most meaningful representation of the information. The cumulative variance extracted amounts to 72.092%, exceeding the recommended minimum of 50%. This outcome indicates that a single factor accounts for the variation observed in the data. Furthermore, the statistical significance of the EFA model for the dependent variable (CI) is confirmed by the test results, with a Sig value of 0.000, which is less than the conventional significance level of 0.05. Additionally, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient of 0.670 suggests the appropriateness of the factor analysis model for the dataset in question.

Table 4. EFA results for the dependent variable

	Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2,163	72,092	72,092	2,163	72,092	72,092
2	,535	17,819	89,911			
3	,303	10,089	100,000			

(*Source: Results from SPSS 20 data processing software*)

Results of linear regression analysis

In this study, data was collected through a survey of 148 individuals, focusing on assessing the variable CI in English classrooms at high schools in Dong Nai. The obtained average value for this variable was found to be 3.41 on a 5-point scale. This result highlights the significance of teacher-student interaction as a pedagogical tool in the context of English education within the aforementioned high schools. To gain deeper insights into this matter, the researcher aimed to identify the influencing factors and ascertain their respective importance. To address these research inquiries, the researcher employed multivariate linear regression analysis as the chosen statistical methodology. The findings derived from this regression analysis are presented comprehensively in Table 5, offering valuable insights into the factors contributing to conversational interaction between teachers and students in the English classrooms at Dong Nai high schools.

Table 5. Results of regression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1　(Constant)	,185	,328		,563	,574		
B	,353	,063	,364	5,625	,000	,968	1,033
E	,209	,045	,301	4,655	,000	,965	1,036
R	,209	,063	,217	3,325	,001	,951	1,052

M	,187	,057	,214	3,301	,001	,964	1,038

<div align="right">(Source: Results from SPSS 20 data processing software)</div>

The research model results are as follows: TT= 0.364B+0.301E+0.217R+0.214M (2)

The coherence of the acquired linear regression model is substantiated through the examination of both the correlation matrix and multicollinearity tests. As presented in Table 5, the statistical significance of the independent variables is established, thereby confirming their substantial influence on the conversational interaction occurring in English classrooms between teachers and students at the high school level in Dong Nai. The relative importance of these impact factors is quantified in descending order, wherein Belonging (B) holds the highest significance, followed by Expectation (E), Relationship (R), and finally, Motivation (M). These findings shed light on the varying degrees of influence exhibited by these factors in shaping the dynamics of teacher-student interaction during English instruction at the specified educational level and location.

Discussion

The above findings underscore the significance for administrators and teachers of primary and secondary schools in Dong Nai to attend to various pertinent factors, namely belonging (B), expectation (E), relationship (R), and motivation (M), in order to enhance conversational interaction in English between teachers and students within high school classrooms. The researcher put forth the following recommendations based on the outcomes of the research:

Hypothesis 1: *The cultivation of a sense of belonging and emotional well-being in the educational milieu is likely to significantly enhance students' learning endeavors and achievements.*

The results of the study highlight the significant positive influence on students' and teachers' interaction in English when they feel like they belong in their classes. In the context of education, belonging is a complex idea that includes emotions of acceptance, emotional stability, and community. Strong feelings of belonging increase a student's likelihood of participating fully in class discussions, showing interest in the material, and feeling confident enough to voice their ideas. Thus, encouraging students to feel like they belong is essential to enabling meaningful and fruitful dialogues in the English language classroom.

To foster a sense of belonging among students, teachers should adopt a purposeful and comprehensive approach grounded in sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and communicative language teaching principles (Brown, 2000). Key strategies include creating an inclusive classroom environment that welcomes diversity and encourages open dialogue, promoting collaborative learning through group activities and projects to facilitate peer-to-peer connections, building strong teacher-student relationship based on empathy and respect, and demonstrating appreciation and encouragement for students' efforts. These approaches align with Long's (1983) interaction hypothesis, Krashen's (1988) affective filter hypothesis, and Dörnyei's (2001) motivational strategies for language classrooms. By implementing these evidence-based strategies, teachers can create a learning environment that fosters a strong sense of belonging, ultimately enhancing students' engagement and language acquisition. When students perceive

that their teachers value and support them, they are more likely to participate actively in class discussions and approach learning with enthusiasm, which leads to improved outcomes in English language education.

