

# **Effects of streaming platforms on the development of learning English as a Second Language**

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## **Preface**

The study investigates various features of fluency and attempts to measure second language learners' performance through observations, tests and interviews. Speech samples from 13 Hungarian second language learners were examined collected in April and September 2023. Student output was analysed and discussed with experienced English language teachers who supported my judgements regarding spoken fluency. The teachers' spoken advice and opinions and written comments concerning learners' performance were also taken into account during the composition of the present study. The research also attempts to shed light on teachers' perspective in terms of developing fluency with the help of streaming services in or outside the classroom. All the teachers agreed on the importance of self-confidence as an influential factor in students' performance. However, in terms of accuracy, these teachers' opinions differed. All in all, there is an agreement that pauses, or the speed of their performance might relate to individual speaking styles and should not play an important role in assessing second language fluency.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

One might frequently encounter the expressions ‘I can speak English fluently’ or ‘Is she/he fluent in English?’ regarding individuals’ level of proficiency. It refers to the fact that speaking a particular language fluently is usually the aim for L2 learning on every level (Kormos and Dénes, 2004). According to Chambers’s (1997) view, although the term ‘fluency’ is frequently used in language testing and teaching, it remains an ambiguous concept and there is no clear agreement on what is understood by this concept. More specifically, it is not only the description of the term ‘fluently’ or ‘fluency’ that has been a disputed matter, but the way of measuring fluency is also a challenging area to define (see for instance Guillot (1991), Koponen and Riggenbach (2000), Kormos and Dénes (2004) or Kirk (2015)). Although the ambiguous descriptions of fluency define fluent output as smooth, the image of natural spoken language is different. Goldman – Eisler (1968:15) stresses:

‘Somehow the phenomenon of speech has become associated with images which suggest continuity of speech production. We speak of even flow... and many words relating to speech derive from descriptions of water in motion. ... The facts however show these images to be illusory. If we measure vocal continuity by the number of words uttered between two pauses and call ‘phrase’ the sequence uttered without a break we obtain a picture of fragmentation rather than continuity.’

Studies examining various features based on listeners’ observations of fluency have been also a matter of debate. This knowledge of fluency measurement is practical in language teaching since it might facilitate learners’ fluency increase. Grounding valid and reliable scales and measurement of fluency are also important for linguists, as a great number of theses tend to assess oral performance by measuring fluency (for instance Skehan, 1997; Skehan and Foster, 1999).

Influenced by Riggenbach's (1991) research, have attempted to investigate features of spoken fluency (e.g. Ejzenberg, 2000; Freed, 1995; 2000; Lennon, 1990; Riggenbach, 1991, Kormos

and Dénes, 2004). One of the large-scale studies that examined fluency measurement was conducted by van Gelderen (1994), which investigated L1 speakers of Dutch. Thus, it is not evident whether it might be applicable for second language learners. The present study is influenced by Kormos and Dénes' (2004) work, who measured 16 Hungarian learners of English as a foreign language. They measured fluency based on various features: speech rate, articulation rate, phonation ratio, mean length of runs, the number of silent pauses per minute, the mean length of pauses, the number of filled pauses per minute, the number of disfluencies per minute, pace and space.

## **1.2 Aims of the current research**

In the present study, the focus is on non-native speakers' L2 fluency development considering the use of streaming services. I attempt to examine their improvement throughout the 6-month period by recording pre – and post - tests and requested interviews from teachers who explained how streaming platforms might develop vocabulary and spoken fluency in their point of view. In the first part of the paper, I attempt to define the concept of communicative competence and performance and the relationship between performance and spoken fluency. Following that, I describe various researchers' views on the concept of fluency and ways of measuring spoken fluency.

Analysing different aspects of spoken and vocabulary texts is time-consuming and difficult and only a 6-month period was provided for observations and interviews. Therefore, I decided to analyse pre – and post –tests of 13 Hungarian learners of English as a foreign language. I collected samples from one focus group and examined them with the assistance of Teacher T (see Appendix). Pre – and post - tests of their spoken performance were then compared by the end of the course with various features of measurement of spoken fluency. In order to provide more reliability and background information, students were asked to complete a questionnaire about their streaming services watching habits, and their attitude towards their fluency development and speaking skills. I also connected self-confidence, accuracy and productivity with fluency scores, and interviewed their English teachers in order to establish which of these variables are more influential in perceptions of fluency. The main goal is to find out whether streaming services are beneficial in second language learning, and if so, to what extent. Moreover, I would like to motivate my colleagues and students to use them more frequently in the L2 in order to 'pick up' the language in a more natural and fun way. I truly believe that

watching movies and series in L2 plays a major role in second language development and we should use that opportunity on a regular basis.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In order to set the theoretical framework of the paper, this section focuses on the critical analysis and review of the relevant literature with the aim of describing the background and the connection of communicative competence and performance in order to understand further aspects of the study. ‘Competence’ remains one of the most disputed terms in the field of language teaching and applied linguistics and I attempt to describe its diversity in the upcoming section. Furthermore, I introduce different theories of communicative competence, performance and possible gaps related to the competences. Additionally, I explore connections between communicative performance and spoken fluency and illustrate various ways to measure it.

### **2.2 Communicative Competence and Performance**

According to previous research, in the last three decades on communicative competence, there are four influential models: the first important model for the present study is connected with Widdowson’s work (1983). Additionally, it is worth describing Canale and Swain’s model (1980, 1983), and the model of Bachman and Palmer (1996) and the definition of the features of communicative competence in the Common European Framework (CEFR). I am going to illustrate the above mentioned competences in more details in order to comprehend further aspects of the dissertation, i.e., spoken fluency.

In the past, more attentions has been paid to the provision of communicative competence and performance which are related to the present study. The term ‘competence’ has been commonly connected with Chomsky (1965). In differentiating between the two concepts, Chomsky (1965) explains that ‘competence’ reflects on the speaker and listener’s knowledge of a certain language, more specifically knowing about the language and ‘performance’ signifies the actual language use in real, authentic situations, ‘doing’ something with the language knowledge. The latter mentioned (performance) will be more significant regarding in this paper. Therefore in the following part, more focus is needed on the term ‘communicative performance’.

### **2.3 Overview of the communicative competence**

Following Chomsky’s theories about competence and performance, numerous researchers – for instance Savignon in 1972, Hymes 1972, Campbell and Wales (1970) - criticised the concept

of a clear, idealised competence as a methodology for teaching, learning or testing various languages. For Dell Hymes (1972) and Campbell and Wales (1970) communicative competence includes grammatical competence (explicit and implicit knowledge), and contextual and sociolinguistic competence (knowledge of language usage). In the period of the 1970's and 1980's, various linguists (for instance Briere 1971, Paulston 1974, Brown 1976, Munby 1978, Palmer 1978, Canale and Swain 1980, Widdowson 1983,) attempted to develop and further examine the theory of communicative competence.

For further investigation and a deeper understanding on the study it is important to elaborate on different models of communicative which I aim to focus on in the next part of this paper competence in order to understand the concept of communicative performance. In the following part only four different competences are going to be illustrated which are related to the actual study and more specifically are significant theoretical and empirical reflections regarding to the concept of relationship of communicative competence and performance.

### **2.3.1 Communicative Performance and Widdowson's model**

Widdowson (1983) provides a differentiation between capacity and competence. According to him, competence can be described in linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects. Widdowson means under capacity (which he tends to define as a procedural or communicative capacity) the capability of creating meaning in a certain language. According to his point of view, ability is not an element of competence; it stays 'an active force continuing creativity', for instance the strength for the comprehension which defined as 'meaning potential' by Halliday (Widdowson, 1983:27). In the history of language teaching and testing, Widdowson might be the first person who made an attempt to find the relationship between communicative competence and performance and more specifically focused on the use of real language or performance in his 'three tier model' (Widdowson, 1983). His model features three different levels:

- systemic level which is the linguistic competence
- schematic level that refers to the ability for language use
- procedural level is the actual performance (Fulcher, 1998:283).

Widdowson's three tier model is related to the academic background of Teaching English for Specific Purposes. His discourse model was specifically based on a schema concept, he defines schemata as follows: 'cognitive constructs which allow for the organisation of information in long term memory and which provide a basis for prediction. They are kind of stereotypic images which we map onto actuality in order to make sense of that it, and to provide it with a coherent

pattern' (Widdowson, 1983, pp. 34-35). To account for performance or the actual language use, the 'third tier model' is illustrated above.

