

# *A Deep Dive into the Relationship between L2 Grit and College Students' Oral English Learning Engagement*

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**Abstract:** In the age of rapid globalization, cultivating strong oral English proficiency is of great importance. Second language grit (L2 grit), which reflects learners' perseverance in second - language learning, significantly affects learning efficiency. This study concentrates on college students, delving into the relationship between L2 grit and their oral English learning engagement. A quantitative research method was adopted. 538 college students from various regions, schools, and majors were recruited. The research focused on two questions: (1) the current levels of college students' L2 grit and oral English learning engagement; (2) the correlation between college students' L2 grit and oral English learning engagement. Data were gathered using the Foreign Language Grit Scale and the English Learning Engagement Scale, and analyzed with SPSS 26 through descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The results show that college students generally have a moderate to high level of L2 grit. There's a notable positive correlation between their L2 grit and oral English learning engagement. Based on these findings, the paper provides suggestions for teachers, classroom teaching, and school education. These aim to help students strengthen their grit qualities, boost learning engagement, and improve English learning quality. The study's results have practical value for enhancing foreign language teaching methods and students' English academic performance, and offer references for shaping the learning qualities of Chinese English learners in the new era. Yet, the study has limitations in methods and content. Future research could use case tracking or mixed methods to systematically explore college students' grit and English learning engagement for more comprehensive data and better college English teaching guidance.

## **1. Introduction**

With the advent of economic globalization and the digitalization, international exchanges have become increasingly frequent. English, as an international lingua franca and a crucial medium for daily communication, has seen its status and significance grow more prominent, and its importance is self-evident. However, students often face issues such as insufficient motivation and lack of interest in learning English. To address these problems, schools can better implement personalized education only by gaining a deep understanding of individual differences among students in terms

of their personality development, behaviors, cognition, and emotions during English learning. In recent years, Second language grit (hereafter L2 grit) and learning engagement have garnered widespread attention from scholars both domestically and internationally, becoming a focal point of research for many. For instance, as Xiao Keting notes in her analysis of *The Analects of Confucius*, the text states: "A scholar ought to embody both steadfast determination and an open-minded spirit, for they bear a weighty duty and must traverse an arduous journey ahead." [1] Internationally, there has been a surge in studies on the relationship between L2 grit and oral English learning engagement. Existing research indicates that, from the perspective of the broaden-and-build theory, the experience of positive emotions can broaden college students' immediate thinking and actions in oral expression, enabling them to communicate more fluently and diversely in oral English interactions. This, in turn, helps college students build enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and linguistic intellectual resources to social interaction and psychological confidence, thereby effectively promoting the enhancement of their oral English proficiency. However, research on the relationship between L2 grit and oral English learning engagement among domestic college students is currently relatively scarce. Therefore, this study focuses on investigating L2 grit and oral learning engagement among domestic college students, aiming to provide insights for improving their oral English learning.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Definition of L2 grit

The notion of "grit," introduced by Duckworth through empirical investigations across diverse populations, is characterized as a composite personality trait that combines sustained perseverance and unwavering passion toward enduring objectives [2]. This construct operates along two dimensions: consistency of effort and stability of interest [3]. Consistency of effort reflects an individual's capacity to sustain commitment and exertion when pursuing long-range goals, irrespective of obstacles or adversities. Stability of interest denotes the ability to uphold enthusiasm and dedication toward goal attainment over extended periods, even amid repeated challenges or failures. Second language (L2) acquisition represents a multifaceted socio-psychological endeavor. When learners encounter obstacles, setbacks, or the necessity for prolonged investment in L2 development, grit functions as a critical psychological resource, enabling them to persist through adversity. The theoretical framework of self-efficacy further substantiates the role of grit in L2 contexts: learners' confidence in their capacity to master a new language directly influences their perseverance and diligence. Motivational theories underscore the interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic drivers in L2 learning, with grit emerging as a robust motivational catalyst. Empirical evidence indicates that learner autonomy—characterized by active engagement in one's own educational journey—yields advantages such as amplified motivation and enhanced academic outcomes [4]. This autonomy fosters sustained engagement and concentration in L2 tasks across varied contexts. Moreover, well-defined L2 learning objectives provide learners with clear directional guidance and motivational anchors, while grit ensures resilience against attrition along the path to goal realization. This synergy between grit and strategic goal-setting not only facilitates the attainment of enduring personal and academic milestones but also lays a foundation for future professional and linguistic development, offering a pragmatic approach to optimizing oral proficiency among university students.