Additionally, students' sense of community inside the classroom may be strengthened by recognizing and appreciating their unique contributions and skills. Teachers may create an atmosphere where every student feels appreciated and inspired to contribute to the learning process by acknowledging and valuing their different talents and viewpoints. Eventually, teachers may establish a favorable atmosphere for productive English-language conversational exchanges by giving priority to tactics that foster a sense of belonging. Students are more likely to ask questions, participate fully in conversations, and have meaningful exchanges when they feel welcomed, encouraged, and connected. This improves their language skills and all-around academic performance.

Hypothesis 2: *Both teachers and students in the L2/FL context hold particular expectations regarding conversational teacher-student interaction, which can significantly impact the language learning process.*

The study's findings highlight the critical role of expectations in shaping conversational interactions between teachers and students in English language classrooms. Both teachers and students harbor specific expectations about these encounters, which can significantly influence the overall language acquisition process. For instance, students may expect teachers to provide ample opportunities for speaking practice, while teachers might expect students to actively participate in discussions. The research hypothesis suggests that these conversational teacher-student interactions can substantially impact language learning outcomes. In the L2/FL context, teachers and students hold particular expectations, such as the level of English proficiency to be used in class or the frequency of error correction. For example, students might expect immediate correction of their mistakes, while teachers may prefer to focus on fluency over accuracy in certain activities. This underscores the importance of addressing and aligning these diverse expectations to optimize learning outcomes. By openly discussing and harmonizing expectations, educators can create a more effective and supportive learning environment that enhances language acquisition and student engagement.

Teachers can promote more fruitful student-teacher relationship by establishing clear and reasonable expectations for the learning environment and teaching results. Teachers can facilitate students' achievement of targeted learning objectives and foster a mutual awareness of classroom norms and expectations by clearly conveying them. Additionally, by recognizing and responding to students' expectations, teachers may better adapt their pedagogical strategies and foster a more dynamic and responsive learning environment.

Expectations surrounding conversational exchanges between students and teachers may have a big impact on students' motivation, engagement, and overall learning process. It's possible for students to develop expectations about the teacher's language skills, style of instruction, or classroom dynamics. Through acknowledgement and resolution of these expectations, educators may cultivate a feeling of confidence and connection with their pupils, promoting more engagement and candid communication in dialogue exchanges.

In order to optimize the advantages of conversational exchanges and match expectations, educators might utilize a variety of tactics. Starting the course with open talks to learn about the students' worries and expectations might yield insightful information. Setting acceptable

expectations can also be aided by clearly defining rules and rubrics for classroom participation and conversational exchanges. Throughout the learning process, teachers and students may also reevaluate and adjust their expectations with the help of regular feedback and reflections. Teachers may foster meaningful conversations by setting up an environment that encourages meaningful interactions, which will improve language acquisition in general.

Hypothesis 3: *Positive teacher-student conversational interactions positively impact learning outcomes and attitudes, while their absence may negatively affect academic performance and engagement.*

One cannot emphasize how important teacher-student connections are to the development of fruitful dialogue exchanges and successful learning outcomes. In order to foster an environment that is welcoming and courteous and promotes candid dialogue and involvement, teachers and students must get along well. The idea that good teacher-student conversational interactions favorably affect learning outcomes and attitudes, and that their absence may negatively impact academic achievement and engagement, will be explored in this section.

First of all, when students and teachers get along well, a supportive learning atmosphere is created, which in turn encourages outside motivation. A student's likelihood of actively participating in class discussions and engaging with the topic is increased when they believe that their teachers regard, respect, and understand them. As a result of the confidence and security that are fostered by this positive reinforcement, students are able to openly voice their opinions and ask for explanations, when necessary, without worrying about being judged or made fun of.