### **2.3.2 Different aspects of competence: Canale and Swain**

Following his theories about competence and performance, Canale and Swain in 1980 and Canale in 1983 described communicative competence as an abstract of skills and knowledge which is inevitable for communication amongst language learners. According to their prospect, communicative competence refers to the conscious and unconscious knowledge of a person about different features of their language usage. Canale and Swain's (1980, 1981) theoretical model's first appearance provided three different elements: sociolinguistic, grammatical and strategic features. Two years later, Canale (1983, 1984) adapted various components from the sociolinguistic competence into a new element: 'discourse competence' which is connected with cohesion and coherence in certain utterances. According to Canale and Swain (1980, 1981) grammatical competence was based on Chomsky's linguistic competence which I mentioned above. That is the reason why several linguists for example Savignon (1983) communicative competence was mainly described accordance with Canale and Swain's terms: 'linguistic competence' for 'grammatical competence'.

Canale and Swain (1980) distinguish three different types of knowledge, firstly the knowledge of summarizing grammatical rules and principles, secondly the knowledge of how individuals may use language in real situations in order to perform communicative functions (performance) and the third type of knowledge is the knowledge that refers how to integrate communicative functions and utterances in terms of the conversation rules. Additionally, Canale and Swain's suggest that theories about skills related to authentic communication and how individuals may use language knowledge.

According to Canale (1983) concept of language skills needs further investigation and differentiation between determining capacity and its appearance in real conversation in performance which is going to be an important definition of the study. It is certainly inevitable to note that Canale and Swain (1980) besides Canale (1983) emphasized the relevance of distinguishing communicative competence and performance, more specifically actual performance in order to evade negative overtone with Noam Chomsky's theory of performance. Canale and Swain's grammatical competence is connected with the verbal and non-verbal linguistic code that is consist of morphological, semantic, syntactic, phonetic, orthographic and vocabulary knowledge. Those types of knowledge are significant for the language speaker in order to comprehend and express their ideas.

Canale and Swain's (1980, 1981) strategic competence is mainly based on verbal and nonverbal communication as I mention above and those strategies can be employed to overcome communication breakdown due to inaccurate or not sufficient communicative competence (1980:30). According to their definition, the strategies are a combination of guessing, paraphrasing, changing themes, repetition, reluctance, avoidance of words, modifications. Adapting Canale and Swain's definition, Canale (1983) emphasize that it might produce effective communication. Although the fact that Canale and Swain's model might be the simplest it achieved an enormous impact on the field of language learning and testing for decades and it still has an impact until nowadays because it sets a theoretical framework for many research.

Canale (1983, 1984) defined discourse competence as different rules which might underlie forms and meanings in order to accomplish successful communication. In more detail, it can be seen in achieving cohesion in form and coherence in various spoken and written text. There are various ways to achieve cohesion, for instance with using cohesive devices, namely conjunctions, pronouns, synonyms or parallel structures which enables the language speaker to connect single utterances in spoken text or sentences in written text to a whole, structured text. Additionally, consistency, relevant ideas, repetition initiate a more rational between between individual sentences (Canale, 1983). Canale also states (1983) that the relationship between fluency and overall language skills is based on language knowledge but generally achieved by strategic competence which is the skill to overcome failures in communication (Ejzenberg, 2000:298).

In contrast to the models suggested by Canale and Swain or Widdowson, Savignon (1972, 1983) highlights factors that are associated with the aspect of ability in the definition of communicative competence. In more detail, Savignon (1972) defined communicative competence as the ability to cooperate in a communicative environment, a 'dynamic exchange' in which linguistic competence should change to the complete informational input of speakers of the language. According to her point of view, various linguists, for example Canale and Swain (1980) believe that the essence of communicative competence is dynamic and it is rather interpersonal than intrapersonal. Monitoring the difference between competence and performance, Savignon illustrated competence as a basic ability and performance as a revelation of competence. According to Savignon's opinion (1972), competence might be maintained, facilitated and observed exclusively through performance. Similarly to several savants in language teaching and learning, he/she correlates communicative competence with language proficiency.

### **2.3.3 Bachman and Palmer's view on communicative competence**

Consequently, coming from the ambiguity of the definition of competence, Bachman (1990) proposed applying the term 'communicative language ability' in order to unite the meaning of communicative competence and the term of language proficiency. Bachman put greater emphasize on the features of language use, in details, the ways how individuals may target various communicative goals in certain situations. Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996) provided a more complex and extensive definition for communicative competence that worth mentioning in my study.

Examining and revising previous researches, Bachman step forward with a new concept of communicative competence which he titled 'communicative language ability'. Bachman's model was slightly revised by Bachman and Palmer. According to their view (1996) various features of language use, for instance topical knowledge, language ability or affective schemata might affect communicative language ability. That language ability is based on two main components: language knowledge and strategic competence. In detail, language knowledge consists of two subcomponents: organisational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge and they complete each other in actual use of the language.

Bachman and Palmer (1996) emphasize the importance of 'controlled abilities' rather over formal structures, namely textual or grammatical knowledge. Grammatical knowledge is mainly focused on vocabulary, morphology, phonology and syntax knowledge which might facilitate the production of grammatically accurate sentences and the understanding on the propositional content. However, the other type of controlled ability –textual knowledge – might foster the process and understanding on spoken and written texts. More specifically, it is responsible for linking sentences or utterances into whole texts and in order to achieve combining sentences, Bachman and Palmer defined the knowledge of cohesion, rhetorical organisation and conversational organisation.

The first knowledge is the conductor who guides us the way how to mark semantic relations between sentences and the second knowledge tells us ways in order to evolve narrative descriptions or comparisons. The last knowledge is responsible for maintaining and finishing conversations.

The term 'pragmatic knowledge' is connected to different skills for establishing and comprehending conversation. It can be divided into two subcomponents: functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge. Functional knowledge is accountable for expressing and

comprehending the illocutionary act of the conversations, however, sociolinguistic knowledge focuses on sociolinguistic aspects of interpreting phrases that are correct in a certain context (Bachman and Palmer, 1996).

In addition to the above mentioned knowledge the strategic knowledge which is devised as a summary of metacognitive features that might facilitate speakers' engagement in goal settings communicative sources' assessment. In more detail, according to Bachman and Palmer (1996) goal settings can recognize various tasks, selecting a specific one and complete them, more specifically, language usage is closely related to various areas in communicative language ability: affective schemata and topical knowledge. Planning means the ways of comparing and contrasting how to imply language knowledge and use it in a particular context appropriately. Considering all the descriptions of Bachman and Palmer's communicative competence model, we may notice that the model is more comprehensive and complicated and more suitable for language testing and assessment in opposite of Canale and Swain's competence model which is a much clearer model. 'It is preferable because of its detailed and at the same time very organisational description of basic components of communicative competence (Bagaric, 2007:99).

#### **2.3.4 CEFR and communicative competence**

The last model which I aim to focus on is additionally significant aspect for my study, the definition of communicative language competence in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001). CEFR was originally established for practicing language teaching, learning and assessment and developing the quality of conversation amongst individuals in Europe with various language skills and backgrounds (CEFR, 2001). In that model, the communicative competence is examined in the respect of knowledge which divided into three different elements: i, language competence, ii, sociolinguistic competence, iii, pragmatic competence. 'Each of these components is postulated as comprising, in particular, knowledge and skills and know-how' (CEF, 2001:22). Firstly, language competence refers to the quality of the certain knowledge of an individual which might be his/her vocabulary knowledge and to cognitive skills and several ways how this knowledge is reserved and how to recall that knowledge. Sociolinguistic competence is accountable for skills in order to use language accurately in various social contexts, for instance rules and norms for behaving politely amongst diverse age, gender, social groups. In addition to this participants might be not aware of the fact, but sociolinguistic elements may affect participant from different cultural backgrounds. The last element in this model is the pragmatic competence which refers to functional language use and speech acts, illustrating interactional acts. The competence is

related to the mastery of conversation, cohesion and coherence. Similar to the linguistic competence, it is also important to look at different types of cultural circumstances and interactions with individuals. Each category is conceived in order to categorize types of competences or the cognitive features which may refer to individual performances. In addition to this, different learning activities may facilitate and apply those features.

CEFR is created as a use of strategies in a broad sense; therefore the module focuses on various communication strategies which might be helpful in order to develop challenging areas in language learning. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages' writers, all the components attempt to specify 'internal representations, mechanisms and capacities, the cognitive existence of which can be considered to account for observable behaviour and performance" by individuals (CEFR: 2001: 14). Fluency

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>C2</b>          | Can express <u>him/herself</u> spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it. |
| <b>C1</b>          | Can express <u>him/herself</u> spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.                                        |
| <b>B2+,<br/>B2</b> | Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo: although she/he can be hesitant as she/he searches for patterns and expressions. There are few noticeably long pauses.             |
| <b>B1+,<br/>B1</b> | Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.                         |
| <b>A2+,<br/>A2</b> | Can make <u>him/herself</u> understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident.                                                          |
| <b>A1</b>          | Can manage very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words and to repair communication.                   |

Table 1: CEFR: qualitative aspects of spoken language use: fluency (2001)

## 2.4 Communicative performance and speaking fluency

As described in the Common European Framework of Languages (CEFR; Council of Europe, 2001), producing fluent speech is a significant element of speaking proficiency for non-native speakers. The writers of the CEFR stress that speakers at level B2 can communicate 'with a

degree of fluency'; at the level of C1, speakers can express themselves 'fluently,' and at level C2, individuals can speak 'very fluently' (2001:24).