### 2.2 Definition of Learning Engagement

"Learning engagement" was a multi-dimensional and complex concept, referring to the degree of

students' participation and effort in the learning process, and to what extent this physical and mental activity was goal-oriented and purpose-driven[5]. The learning engagement of learners was a key issue in all language learning. Without learning engagement, learning would be meaningless. Therefore, more and more researchers had recognized the importance of learning engagement in education, and this research had become increasingly important in education.

Many researchers believed that learning engagement covered aspects such as behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement[6]. Among them, emotional engagement included interest, enthusiasm, and positive emotions in English learning, and positive emotional experiences could promote deeper learning engagement. Cognitive engagement involved the thinking strategies and attention that learners applied in English learning, such as in-depth processing of knowledge and active thinking. Behavioral engagement was mainly reflected in the performance of learners in terms of learning time and effort[7]. When they felt that they could participate in English learning autonomously and gain satisfaction from it, they tended to engage more actively. The specific influence mechanism and change process in the middle still needed to be further explored. In addition, the differential manifestations of different individuals in these aspects, as well as the correlations between these differences and learning effects, were all directions that future research needed to focus on.

### 2.3 Theoretical Framework

Previously, there have been many mature experimental and theoretical studies that have elucidated the impact of different levels of L2 grit on academic performance, the influence of different levels of learning engagement on performance, and the effect of L2 grit on learning engagement. In this study, the "Broaden-and-Build Theory" model will be adopted as the theoretical framework. The Broaden-and-Build Theory provides a valuable research tool for investigating issues related to L2 grit and learning engagement in second language learning.

The Broaden-and-Build Theory was proposed by Fredrickson B L[8]. This theory posits that positive emotions play a crucial role. Positive emotions not only reflect an individual's sense of well-being but also have long-term adaptive value for the individual's growth and development. Firstly, Fredrickson B L [9]points out that emotions, as intense feelings directed at people or things, are psychological reactions to objects. When life is threatened, negative emotions generate specific behavioral tendencies. For example, anger can trigger aggressive behavior, and fear can lead to avoidance behavior. They enhance people's ability to act quickly and decisively, possessing evolutionary significance. However, positive emotions typically do not point to specific behavioral tendencies and must have different adaptive meanings from negative emotions. Secondly, positive emotions can broaden an individual's momentary thought-action repertoire, thereby building enduring personal resources and bringing long-term adaptive benefits to the individual.

Specifically, the theory encompasses two propositions: the Broaden Proposition and the Build Proposition. Regarding the Broaden Proposition: Fredrickson B L [9] notes that, compared to negative emotions and neutral states, positive emotions broaden an individual's momentary thought-action reserves. For instance, happiness evokes the urge to play, interest sparks the impulse to explore, contentment triggers the desire to savor and integrate, and love, within safe and intimate relationships, stimulates a cycle of these impulses. The open-mindedness generated by these positive emotions contrasts sharply with the narrow-mindedness induced by many negative emotions (i.e., specific behavioral tendencies such as aggression or avoidance). For example, it makes an individual's thinking patterns more flexible, inclusive, and creative, and increases the individual's tendency to seek diversity and remain open to more behavioral choices, thereby bringing immediate benefits.