Secondly, the development of a close relationship between teachers and students depends on the use of suitable language skills and communication techniques. Teachers who exhibit good communication techniques, such as empathy, active listening, and clear expression, foster an environment of mutual respect and understanding. Students are encouraged to reciprocate by actively engaging in discussions, posing queries, and looking for responses in this kind of environment. In order to better identify and meet each student's unique learning requirements, teachers can promote positive learning outcomes by encouraging an atmosphere of mutual respect and open communication.

Thirdly, enhancing expectations and fostering mutual understanding are two tactics that may be implemented to improve the teacher-student connection. It is the goal of educators to set expectations for themselves and their students that are reasonable, explicit, and culturally relevant. In order to ensure that everyone is working toward the same objectives, regular feedback loops and communicative exchanges may help align these expectations. In order to further enhance the relationship between teachers and students, it is also important to support teachers in implementing a learner-centered approach that gives students more autonomy and empowerment.

On the other hand, a lack of constructive dialogue between a teacher and students can negatively impact both academic achievement and engagement. Students may lose motivation, get disengaged, and be less likely to actively participate in the learning process if they believe that their teachers do not respect or understand them. This may result in a communication breakdown that obstructs the flow of ideas and the learning of new information and abilities. In the end, students' entire learning experience, academic success, and personal development may all be adversely affected by a strained teacher-student connection.

Therefore, it is critical to promote good learning outcomes and attitudes by cultivating positive teacher-student connections via polite, open dialogue. Teachers may foster a climate that encourages motivation, active involvement, and academic achievement by setting clear standards, utilizing effective communication techniques, and providing a supportive environment. The importance of fostering strong teacher-student ties in the classroom is highlighted by the possibility that a lack of such interactions may negatively impact student performance and engagement.

Hypothesis 4: *In foreign language learning, teacher's and student's motivation mutually influence each other, jointly affecting students' attitudes, language proficiency, and academic achievements.*

In the process of learning a language, motivation is essential since it propels students' interest, perseverance, and eventually, academic success. The study's findings demonstrate how teachers and students' motivation is mutually reinforcing, indicating that one has a considerable impact on the other's motivation levels. So, teachers who want to improve conversational interactions in English classes should prioritize creating an environment that is motivational.

In order to foster student motivation, educators should make an effort to establish a welcoming and pleasant learning environment. This may be accomplished by introducing lively and participatory exercises that motivate students to work together actively. Furthermore, by encouraging students to feel like they are making progress and are successful, timely and constructive feedback can support their intrinsic drive. Additionally, educators should act as role models for their pupils by speaking English fluently and with excitement, encouraging them to share their enthusiasm for the language.

On the other hand, teachers' commitment to their work can also be positively impacted by their students' motivation. When students show a sincere interest in and excitement for learning, it can inspire teachers to keep improving their methods of education and rekindle their passion for teaching. As a result of the mutually reinforcing nature of this interaction between teacher and student motivation, an atmosphere for learning that is both stimulating and effective is produced.

Teachers and students should be motivated by each other, and educators should use tactics that support this reciprocal interaction to its fullest. This might involve encouraging a cooperative learning community, providing avenues for open communication, and acknowledging and rewarding successes. Academic success, positive attitudes toward learning, and increased language proficiency can all be promoted by educational institutions through fostering conversational interactions in English classrooms and acknowledging the connection between teacher and student motivation.

Conclusion

The study's findings summarized the variables that affected how teachers and students in three high schools in the Vietnamese province of Dong Nai interacted in English. A quantitative research model was created and evaluated using Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Long's interaction hypothesis, and Brown's communicative language teaching approach. The study shows that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between the four characteristics of belonging, expectation, relationship, and motivation and the development of fruitful conversational exchanges in English in the classroom.

There are several constraints to take into account, even if this study offers helpful information. Initially, the study was limited to a certain area of Vietnam, so the findings might not apply to the whole nation. Furthermore, the survey data was provided by the teachers themselves, which may have introduced biases. Prospective research endeavors may include observational data with students' viewpoints.