Various definitions can be found for the term 'fluency'. For instance the Oxford Dictionary (2016) describes fluency as 'The ability to speak or write a particular foreign language easily and accurately' or 'the ability to express oneself easily and articulately'. One of the first descriptions of language fluency might be written by Fillmore (1979) who provides a complex definition of speaking fluency: firstly, being able to speak at length with only a small number of pauses. Secondly, creating utterances in a coherent, reasoned and semantically correct way, more specifically, have accurate phrases in a broad range of contexts, and lastly that being able to use creative and imaginative language. Later, Pawley and Syder (1983) provided a new concept of fluency in which they described it as 'the native speaker's ability to produce fluent stretches of discourse' (1983:191).

According to Faerch, Haastrup and Phillipson (1984) analyse fluency as an element of the communicative competence and they describe it as the ability of a language speaker in terms of creating use of linguistic or pragmatic competence they possess.

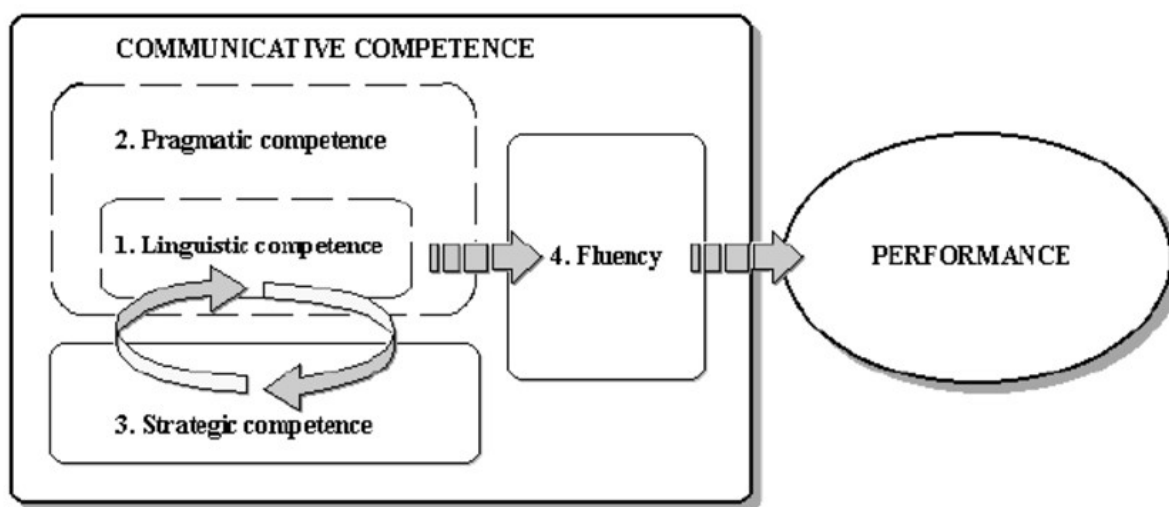


Figure 1- Components of communicative competence: Faerch 1984

## 2.5 Overview of speaking fluency

Fluency is a notion that is a primary term in English language teaching, testing and linguistics. The importance of fluency can be seen in its frequent use in various research papers related to second language acquisition and methodology. However, it is difficult to define due to ambiguity. Segalowitz (2010) distinguishes three different types of fluency: cognitive, perceived and utterance fluency. Cognitive fluency is when second language speaker is able to

translate thoughts to L2 speech. Perceived fluency refers to a subjective measure of what listener perceive, and utterance fluency is the objective acoustic measure of fluency (2010:165). According to Kirk and Carter (2010) it is hard to define fluency because firstly, it is a lay term with its own features and uses. Secondly, the term has been described widely by linguists therefore differences can be find in certain studies. More specifically, fluency has been divided into two categories: the first category is close to the general proficiency. However, the other is more technical, related to certain features in spoken language (Kirk and Carter, 2010). Additionally, it is a more complex due to debates regarding to native and non-native speakers' fluency (Kirk, Carter, 2010: 1).

The second meaning might be more relevant to the actual study because I decide to focus on specific features in spoken language and I am going to illustrate and examine Hungarian students' spoken fluency and its development throughout the period. Guillot (1999, p. vii) emphasizes: 'Yet it is peculiarly available to all, language specialists and non-specialist, as a measure of oral performance, and is used with a confidence which hardly seems justified in view of the scarcity of accounts governed by anything other than intuition.' It is clear, however, that fluency needs closer analysis in order to measure students' spoken fluency and demonstrate its development.

Because of the ambiguity of the fluency' definitions, Brumfit (1984) describes fluency as natural use of language like native speakers (NS). In details, the ability that the language learner speaks fluently can encourage the speaker to create continuous verbal communication without any barrier or understanding difficulties for the listener. Fluency can be measured by the five following features (Fulcher, 1996):

- comprehension of listening
- how long their utterances are
- existence of backchannels
- amount of utterances
- ability to correct mistakes while communicating (Kirk, Carter, 2010:6)

Regarding the importance of the listener, Kraut et al. suggest (1982) that fluency in all conversations should be co-constructed by both speakers. McCarthy (2005:4) describes it as 'fluency confluence' which refers to the fact that participants of the conversation may complete each other sentences or predict certain words that other speakers might be seeking for which may produce successful and fluent conversation.

### **2.5.1 Fluency development**

Hedge (2000) stresses that fluency refers to coherent answer, accurate usage of coherent devices, for instance: and, however, moreover and intelligible pronunciation. In terms of fluency development, Hedge (2000) suggests that focusing on spoken fluency might create a convenient environment amongst students and gain their self-confidence. Completing Hedge's definition, Richards (2006) examines how spoken fluency might be fostered by various aspects: a, with cooperation in problem solving tasks, b, the discussions of meaning in pair work activities and c, the use of communication strategies.

Hasselgreen (2005: 135) emphasizes that 'small words' which are 'small words and phrases, occurring with high frequency in the spoken language, that facilitate our speech flowing, yet do not contribute essentially the message itself' may develop spoken fluency. Small words, for instance: 'you know, well, kind of' might help the speaker to provide a better understanding for the listener in certain conversations. After describing various views on spoken fluency, it is obvious that fluency is an important component of the communication competence and needs further examining.

It can be seen clearly that researchers seek to understand the diversity and complexity of speaking fluency and it is also difficult to measure and scale fluency. This study investigates and focuses on Hungarian students' vocabulary and spoken fluency and attempt to measure their improvement throughout the six-month period. Learners are asked to be examined by observations, interviews, vocabulary and speaking tests in order to analyse their second language fluency development. The second part of the study is going to focus on teachers' attempts in terms of fluency development with streaming services. By analysing Hungarian students' fluency improvement, the study might provide useful information for teachers who wish to teach Hungarian students. It was hoped that the findings of the research could help developing the importance of focusing on communication in language teaching. Furthermore, the study aims to seek various ways in order to improve Hungarian students' speaking skills with streaming services in the future.

## 2.6 Research questions:

Research questions are:

- What are the effects of streaming platforms in the development of English as a Second Language?
- Is the vocabulary level of learners increasing due to watching streaming services in L2?
- To what extent do the vocabulary and fluency level improve by using streaming services?
- In what ways can teachers implement the use of streaming platforms into their teaching?

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

In order to have not only qualitative but also quantitative data (mixed methods research) students were observed, tested and asked to complete a questionnaire related to their fluency and speaking skills. I decide to have both types of data because 'it is suggested by many that we can gain a better understanding of a complex phenomenon by converging numeric trends from quantitative data and specific details from qualitative data. Words can be used to add meaning to numbers and numbers can be used to add precision to words' (Dörnyei, 2007:45)

### 3.2 Participants

|        | Teachers | Students |
|--------|----------|----------|
| Male   | 1        | 5        |
| Female | 2        | 8        |
| Total  | 3        | 13       |

Table 2: Participants by genders

In order to examine several differences and improvement in students' vocabulary skills and spoken fluency, 13 Hungarian students are selected at the Mosonmagyaróvári Kossuth Lajos

High School. According to their head English teacher “they are persistent, clever and cute but a bit shy students” (Teacher T).

Thirteen participants in this group were five males and eight females, whose age is from 17 to 19.