Regarding the Build Proposition: Fredrickson B L [9] argues that by expanding an individual's momentary thought-action reserves through play, exploration, or similar activities, positive emotions facilitate the discovery of novel, creative actions, ideas, and social connections, thereby building the individual's personal resources. These resources range from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources, such as intellectual resources (problem-solving abilities, new knowledge, etc.), physiological resources (physical coordination, strength, cardiovascular health, etc.), psychological resources (resilience, optimism, self-identity, goal orientation, etc.), and social resources (consolidating or establishing social connections, etc.), thereby bringing long-term benefits to the individual.

Finally, Fredrickson B L has discovered a new theoretical perspective, namely positive traits, which is an emerging perspective within the field of positive psychology [9]. Positive learning emotions can stimulate students' interest and curiosity in learning, broaden their learning horizons and ways of thinking, and make them more willing to actively explore new knowledge and try new methods. By continuously accumulating positive learning experiences and building personal resources, students can gradually develop a positive learning mindset and stable learning motivation, improve their learning autonomy and self-regulation abilities, thereby achieving better academic performance and development, and greatly enhancing their oral English proficiency.

## 2.4 Current Status of Foreign Research

Previous studies have encompassed diverse populations across various regions and educational levels. Overall, foreign research has yielded relatively abundant findings. Many studies have examined the relationship between students' personality traits and academic performance, with some also exploring the role of personality in second language (L2) achievement. Teimouri Y, Plonsky L, and Tabandeh F argue that grit is a significant predictor of success across different populations. They conducted a study with 191 English learners to investigate the relationships among grit, motivated behavior, and language proficiency[3]. By developing and validating a scale, their research revealed a significant positive correlation between L2 grit and students' language learning motivation as well as academic performance. This finding provides an important basis and reference for subsequent related studies.

Liao Y H and Chen H C believe that grit describes unremitting efforts made to achieve success. They administered three psychological self-assessment scales to 214 college students and conducted straightforward regression analyses on the collected data to analyze the impact of three variables. The results indicated a positive correlation between grit and executive function, as well as well-being [10]. This study further deepens our understanding of the impact of grit at the individual psychological level.

Teravainen-Goff A addressed some of these challenges by developing and piloting a questionnaire to measure the intensity and perceived quality of L2 classroom engagement. The questionnaire was piloted among 378 learners in England. Through the use of scales and data analysis methods, the study results showed that learners scored higher on effort intensity than on social aspects of learning or perceived quality of engagement [4]. This research provides new ideas and methodologies for exploring issues related to L2 classroom engagement. Foreign research on language learning engagement is also on the rise.

Hiver P, Al-Hoorie A H, Vitta J P, et al., systematically reviewed the development of language engagement research over the past two decades. To ensure the reliability of coverage, they searched 21 major journals in second language acquisition and applied linguistics and identified 112 papers that met the inclusion criteria [5]. Learning engagement is a multidimensional construct, encompassing cognitive, behavioral, social, and emotional engagement[11]. Although most

previous studies have explored the concept of language learning engagement, there is a lack of concrete practice, particularly in research on college students' oral English learning engagement.

## 2.5 Current Status of Domestic Research

Research on L2 grit and oral English learning engagement in China is still in its infancy. Xiao Keting conducted a study with 456 high school freshmen from a provincial capital city in eastern China to explore the relationships among middle school students' grit, learning engagement, and English academic performance. Using statistical software SPSS and Mplus, the data analysis methods included descriptive statistics, independent samples T-tests, one-way ANOVA, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and mediation effect analysis. The research results indicated a significant positive correlation among middle school students' grit, English learning engagement, and English academic performance. This conclusion further enriches the research findings in this field in China.

Song Jinjin took 526 high school freshmen from a high school in Jiangsu Province as the research subjects. Through questionnaire surveys and data analysis methods, she explored the relationships among high school students' L2 grit levels, foreign language enjoyment levels, as well as the relationships between high school students' L2 grit, foreign language enjoyment, and English academic performance [12]. The research results showed that high school students' L2 grit can promote academic performance, providing a certain basis and inspiration for subsequent research.