Nevertheless, these results suggest a number of actions that Vietnamese schools might take to improve conversational engagement in English and the learning of said language: (i) Establish a welcoming and connected classroom atmosphere that is inclusive; (ii) Clearly define expectations for English language that are both acceptable and sensitive to the cultural context; (ii) Promote constructive connections between educators and learners that are based on respect and understanding; and (iv) Put techniques that will increase student and teacher motivation into practice. Through attending to these fundamental issues, Vietnamese educational establishments may foster a genuine dialogue atmosphere that will eventually raise the quality of English language instruction to the level required by international organizations.

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Appendix 1
Table 1: Coding of Observation Variables

Factors	Scale content and reference sources	Code
Belonging (B)	In order to be able to master the classroom, teachers only need to be good at professional skills (Strayhorn, 2012)	**B1**
	I would argue that mastery is assessed based on the completion of a lecture in the classroom (Strayhorn, 2012)	**B2**
	I consider that mastery has a positive relationship with teaching outcomes (Gibson et al. 2004; Cemalcilar, 2010; Thomas, 2012; Henry, 2020)	**B3**
	Learners are really interested when teachers master the classroom (Cuellar & Johnson, 2016; Museus, 2017)	**B4**

Expectation (E)	I often set certain expectations for teaching outcomes when I am in class (Mulisa & Kassahun, 2019)	**E1**
	I think that teachers' expectations are always commensurate with the results achieved by students (Mulisa & Kassahun, 2019)	**E2**
	Teachers need to adjust their expectations of their teaching outcomes to suit the teaching environment (Asma, Salija, & Halim, 2016)	**E3**
	I consider that expectations are the driving factor for positive behavior and teaching activities of teachers toward students (Kazemi & Soleimani, 2016)	**E4**
	Teachers' expectations of student learning outcomes must be in line with cultural and socioeconomic contexts (Polat, 1994)	**E5**
Relationship (R)	Students have a good relationship with their teachers when they feel respected (Calhoun, 2019)	**R1**
	Student learning outcomes depend largely on the interaction relationship between teacher and student (Agyekum, 2019).	**R2**
	Relationship between teachers and students can produce negative effects that affect students (Wei, Brok & Zhou, 2007; Liu, 2015)	**R3**
	Teachers build relationship by building comfortable interactions between teachers and students (Wei, Brok & Zhou, 2007; Liu, 2015)	**R4**
	When students do not have a good relationship with teachers, it leads to bad consequences in terms of interaction with teachers in the classroom (Uysal and Güven, 2018)	**R5**
Motivation (M)	Teachers play an important role in shaping students' learning motivations (Dörnyei, 1994; Gonzalez, 2008; Marshall, 2010; Woon et al., 2016)	**M1**
	The use of English by students is closely related to academic achievement (Wang, 2006; Midraj et el., 2008)	**M2**
	Teachers are role models to help students form and develop intrinsic motivation in learning (Dörnyei, 2001)	**M3**
Conversational interactions between teachers and students (CI)	Frequent conversational interactions between teachers and students in English are seen as a positive source of input for students	**CI1**
	I think that in order to have an effective conversation between teachers and students, teachers must follow the principles of communication.	**CI2**
	Teachers must know how to regulate communication roles to suit each teaching stage in the curriculum	**CI3**

Appendix 2

Questionnaire for English Teachers in Dong Nai High Schools

Dear participant,

This survey aims to gather information about factors influencing English conversational interaction between teachers and students in high schools in Dong Nai province. Your responses will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. Thank you for your participation.