Regarding the students’ language learning background, they all learnt English in a formal way, in primary school since the age of 6 and according to their statements, the majority of the students took private English lessons at home for a minimum of 1 year. The participants took a 5-year-course at the Mosonmagyaróvári Kossuth Lajos High School and 2023 was their fourth year. All the students possess a B2 Euroexam language exam since 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

Additionally, none of them had the opportunity to live in a native English-speaking country. All members of the focus group were selected based on their scores they reached in the placement test. Placement test was needed at the beginning of the 5-year-course in order to ensure that their language proficiency was fairly similar: the ‘beginner’ group. In this research, one native speaker judged students’ fluency development throughout the course. The native speaker “K” studied MA TESOL with Applied Linguistics in England and had 5 years of experience in the field of language teaching and testing, and he supported my judgment regarding to spoken fluency. Additionally, two more teachers were involved in the study who taught in the 5-year program, and they were interviewed about students’ development.

All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and I asked for permission from the Mosonmagyaróvári Kossuth Lajos High School’s teachers and from the students to observe them. It is also important to state that students were aware of the fact that their speaking was going to be recorded and analysed. All of the students participated on a voluntary basis and their anonymity was secured in every chapter of the current dissertation.

### **3.3 Procedures**

#### **3.3.1 The pre-and post- test: vocabulary test**

I decide to choose a B+ (according to the CEFR) use of English vocabulary test in order to measure students’ written skills. Since I taught the focus group for two years, I know their level and I wanted to challenge them in order to have a better understanding on their development in vocabulary and fluency.

The vocabulary test consists of 3 complex task which aim is to focus on ‘everyday English’ and supposedly they can only learn these expressions from native speakers through extensive

listening. Online streaming platforms, for instance Netflix, HBO Go, Disney +, Apple TV have revolutionized language learning by offering a practical way for learners to immerse themselves in a variety of programs. Webb (2015) advocates for extensive viewing, urging learners to make watching L2 television a regular habit. Similar to extensive reading, extensive viewing (EV) involves engaging learners emotionally as they watch for enjoyment. However, unlike reading, which is widely accepted as an educational activity, television watching is primarily associated with entertainment. This poses a significant challenge for extensive viewing's recognition as a valuable tool for language acquisition.

For the pre- as well as the post-test my goal was to choose and create a vocabulary test which can be useful in their everyday speaking.

Task 1: They had to complete the sentences, using a phrasal verb from the box in its correct form. Based on my previous experiences, students who listen to native speakers or watch movies and series tend to be more familiar with expressions like: **CROSS OUT - EAT OUT - GET THROUGH TO - GROW UP - KEEP UP** (See attachment for the vocabulary test).

Task 2 was a word formation task: their task was to use the word in brackets to form a new word that fits into each blank.

Task 3 wanted to measure students' general vocabulary. There were no expressions to choose from, they had to choose one word that fits into each blank.

### 3.3.2 Speaking test

Students were observed through weeks which were conducted by T from Monday to Friday, three hours a week. During the first week, observations helped to find out students' preferences regarding topics in order to design a pre-test and post-test for them. On the first week, language learners were asked to choose from cards consisting of various topics, for instance: family, culture, hobby, music, travel, health which were selected from their course book's speaking sections (New English File, 2013). According to other teachers' experience and opinions, in terms of conversation topic, travel was the most popular amongst students. Therefore, that topic was chosen for their pre- and post- test, their main task (role-play, checking into a hotel, see in Appendix).

Before the main task, in the first 2-3 minutes of the test, general questions were designed for them as a warm-up activity in order to relax and encourage them to avoid reluctance when it comes to the main part of the speaking test (role play). Allwright (1984) emphasizes that warm up activities are invented to help students to ignore distracting or unnecessary thoughts, and to get them prepared to concentrate as an individual or in groups on different activities that might

follow. A warming up activity should be an encouraging point that will guide students to present themselves efficiently on the test.

I decide to choose general questions as a **warm-up activity**, because of the advantages of its effects on speaking: to relax and make students feel more comfortable. I had the opportunity to teach the focus group for 2 years and according to my observations, they like small talk and to have a conversation with me. Students attempted to tell me about what makes a person a good friend, living in a different country and how they develop their English skills outside of the classroom. (See appendix I. for questions). Materials gathered for the present study involved Mobile phone-recorded speaking samples which were generally 3 to 4 minutes long. Participants of the research accomplished a narrative task because in language testing, storytelling tasks are popular, and narrative is a helpful medium for acquiring a wide range of speech from learners (Skehan, 2001). Two reasons led to the conclusion of choosing a narrative task. Firstly, analysing students' speech might be extremely challenging due to overlaps and interruption where participants may speak concurrently. The second reason is according to Skehan (1998) and Goldman- Eisler (1968) various sorts of topics might set different cognitive delivery on language speakers therefore it might influence spoken fluency. In order to evade that influencing feature of fluency, I gave them some time to look at the questions and think about them. For the aim of the current study, it was the activity selected to motivate learners to be more expressive during the speaking test. Kay (1995) defines warming up activity as 'an effective way to help the students begin to think in English' (1995:6).

Students were asked to sit front of me, and 2-3 minutes were provided for participants of the study to look at the questions and answer them to have sufficient time to understand them and to gather their thoughts about how they might talk about the task. One of the teachers, T was always present at the recording but did not intervene during the test in case of hesitations or problems. The students' performance was recorded on a mobile phone and saved on the computer immediately after the test. Following the "general questions" section, only one student stayed in the classroom to be tested for the main activity.

I chose role-play activity for the **main task** because of its proven advantages. Stern (1983) suggests that 'role playing helps the individual to become more flexible' and 'create a sense of mastery in various situations' (p. 213). She also mentions that 'through role play, L2 learners can experience different situations in which they will use the language; and as they develop a sense of mastery in them, they should be able to apply the language more easily to new situations' (p.213). Ladousse (2004) stresses that 'role play is one of a whole spectrum of

communicative techniques which might improve fluency in language learning and it supports interaction in the classroom, and it should foster students' motivation (p.7). Additionally, he emphasizes that role play might motivate pair learning and divide the responsibility for learning between teacher and learner. Ladousse suggests role-plays to be 'perhaps the most flexible technique in the range' of communicative methods, and with appropriate and suitable role-play activities, teachers might meet an endless choice of needs (Ladousse, 2004:7).

After the pre-test, I asked students to watch any streaming service. I did not tell them on purpose how often, whether in English or with English subtitle. One of my aims was to find out whether they prefer to watch it in English and if it is beneficial in their language development.

### **Post-test**

The focus group did the same vocabulary and same speaking test, however, at the end of the test, I provided a questionnaire for them. The questionnaire consists only three questions: How frequently they watched streaming platforms, whether they watched it in English or in their L1 (Hungarian) or with English/Hungarian subtitles. Lastly, I asked them to describe if they think that streaming services improved their English skills throughout this six-month-period. It is important to state that the group had a two-and-a-half-month summer break during this period so they did not have English lessons which might influence their language development.

In the next part, my aim is to illustrate the criteria how I attempt to measure students' speaking fluency improvement by listing various features of fluency measurement.

After the analysis of fluency, interviews were recorded with teachers about students' speaking skills and its development throughout the 5-year-course. (see in Appendix III). In addition, I gave questionnaires to all English teachers at the school in order to find out whether they use streaming platforms in their teaching, if they do, how they implement it, if they do not, what is the reason for it (see in Appendix).

### **3.3 Ways of measuring fluency development**

It is important to state that I attempt to focus on non-native English spoken fluency because there have been debates about distinguishing fluency measurement amongst native and nonnative students. 'However, disfluencies, for instance pauses, fillers, repairs may occur in both native and non-native speech, and it is as yet unclear how fluency rates weigh the fluency characteristics of native and non-native speech' (Bosker et al., 2014:579).

There have been numerous attempts to explore the fluency level of non-native speakers (e.g., Wennerstrom, 2000; Cucchiarini, Strik, and Boves, 2002; Kormos and Dénes, 2004; Derwing, Rossiter, Munro, & Thomson, 2004; Mora, 2006; Rossiter, 2009; Ginther, Dimova, & Yang, 2010). According to Bosker et al. (2014) all of these studies involve relating measures of perceived fluency (listener ratings with Likert scales) to utterance fluency (temporal speech measures) in order to assess the relative contributions of different speech characteristics to fluency perception. The analysis of fluency development mainly follows the steps of Kormos and Dénes (2004).

### **3.4 Interviews with teachers**

After students' post-test by the end of the course, I asked the focus group's teacher's opinion and views about Hungarian learners' language skills, whether they use streaming services in their teaching, why, why not. More specifically, my aim is with the interviews to investigate how fluency is encouraged with streaming services in the classroom. Additionally, the focus is on finding out what they suggest about their spoken fluency and how strong it might be compared to other language skills. Recording teachers' opinions and views about students speaking fluency and their development with streaming platforms helps me to find out and answer my second research question:

- Is the learners' vocabulary level increasing due to watching streaming services in L2?

