

Keynote

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Methodological challenges in L2 fluency research

This presentation will explore current methodological challenges in second language (L2) fluency research, focusing on issues such as the operationalisation of fluency and the impact of contextual factors on fluency measures. Three strands are highlighted, starting with issues of fluency measurement. For example, there is little agreement on whether or where to include typical elements often described as 'disfluent', such as filler particles. However, there are contexts where they can be seen as contributing to fluency rather than disfluency. Furthermore, the study of dialogue has received increasing attention in recent years, presenting challenges for data annotation, analysis and interpretation. The dyadic nature of dialogue is also leading researchers to reconsider their views on disfluencies, which in the context of dialogue may actually be perceived as fluency-enhancing elements. Related to this is a growing interest in moving away from static analyses in favour of dynamic analyses based on time series. While static analyses provide a snapshot of fluency at a given moment, dynamic analyses capture the development of fluency over time, providing deeper insights into the variability of fluency during interaction, but requiring more sophisticated statistical techniques.