Background Information

1. Name of your school: _____

2. Years of teaching experience: _____ years

3. Highest level of education:

   □ Bachelor's □ Master's □ Doctorate □ Other: _____

4. Gender: □ Male □ Female □ Prefer not to say

5. Age group: □ 22–30 □ 31–40 □ 41–50 □ 51 and above

Belonging (B)

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

6. I feel a strong sense of belonging in my school community.

7. My colleagues and I share a strong bond and support each other.

8. I feel valued and respected by my students.

9. The school administration recognizes and appreciates my efforts.

10. I feel comfortable expressing my opinions and ideas in staff meetings.

11. I actively participate in school events and activities.

12. My cultural background is respected and valued in the school.

13. I feel that I can be my authentic self in the classroom.

14. The school provides a supportive environment for professional growth.

15. I feel a strong connection to the goals and mission of my school.

Expectation (E)

16. I have high expectations for my students' English language proficiency.

17. I believe all my students can achieve fluency in English conversation.

18. I expect my students to actively participate in class discussions.

19. I anticipate that my students will use English outside the classroom.

20. I expect my teaching methods to significantly improve students' English skills.

21. I believe my students can overcome language barriers with proper guidance.

22. I expect my students to take responsibility for their own learning.

23. I anticipate that my students will make mistakes and learn from them.

24. I expect my students to challenge themselves in English conversations.

25. I believe my students can achieve national English proficiency standards.

Relationship (R)

26. I have a positive relationship with most of my students.

27. My students feel comfortable approaching me with questions or concerns.

28. I make an effort to understand my students' individual needs and backgrounds.

29. I regularly provide constructive feedback to my students.

30. My students respect me as their English teacher.

31. I create a supportive and inclusive classroom environment.

32. I encourage open communication between myself and my students.

33. I address conflicts or misunderstandings with students promptly and fairly.

34. I show genuine interest in my students' progress and well-being.

35. My students trust me to guide them in their English language learning journey.

Motivation (M)

36. I am passionate about teaching English to my students.

37. I continuously seek ways to improve my teaching methods.

38. I find joy in seeing my students progress in their English skills.

39. I am motivated to create engaging and interactive lessons.

40. I encourage my students to set and achieve personal language goals.

41. I use various teaching strategies to keep my students motivated.

42. I celebrate my students' achievements in English language learning.

43. I remain positive and enthusiastic even when facing challenges.

44. I inspire my students to see the value of English in their future careers.

45. I am committed to my own professional development as an English teacher.

Conversational Interaction (CI)

46. I encourage students to speak English as much as possible during class.

47. I create opportunities for students to practice English conversation daily.

48. I use pair and group work to promote English conversation among students.

49. I incorporate real-life situations into English conversation practice.

50. I provide constructive feedback on students' English conversation skills.

51. I use English as the primary language of instruction in my classroom.

52. I encourage students to ask questions and express opinions in English.

53. I use role-play activities to enhance students' conversational skills.

54. I integrate technology to facilitate English conversations (e.g., online discussions).

55. I adapt my speaking pace and vocabulary to my students' proficiency levels.

Open-ended Questions

56. What strategies do you find most effective in promoting English conversation in your classroom?

57. What challenges do you face in encouraging students to speak English during class?

58. How do you build and maintain positive relationships with your students?

59. What motivates you to continue improving as an English teacher?

60. How do you address diverse learning needs and cultural backgrounds in your English classes?

Likert Scale Items (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree,

5 = Strongly Agree)