After students finished the final exam, I decided to ask all teachers who taught my focus group how they feel about developing vocabulary and speaking with streaming services and describe their ways of facilitating students' fluency. Furthermore, I wanted to find out what they would suggest for further activities and teaching methods in order to use those platforms. (See in appendix).

### **3.5 My methods in developing fluency with streaming platforms**

According to teachers' opinions and suggestions, it seems evident that my conversation classes (when I taught them in the school year 2020/2021 and 2021/2022) helped learners' fluency development. Therefore, I believe that it is worth mentioning how I attempted to improve speaking skills throughout the course and what needs to be taken into consideration in the future when developing learners' fluency. Before the course started, I was informed that I am going to have conversation classes with learners where the focus is on speaking activities. Therefore, I

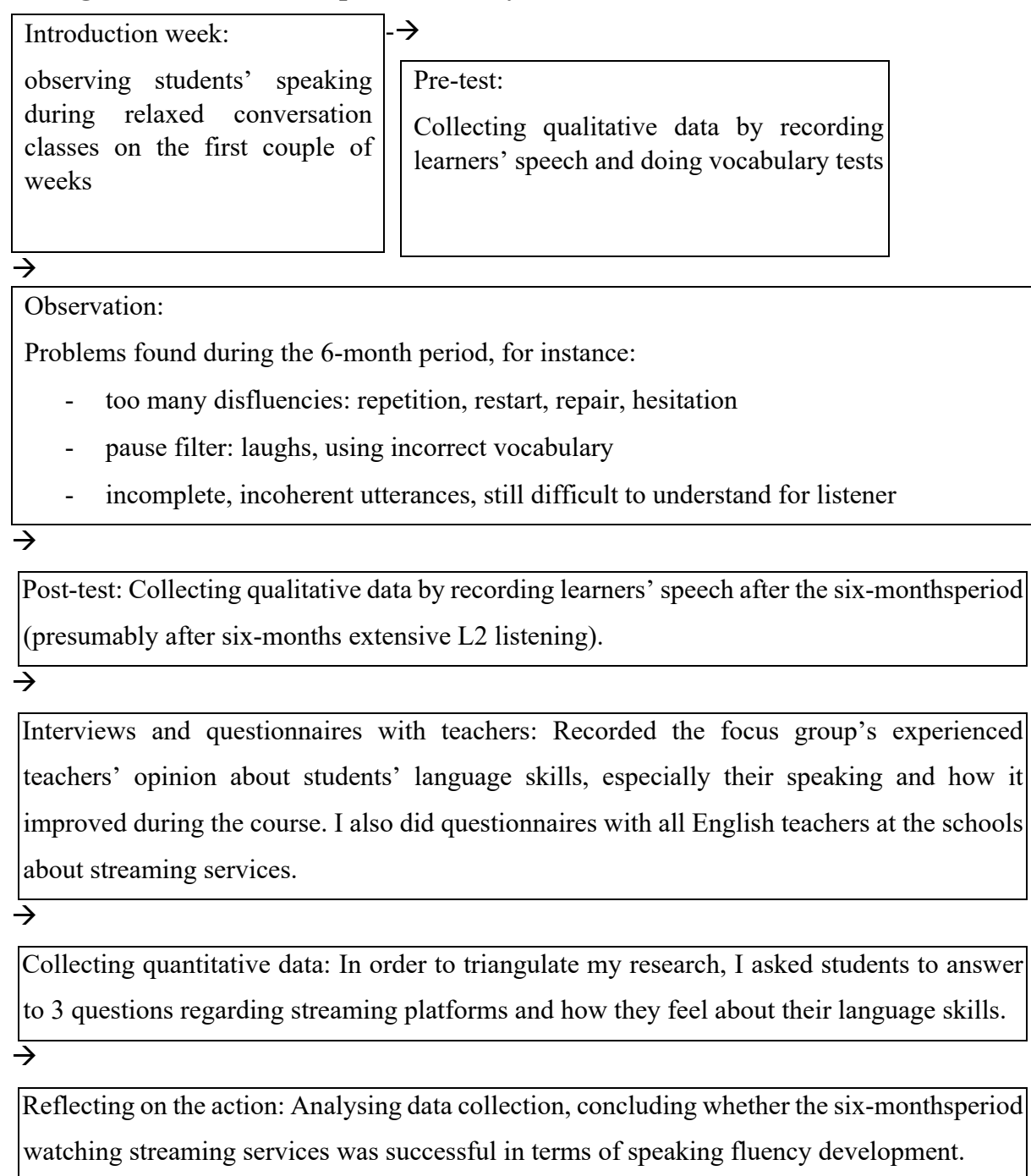
chose a communicative language teaching approach which is the Task – based Language Teaching (TBLT). I decided to select TBLT because it mainly focuses on authentic language and on requesting learners to create various meaningful tasks using their second language. Meaningful tasks may involve e.g. visiting a hospital, booking a hotel room, making a complaint in a restaurant – which are related to real life conversations. Therefore, the assessment is based on task outcome, not on grammatical features of the target language. It promotes TBLT to develop second language fluency and student confidence. (Willis, 1996).

According to Ellis (2003) the task underlies 4 main features:

1. The primary focus is on the meaning.
2. The task involves a ‘gap’.
3. The participants choose the linguistic resources needed to complete the task.
4. The task has a clear, non-linguistic outcome. (2003:22).

The main advantage of TBLT according to Willis (1996) is that it might facilitate learners’ confidence that is a crucial factor in language teaching. Through observations and relying on teachers’ views, fluency development might be related to the gain of self-confidence. According to the present education system in Hungary, my focus group did only have the opportunity to study with Hungarian native teachers who rarely let students speak and communicate in English in the classroom. Additionally, one major influential factor might be that Hungarian students are afraid of losing face. It refers to the fact that they are afraid of making mistakes while speaking front of the class. I suggest this factor might be related to self – confidence. Individuals who have usual connection with members of different nationality are likely to experience a high level of self-confidence. Self-confidence might affect the quality of second language contact (Clément, 1980; Clément & Kruidenier, 1985; Dörnyei, 1994). Taking into consideration the English learning situation in a mono-cultural environment, in our case: Hungarian EFL learners do not have sufficient opportunity to practice their communication skills in English, that is to say, they could not develop enough self-confidence in speaking the target language. The enhancement in fluency becomes evident within the six-month timeframe. Upon conducting the post-test within the focus groups, I promptly discerned noticeable advancements in the students’ communicative abilities. Employing identical topics and tasks for both pre-test and post-test facilitated a comprehensive assessment of discrepancies in their vocabulary, grammar, and selfassurance.

### 3.6 Figure of research: Steps of the study



### 3.7 Analysis

Following the transcription of data from 13 students and 1 teacher, I observed several significant aspects concerning the students' oral fluency, speech duration, extended pauses, and disfluencies. Recognizing the prominence of these attributes, I initiated a thorough analysis of

their speech patterns, given the pronounced differences compared to those observed in vocabulary assessments.

1. Grades: The first important step is to grade the Mosonmagyaróvári Kossuth Lajos High School's students in order to see how their speaking fluency changed in general. The criteria of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001) guides me to determine their speech. In order to ensure reliability and validity, I asked Teacher T to grade each student in the focus group and then make a comparison whether the results are similar. I suggest that if the outcome is comparable, it might be more reliable.
2. Length and amount of speech: Through careful observation and examination, a discernible increase in students' vocabulary usage and speech volume was evident by the conclusion of the period. I propose that this observed trend merits attention when conducting analyses of oral language development. Additionally, the inclusion of pauses in speech length measurements is imperative for maintaining naturalness in discourse, a concept I intend to delve into further in the subsequent segment of the analysis, as advocated by Riggenbach (1991). Speech volume is quantified by the total number of words per speech.
3. The number of unfilled long pauses per speech: The focus is on unfilled longer pauses which is a silence of 5 seconds or longer. In order to analyse pauses, pauses are considered only over 0.2, according to Riggenbach (1991:426). Pauses shorter than 0.2 seconds are considered 'micro-pauses' and are not regarded as hesitation phenomena (Riggenbach, 1991). Following Riggenbach's theories about pauses (1991), unfilled pauses under 3 seconds were not involved in the calculation of the research. Unfilled pauses shorter than 3 seconds are generally regarded articulation pauses and not as hesitation phenomena. According to Fillmore (1979) and Deese (1980) short pauses of 4 seconds or even less often takes place in native speakers' speech and are often considered 'micropauses' in the terminology of fluency (Grosjean, 1980). Therefore, I suggest that that shorter pauses do not necessarily mean the lack of fluency or weaker speaking skills. Short pauses might even foster spoken fluency in terms of the listeners' prospect because pauses are inevitable for listeners' comprehension.
4. The number of disfluencies per speech: The total number of disfluencies per speech of each participant, for example repetitions, restarts and repairs (Kormos and Dénes, 2004).

In this study, teachers examine accuracy only in general in the pre – and then in the post – test rather than measuring each student’s output in terms of grammatical complexity.

The quantity of talk students produced was measured by the total number of words (Dewaele and Pavlenko, 2003; Dörnyei and Kormos, 2000 in Kormos and Dénes, 2004:12)

### **3.7.1 Vocabulary test**

Given that each student holds a B2 language proficiency level, I opted for tasks geared towards the B2+ level. I firmly believe that observable improvements are more pronounced when tasks slightly exceed the students' current proficiency level. The tasks I curated were sourced from the website [www.english-practice.at](http://www.english-practice.at).

This website offers complimentary downloadable practice materials tailored for both students and educators.

The vocabulary test comprises three tasks, each containing useful expressions that, in my personal assessment, may be more effectively acquired through extensive listening to native English speakers or through watching English-language movies and series.

### **3.7.2 Questionnaires**

Aiming to find out students’ feelings about their spoken fluency, skills and background reasons, a survey of questionnaire is employed in this research. The questionnaire includes 2 close-ended questions and 1 open-ended question. 3 questions seek to find out students’ watching habits and how they feel about their language skill development after the period. Additionally, my main aim is to focus on background reasons which might influence their fluency in the classroom. The main idea of the questionnaire was taken from Wang’s (2003) research who also attempts to examine young EFL (English as a foreign language) learners’ spoken fluency and accuracy and how it can be developed. However, subtle changes are applied in order to produce a more appropriate and suitable questionnaire for my focus group, in detail: Please describe whether streaming services improved your English skills.

Thirteen questionnaires were distributed following the completion of the vocabulary and speaking tests to learners who had been provided with clear instructions on how to fill them out. Participants were instructed to select one of the following frequency options: 'every day', 'around three times a week', 'once a month', or 'never', based on their initial impression.

Although respondents were prompted to complete the questionnaire based on their immediate reactions, there is a lack of clarity regarding the duration they spent on filling it out.

Furthermore, an additional drawback is the absence of mechanisms to verify the truthfulness of responses, as noted by Longman (1981). Consequently, the validity of the questionnaire may be subject to scrutiny.

Question 1 aims to ascertain the frequency of participants' consumption of streaming platforms. Question 2 delves into their viewing habits regarding movies and series, including language preferences and subtitle usage. The final question seeks their opinions on the efficacy of using movies to enhance language skills throughout the period.

In the subsequent section of the dissertation, I will delve into the results and findings derived from the data collected, elucidating on how the six-month period potentially influenced changes in students' vocabulary proficiency and spoken fluency.

## 4.Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Table: Vocabulary measurement (test results)

|                | Pre-test      | Post-test   |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| Student A      | 46 %          | 35 %        |
| Student B      | 100 %         | 95 %        |
| Student Bol    | 33 %          | 26 %        |
| Student Cs     | 51 %          | 44 %        |
| Student D      | 64 %          | 66 %        |
| Student H      | 62 %          | 57 %        |
| Student L      | 42 %          | 37 %        |
| Student Lo     | 42 %          | 42 %        |
| Student M      | 57 %          | 68 %        |
| Student S      | 64 %          | 66 %        |
| Student V      | 75 %          | 57 %        |
| Student Z      | 53 %          | 44 %        |
| Student Zs     | 62 %          | 71 %        |
| <b>Overall</b> | <b>57,7 %</b> | <b>54 %</b> |

Table: Table of vocabulary test score comparison between pre-test and post-test

4 better result, 3 similar (plus, minus 5 %), 5 worse, 1 is the same percentage

## **Vocabulary test results:**

This data appears to represent the performance of several students across two assessments (pre and post-tests) with each student having scores for both Assessment 1 and Assessment 2. The last row, "Overall," provides the average scores for both assessments across all students.

There's considerable variability in performance amongst students. For instance, Student B scored a perfect 100% in Assessment 1, while Student Bol scored only 33%. Similarly, while Student M improved from 57% in Assessment 1 to 68% in Assessment 2, Student V declined from 75% to 57%.

Comparing the overall averages with individual student scores, it can be seen that some students perform above average (e.g., Student M in Assessment 2), while others perform below average (e.g., Student Bol in both assessments). Some students, however, like Student D and Student S, have fairly consistent scores between the two assessments, both scoring 64% and 66% respectively. To gain deeper insights, it could be helpful to analyse factors such as study habits, learning styles, and any external factors that may have influenced performance. Additionally, comparing these scores with previous assessments or benchmarks could provide context for understanding overall progress.

Overall, this analysis highlights the diverse range of student performance across two assessments and underscores the importance of targeted support and intervention to address individual learning needs.

| A           | B     | C    | D                                                           |          | E          |          | G                                 | H    | I                    | J    | K                            | L    |
|-------------|-------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------|----------|-----------------------------------|------|----------------------|------|------------------------------|------|
| Student     | GRADE |      | LENGTH, AMOUNT OF SPEECH (min:sec, numbers of words/speech) |          |            |          | UNFILLED LONG PAUSES (sec/speech) |      | DISFLUENCIES/ speech |      | Vocabulary test results in % |      |
|             | PRE   | POST | PRE                                                         |          | POST       |          | PRE                               | POST | PRE                  | POST | PRE                          | POST |
| Student A   | B1+   | B2   | 3:34                                                        | 393      | 5:03       | 526      | 1 (5 sec)                         |      | 2                    | 1    | 46                           | 35   |
| Student B   | C1    | C1   | 3:59                                                        | 572      | 2:53       | 344      | -                                 | -    | -                    | -    | 100                          | 95   |
| Student Bol | A2    | A2+  | 5:27                                                        | 740      | 3:47       | 461      | -                                 | -    | 3                    | 3    | 33                           | 26   |
| Student Cs  | B2    | B2+  | 4:30                                                        | 546      | 3:07       | 313      | -                                 | -    | 2                    | -    | 51                           | 44   |
| Student D   | B2    | B2+  | 3:40                                                        | 578      | 2:59       | 403      | -                                 | -    | 2                    | -    | 64                           | 66   |
| Student H   | B2    | B2+  | 3:09                                                        | 304      | 4:38       | 596      | -                                 | -    | 1                    | -    | 62                           | 57   |
| Student L   | B2    | B2   | 4:06                                                        | 477      | 3:22       | 371      | 1 (4 sec)                         | -    | 3                    | 2    | 47                           | 37   |
| Student Lo  | B2    | B2   | 4:44                                                        | 582      | 5:49       | 542      | -                                 | -    | 3                    | 1    | 42                           | 42   |
| Student M   | B2    | B2+  | 4:57                                                        | 629      | 7:56       | 896      | -                                 | -    | 2                    | -    | 57                           | 68   |
| Student S   | B2+   | B2++ | 3:24                                                        | 497      | 4:01       | 809      | -                                 | -    | 1                    | -    | 64                           | 66   |
| Student V   | B2    | B2+  | 3:17                                                        | 447      | 3:32       | 461      | -                                 | -    | -                    | -    | 75                           | 57   |
| Student Z   | B2    | B2+  | 5:36                                                        | 557      | 3:33       | 431      | -                                 | -    | 2                    | 2    | 53                           | 44   |
| Student Zs  | B2    | C1   | 4:07                                                        | 477      | 5:33       | 627      | -                                 | -    | 2                    | -    | 62                           | 71   |
|             |       |      |                                                             |          |            |          |                                   |      |                      |      |                              |      |
|             |       |      | 51,9 min.                                                   | 6799 w/s | 54,32 min. | 6778 w/s | 9 (sec)                           | 0    | 22                   | 9    | 57,70%                       | 54%  |

Table: Table of speaking fluency score comparison between pre-test and post-test

First and foremost, I consulted with Teacher T and with all teachers who ever taught the focus group about the results, and we made a comparison about students' fluency. In general, they tend to relate fluency development to the naturalness of their speech, more specifically they focused on the lack or presence of disfluencies, e.g. self-corrections, repetitions and long pauses and how students could handle communicative breakdowns. Following that, we also focused on the scale of vocabulary students used. 3 out of 4 teachers mentioned that they notice fluency improvement. Teacher T stresses: "...Their speaking and their fluency seem to be improved a great deal. Erm... their... they've built confidence as well, speaking not only to foreigners but also teach other in English, which was always... at the start they were a bit shy and found it very weird talking to each other in English..." Teacher T suggests about their development: "...From the beginning I am not sure because of their nerves or they were shy or not but throughout the course they've started to input more into discussion, I think a lot of conversation time helped with that. So yes, I think they improved more because they have more of a chance to actually speak and watch movies in English whereas if they went outside, they wouldn't have the chance..."