61. My students are eager to participate in English conversations.

62. I feel confident in my ability to teach English conversation skills.

63. The school provides adequate resources for English language teaching.

64. Parents are supportive of their children's English language learning.

65. I regularly assess my students' English conversation skills.

66. I collaborate with other English teachers to improve my teaching methods.

67. I use authentic materials (e.g., news articles, videos) in my English lessons.

68. My students are motivated to improve their English conversation skills.

69. I feel supported by the school administration in my teaching efforts.

70. I adapt my teaching style to suit different learning preferences.

71. I encourage students to reflect on their own learning progress.

72. I use humor and creativity to make English lessons more engaging.

73. I provide opportunities for students to practice English outside the class.

74. I feel that my efforts as an English teacher are making a difference.

75. I am satisfied with the overall English proficiency of my students.

76. I use peer feedback to enhance students' English conversation skills.

77. I incorporate cultural aspects into English language teaching.

78. I feel comfortable speaking English in front of my students.

79. I use formative assessment to guide my teaching practices.

80. I encourage students to use English in their daily lives.

81. I feel that the English curriculum is relevant to students' needs.

82. I use project-based learning to enhance English conversation skills.

83. I create a low-anxiety environment for English conversation practice.

84. I use storytelling as a method to improve students' English skills.

85. I encourage students to express their opinions on various topics in English.

86. I use games and interactive activities in my English lessons.

87. I provide individualized feedback on students' English conversation skills.

88. I feel that my students are making steady progress in English conversation.

89. I use debates and discussions to enhance critical thinking in English.

90. I encourage students to read English books or articles outside the class.

91. I use music and songs to teach English pronunciation and vocabulary.

92. I feel that my teaching methods are effective in improving students' English skills.

93. I encourage students to watch English movies or TV shows with subtitles.

94. I use peer tutoring to support weaker students in English conversation.

95. I feel that the school's English language program is well-structured.

96. I use visual aids to support English language teaching and learning.

97. I encourage students to participate in English language competitions or events.

98. I feel that my students are confident in using English for communication.

99. I use online resources to supplement my English teaching materials.

100. I encourage students to keep a journal or diary in English.

101. I use error correction techniques that do not discourage students from speaking.

102. I feel that my students enjoy learning English in my classes.

103. I use cooperative learning strategies to promote English conversation.

104. I encourage students to use English-language social media or forums.

105. I feel that my teaching style adapts well to students' changing needs.

106. I use drama or theater activities to enhance English speaking skills.

107. I encourage students to present projects or reports in English.

108. I feel that the school provides adequate professional development opportunities.

109. I use multimedia resources to expose students to different English accents.

110. I encourage students to teach their peers certain English language concepts.

111. I feel that my classroom management skills support effective English teaching.

112. I use current events and news as topics for English conversations.

113. I encourage students to create and share digital content in English.

114. I feel that my assessment methods accurately reflect students' English abilities.

115. I use problem-solving activities to stimulate English conversation.

116. I encourage students to correspond with international pen pals in English.

117. I feel that my teaching approach fosters learner autonomy.

118. I use English language games to make learning more enjoyable.

119. I encourage students to give presentations in English on topics of their choice.

120. I feel that my feedback helps students improve their English conversation skills.

121. I use role reversal techniques where students take on the teacher's role.

122. I encourage students to create and perform skits or dialogues in English.

123. I feel that I effectively integrate all four language skills in my teaching.

124. I use peer interviews to promote English conversation practice.

125. I encourage students to listen to English podcasts or radio programs.

126. I feel that I provide equal speaking opportunities to all students in class.

127. I use task-based learning approaches in my English lessons.

128. I encourage students to participate in English language clubs or groups.

129. I feel that I successfully create a positive learning atmosphere in my classes.

130. I use information gap activities to encourage meaningful communication.

131. I encourage students to write and perform original songs or poems in English.

132. I feel that I effectively use wait time to encourage student responses.

133. I use English language learning apps to supplement classroom instruction.

134. I encourage students to create vlogs or video diaries in English.

135. I feel that I successfully differentiate instruction for various proficiency levels.

136. I use debate topics that are relevant to students' lives and interests.

137. I encourage students to conduct interviews with English speakers when possible.

138. I feel that I effectively balance fluency and accuracy in my teaching approach.

139. I use authentic listening materials to improve students' comprehension skills.

140. I encourage students to participate in English language exchange programs.

141. I feel that I successfully integrate cultural awareness into language teaching.

142. I use storytelling circles to promote continuous English conversation.

143. I encourage students to create English language content for social media.

144. I feel that I effectively use group dynamics to enhance language learning.

145. I use English-only periods during class to immerse students in the language.

146. I encourage students to set personal goals for English language improvement.

147. I feel that I successfully address common errors in English conversation.

148. I use virtual reality or augmented reality tools in English language teaching.

149. I encourage students to reflect on their English learning strategies.

150. I feel that my teaching contributes to students' overall academic success.