Teacher T: "...And the other thing is that we try to encourage them that it's okay to make mistakes, it's okay to use the wrong vocabulary or less academic vocabulary. Just communicate and we can improve from that later whereas at school they have to say the right thing and if

they don't, they are wrong. Whereas we allow them... you know ... to make mistakes..." Therefore, I did not put great emphasise on their accuracy and grammatical mistakes when analysed their fluency.

A more intriguing observation lies in the fact that upon initial examination of the fluency measurement table, the improvement of the students is not readily apparent when considering the mean scores. However, upon re-listening to all recordings, I made detailed notes (see Appendix V) that facilitated a deeper comprehension not only of the overall performance but also of each student's speech individually. I can affirm that the vocabulary of all learners has shown improvement, as they have begun to employ more sophisticated and advanced expressions and words, e.g.: Student M: economical problems, Student Zs: dozen problems, Student Z: catch the flow, get on well, personality trait, Student V: jealousy, Student S did not use the word 'kinda' as many times, he replaced it with synonyms. (See Appendix V).

The table was created using Microsoft Excel with the intention of presenting the entire process in a single view. In this section of the dissertation, the aim is to analyse the results of the study and explore potential solutions or changes concerning vocabulary and spoken fluency.

## **4.2 Grades**

After grading with the criteria of CEFR and comparison with Teacher T, we strongly agreed that the majority of my focus group's spoken fluency improved. Overall, 10 out of 13 students' grade improved. It is important to note, that we mainly focused on spoken language when examined grades in general. If we examine each student's performance, the most significant change can be seen in student Zs fluency and vocabulary development because according to the CEFR, she improved from B2 to C1. Additionally, her vocabulary test was better with 9% and did not have any disfluencies, hesitations. Student Zs also used rich vocabulary with new expressions, e.g.: pardon me, catch the cold (See Appendix V), at the post-test, did not have misunderstandings at all.

Student Bol achieved to score A2+ by the end of the period, however the participant only scored A2 at the beginning. Additionally, 7 more students reached B2+ from B2 and 1 student from B2+ to B2++ which means according to the CEFR that 'she/he can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo: although she/he can be hesitant as she/he searches for patterns and expressions' (2001:37). Overall, fluency improvement is significant because only 3 participants stayed on the same level after six months which is only 20 % of the focus group.

### **4.3 Length of the speech**

The overall increase in the length of students' speeches is evident, rising from 51.9 minutes to 54.32 minutes, reflecting an improvement of almost 3 minutes. It is essential to emphasize the importance of word count to determine whether students utilized a broader range of vocabulary and expressions rather than simply relying on filled or unfilled pauses. To assess whether students spoke more, I tallied the number of words used per speech and differentiated between speech length and quantity.

Subsequently, I conducted a separate examination of long unfilled pauses for greater precision. An intriguing case is observed with Student Bol, whose speech duration decreased from 5 minutes and 27 seconds to 3 minutes and 47 seconds, with the number of words dropping from 740 to 461. Moreover, it is noticeable that he employed more pauses or disfluencies during the post-test. During the spoken test, he admitted to watching fewer movies overall, and when he did, he watched them in Hungarian to "enjoy" them. Additionally, he confessed that watching anything in the L2 made him feel as though he were in school (refer to Appendix V).

The most significant change is observed in Student S's performance, with the number of words doubling in the post-test from 497 to 809. By the end of the period, his nervousness dissipated, which may have been a contributing factor to his improved speaking performance.

It is worth noting that the pre-test took place during the first lesson of the day, while the posttest occurred during their eighth lesson of the day, which could potentially impact the entire procedure. From my perspective, I observed that the students seemed more focused and prepared during the post-test, likely motivated by the desire to conclude the day's activities and proceed with their other tasks.

### **4.4 Long unfilled pauses**

Great emphasis was not placed on filled and unfilled short pauses, as indicated in the analysis section. Upon scrutinizing long pauses, it is evident that learners spoke without significant hesitations, suggesting a smooth flow in their speech. In general, during the post-test, each student exhibited a smooth flow, resulting in fewer instances of misunderstandings.

## 4.5 Dysfluencies

Goldman-Eisler (1968) suggests that various dysfluencies – whether they examined normal or not – are the outcome of organising speech which request time away from articulation. According to Kormos and Dénes (2004) **repetitions, restarts and repairs** are included when analysing disfluencies in their speech. It can be seen, that except Student V and Student B, all students had disfluencies in the pre-test, however, only 5 students had any in the post-test, which is a huge improvement. Student Z, however, made the same mistakes in the pre-and post-tests.

Numerous disfluencies were observed in the speech of Student L and Lo. Specifically, Student L experienced three restarts and encountered two incomprehensible words. Student Lo's overall performance appeared ambiguous; however, her post-speech segment exhibited clearer and more comprehensible communication. She demonstrated an understanding of my questions and could respond without hesitation. The mean number of disfluencies witnessed a significant decline from 22 to 9 by the end of the course.

## 4.6 Features overall

Upon analyzing each participant's scores across various features, it becomes evident that Student B, along with Student Zs and Student M, achieves the highest scores (95%, 71%, and 68% respectively) and produces the largest volume of words per speech. Their output also exhibits the highest level of accuracy among the examined population, as determined through calculations and comparisons with teachers from the course.

In terms of speech duration, Student M delivers the longest speech, lasting 7 minutes and 56 seconds in the post-test, while Student D presents the shortest performance, with a duration of 2 minutes and 59 seconds. Student Bol demonstrates the highest rate of disfluency in both tests (3 occurrences), whereas Student B and V exhibit the least disfluency (none at all).

Student M presents an intriguing case, being the second slowest speaker in terms of speech duration. However, he manages to double her speech length in the post-test, highlighting notable improvement.

| Mean scores in overall (pre - test → post – test) |                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| -                                                 | Length of speech in minutes: 51,9 minutes → 54,32 minutes |
| -                                                 | Amount of speech in words: 6799 → 6778                    |
| -                                                 | Unfilled long pauses in seconds: 9 → none                 |
| -                                                 | L1 use in words: none                                     |
| -                                                 | Disfluencies: 22 → 9                                      |

#### 4.8Table: Mean scores of development

#### Questionnaires 4.9.1: Answers of questionnaires

|             | Frequency | Language/Subtitle |
|-------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Student A   | 3 x       | HE                |
| Student B   | 3 x       | EE                |
| Student Bol | every day | EE                |
| Student Cs  | 3 x       | EE                |
| Student D   | every day | E-                |
| Student H   | every day | E-                |
| Student L   | every day | EE                |
| Student Lo  | 3 x       | EE                |
| Student M   | 3 x       | E-                |
| Student S   | 1 x       | EE                |
| Student V   | 3 x       | EE                |
| Student Z   | every day | EH                |
| Student Zs  | 3 x       | EH                |

The first question of the questionnaire attempts to find out about how frequently students watch streaming services. (How frequently did you watch streaming services throughout this period?)

There were five possible answers: a, every day b, around three times a week

c, once a week d,

once a month e,

never

As observed, five out of thirteen students reported watching streaming platforms daily, while seven students indicated watching them three times a week. Additionally, one student stated watching them only once a week. None of the learners reported watching them once a month or never. This suggests that the focus group generally enjoys watching streaming platforms. The second question aims to ascertain the language in which students watched streaming services. Ten out of thirteen students selected English as their primary language preference on streaming platforms. Student Zs stands out from the expected trend as she watched Netflix with Hungarian subtitles. However, it is noteworthy that her vocabulary test results improved by 9% by the end of the period.

Question 3 pertains to the students' attitudes toward the improvement of their English skills. All students expressed belief that their listening and speaking skills had developed with the assistance of streaming platforms. (Refer to the Appendix for detailed responses.)

#### **4.8 Interviews with teachers**

Contrary to expectations, almost all the teachers at the Mosonmagyaróvári High School do not prefer using streaming services in the classroom. Most of them think that it is time-consuming, and they do not have sufficient time for it. For instance Teacher A: “I don't use Netflix or any other streaming services in my teaching because I don't have time to select and adapt their stuff.” or Teacher Esz: I don't use it, primarily because I don't have time for it, it could be good as a presentation material,...” Teacher T and Teacher J do not use it because of the poor equipment at the school: “To tell the truth I have never used Netflix in my lessons. Not because I don't consider them to be a useful or beneficial method in language teaching, but because I don't rely on the poor Internet access in our institution. Although numerous IT specialists have been working on the development of the Internet service in the school, I regularly have to face Internet connection problems when it comes to YouTube videos.”

Moreover, age could potentially be a significant factor, as only one teacher, who shares my age and familiarity with streaming platforms, utilizes them frequently. Teacher M says: “Beneficial? Yes, the methodological aim is to provide them opportunity to practice writing, movies are good for practicing how to write reviews, argumentative essays or even articles, they're an excellent source of listening skills practice as they offer a wide range of accents. I use them as easy vocabulary boosting materials and consider them to be useful for developing speaking skills too (for debate or individual long turns, presentation, describing people(actors/characters) or just to learn the basics of opinion giving.”

#### **4.9 General outcomes of the study**

The findings of this research illustrate that there is a set of features, which are appropriate predictive of fluency scores both for native and non-native speaker judges: grade, length of speech, unfilled long pauses, L1 use, disfluencies. By looking at the numbers of mean scores, the results are surprising. According to those numbers, students' fluency development is apparent. The study indicates that shyness and self-confidence play an enormous role when examining Hungarian learners' performance throughout the course.

According to the opinions of my colleagues, the consideration of confidence is essential when analyzing the spoken fluency of EFL learners. We posit that as self-confidence increases, their performance tends to become more fluent and accurate. Although we did not have sufficient time to thoroughly analyze their accuracy, we were able to draw some conclusions regarding this aspect. The study suggests that accuracy may play a crucial role in fluency assessments and is an influential factor in understanding students' speech, as exemplified by the case of Student 13. Collaborating with other teachers, we observed that learners who demonstrated fluency in terms of speech length also tended to produce accurate output. According to Kormos and Dénes (2004) in psycholinguistic terms it refers to the fact that one is only able to speak fluently if the speech production mechanisms are mainly automatic and if those sequences are memorised and used accurately (Schmidt, 1992).

Exceptions also exist in terms of the connection between accuracy and speed, for instance student M, whose performance was accurate, but I would consider it quite slow. Intermediate learners in general might not rely on automatic sentences and apply them while speaking. Therefore, if they attempt to be particularly accurate, their performance results in a slower speech. They attempted to focus most of the time on their grammar knowledge and it resulted in nervousness and hesitations. However, cases, more specifically amongst intermediate ability EFL students, speed and accuracy might be in opposite correlation with each other. We have to note, however, teachers' opinion differ regarding to this phenomenon. For some of them, it includes accuracy, while some other teachers tend to ignore these features of performance (Teacher W and Teacher Z). However, the study refers to the fact that fluency as a term may need to include accuracy. Therefore, if the target of language teaching is to facilitate EFL learners to be fluent speakers of the second language, both practices that support students to express their feelings, ideas in a communicative setting within every - day life interactions, and

in order to achieve that, accuracy may be involved. 'Moreover, tasks that develop accuracy and fluency in the temporal sense at the same time seem to be the most useful.

Furthermore, the validity of descriptions of hesitations, specifically unfilled long pauses in our study, appears to be questionable, as the occurrence of these features may not necessarily correlate with fluency. It is possible that even native speakers, in certain environments or situations, may exhibit hesitation, and individual speaking styles could also influence hesitation behaviour, as previously discussed in the analysis section of the dissertation. The results of the study clearly demonstrate that there is not a significant difference in how native and non-native teachers evaluate fluency, as evidenced by the comparison of grades between Teacher K and myself. Both native and non-native teachers base their assessments on the same set of features. Despite variations in individual preferences among examiners regarding fluency and accuracy, there does not appear to be a correlation with native or non-native status.

## **5.Limitations of the study and teaching implications**

### **5.1 Limitations**

As discussed in the literature review, the ambiguity surrounding the concept of 'fluency' posed a challenge in accurately measuring second language fluency within a short time frame. Fluency is a multifaceted term, making it difficult to determine which aspects should be considered when assessing learners' performance.

It is important to acknowledge that while the findings of the study were established from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives, questions remain regarding the issue of generalizability. Furthermore, my investigation into the factors that encourage students to speak in their second language in the classroom, as well as their experiences during task performance, was hindered by the fact that only 13 out of 15 students completed the full test, which influenced the final scores. Therefore, more extensive data collection is necessary to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Given the exploratory nature of the research, its findings cannot be readily generalized to a larger student population.

The objective of this study is to gather qualitative data to assess students' spoken fluency and vocabulary development using streaming services, as well as to explore teachers' perspectives on improving speaking skills. Consequently, the scope of the study encompasses not only students' perceptions of their speaking skills but also observations of classroom interactions. However, a potential limitation is the absence of both pre- and post-tests, which would offer a

more comprehensive and precise assessment of fluency scores. Nonetheless, conducting a while-test within this short period may not be feasible.

Due to time constraints, I was unable to thoroughly analyse learners' accuracy or compare my scores with those of other teachers to ensure the reliability of the outcomes. Given the significant role that self-confidence plays in fluency development, a more in-depth analysis of confidence levels is warranted. The limitation of this research is evident in its small sample size, suggesting the need for replication with a broader range of activities and a larger cohort of second language learners and evaluators to bolster the validity of the results.

## **5.2 Teaching implications**

Ellis et al. (2008) emphasize that occasional hesitations are necessary to sound natural and enhance comprehension. However, the question arises: how can formulaic sequences be effectively taught to learners? The key may lie in memorization. Memorizing various expressions and complex L2 structures could prove beneficial in the classroom. According to Kirk and Carter (2010), while the concept of memorizing dialogues is not new, dialogues in older textbooks lack authenticity and realism. Conversely, movies and series on streaming platforms like Netflix offer dialogues rooted in everyday language and rich in features associated with fluency.

These dialogues should aim to replicate natural and native-like conversations, incorporating hesitations, backchanneling, discourse markers, and small words – elements highlighted in the literature review. Memorizing conversations may aid in maintaining both accuracy and fluency, as they contain grammatical structures. Lewis (1993, 1997) suggests that while memorizing dialogues may appear restrictive, it is easier to break down memorized, complex structures than to piece together smaller segments.

Numerous questions arise when measuring and defining students' spoken fluency, yet teachers can encourage learners to speak outside the classroom and practice their second language to achieve greater proficiency in L2 conversation. Additionally, exposing students to videos and non-verbal aspects of language may enhance fluency by fostering comprehension of authentic language. Further research is needed to explore the effects of memorizing word-chunks and various authentic texts on fluency development.

To effectively engage the current generation of students, educators must prioritize compelling learning content. Generation Z, born in the 1990s and raised in the 2000s, is recognized as digital natives, shaped by constant exposure to technology, including laptops, smartphones, internet access, networks, and digital media (Giannetto, 2018; Singh and Dangmei, 2016). Utilizing live streaming as a platform for ESL (English as a Second Language) learning is crucial to align education with the pace of globalization. According to Chan, Embi and Hashim (2019) in the contemporary landscape, live streaming has emerged as a prominent and current trend. As education evolves from traditional pedagogy to more dynamic approaches, educators should choose methodologies that cater to the societal needs.

The integration of technology into the modern curriculum provides learners, - who are future global citizens-access to global information and the means for global communication, empowering them to actively participate in the global arena. Live streaming serves as a tool for learners to stay connected with global citizens and knowledge, fostering equal opportunities in education.

My primary objective is to facilitate Netflix and other streaming services more frequently in the classroom to inspire my students to learn English in a casual and authentic manner. Based on my personal observations, students derive enjoyment from watching series in their second language, often with Hungarian subtitles. I encourage them to shift to English subtitles to enhance their writing and reading skills concurrently.

My methods of integrating streaming services include assigning homework during the winter break: students are tasked with maintaining a "Netflix diary", where they watch anything they prefer in English with English subtitles daily and reflect on the plot and their impressions. Additionally, teachers can leverage Netflix in grammar instruction by, for instance, prompting students to identify instances of the present perfect tense while watching a series and pausing when they encounter it. This approach injects an element of fun into grammar learning while reinforcing its principles effectively.

## **6.Conclusion**

This study attempts to investigate Hungarian students' verbal fluency and vocabulary development in their L2 (English) by using streaming platforms, and in order to do so, examines different features of fluency measurement.

In the first part of the dissertation, communicative competence and performance for better comprehension of fluency are described. Moreover, examined the relationship between communicative performance and fluency and intended to introduce the concept of fluency measurement. Following this, the study analyses features of spoken fluency measurement and chose a criteria to analyse the Mosonmagyaróvári Kossuth Lajos High School's students' improvement in terms of fluency and speaking skills.

In the study, I intended to analyse speech samples collected from 13 Hungarian English L2 learners at intermediate-upper intermediate levels of proficiency with the guidance of my colleagues.

The number of and unfilled long pauses and other disfluency phenomena were not considered to be influential as regard of perceptions of fluency. The study also emphasises the fact that the accuracy and self - confidence might play an important role in fluency judgements and that accuracy and amount of speech are significantly related. In other words, fluent performance implies the application of accurate processing mechanisms.

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