Wang Youkun conducted a survey of 276 non-English major graduate students using a questionnaire method to explore the influence pathways of positive psychological factors, L2 grit, and academic resilience on learning engagement. The results indicated that both L2 grit and academic resilience were at moderate levels, and L2 grit had a positive impact on learning engagement[13]. This research result not only possesses a certain degree of innovation but also provides a basis for teachers to promote students' learning engagement from the perspective of cultivating positive psychological qualities.

Li Jia, Jiang Yuhong, and Yuan Fan, based on a questionnaire survey of 201 English major college students, used structural equation modeling to explore the relationships among L2 grit, writing emotions, and the level of feedback engagement in peer feedback[14]. The results showed that perseverance in L2 grit positively predicted learners' feedback engagement; perseverance and writing enjoyment significantly and positively predicted feedback engagement, while writing anxiety was negatively correlated with it. This study expands the research scope of L2 grit from a new perspective.

## 2.6 Gaps in Previous Research

In summary, there are still some gaps in the current research on the relationship between college students' L2 grit and oral English learning engagement. Firstly, compared with research in other fields such as psychology, educational psychology, and health psychology, there is relatively less research on the relationship between L2 grit and English learning engagement. Moreover, research on L2 grit and oral English learning in China started relatively late, with a relatively small number of published articles. Most of the research content has focused on students' academic performance, with less research on oral English learning.

Secondly, there are obvious flaws in sampling. Previous studies have mainly focused on junior and senior high school students as research subjects, with relatively few studies targeting college students. Sampling studies on students of other age groups and from other majors are also relatively scarce.

Thirdly, research on L2 grit and English learning engagement has long focused on case

studies[15], with few studies integrating the two. Therefore, it is of great significance to study the relationship between college students' L2 grit and oral English learning engagement from a more comprehensive and updated perspective to fill these gaps.

Finally, I intend to expand the scope of the investigation by starting with students from different majors and conducting sampling surveys among them to make the investigation results more accurate and persuasive.

### 3. Research Methodology

This study aims to investigate the relationship between college students' second language (L2) grit and their oral English learning engagement. We will address the following research questions:

A. What are the specific levels of college students' L2 grit and their oral English learning engagement?

B. Is there a correlation between college students' L2 grit and their oral English learning engagement?

#### 3.1 Research Participants

Table 1 Background information

Category		Frequency	Percent
Ethnicity	Han	437	81.2
	Yi	22	4.1
	Dong	27	5.0
	Others	52	9.7
Gender	Male	180	33.5
	Female	358	66.5
Degree	Junior College Student	87	16.2
	Undergraduate	441	82.0
	Postgraduate	10	1.9
Grade	Freshman	116	21.6
	Sophomore	106	19.7
	Junior	155	28.8
	Senior	57	10.6
	Others	104	19.3
Mother Tongue	Mandarin	308	57.2
	Minority Languages	39	7.2
	Chinese Dialects	191	35.5
OEL	Kindergarten	59	11.0
	Primary Grades	290	53.9
	Junior High School	189	35.1
Total		538	100.0

To achieve the research objectives, this study selected multiple universities from different regions across China as the research background. Initially, questionnaires were distributed at Lijiang Culture and Tourism College. Through personal invitations, junior college students, undergraduate students, and graduate students from various universities completed the questionnaires. This study investigated the current status of college students' L2 grit and their oral English learning



engagement. According to Table 1, the distribution of background information, including gender, grade, ethnicity, native language, and the age of initial English learning, is presented. The participants come from different universities, majors, and grades across the country. Among the sample, females constitute the majority (N=358), accounting for 66.5%, while males account for only 33.5%. In terms of educational background, undergraduate students (N=441) are the primary research subjects. Regarding grade distribution, freshmen (N=116), sophomores (N=106), and juniors (N=155) account for the majority. In terms of ethnicity, apart from the Han ethnicity (437 individuals), the remaining participants are from the Yi (22 individuals), Dong (27 individuals), and other ethnic minorities, making up 9.7% of the sample. In terms of native language learning, the majority learned Mandarin (308 individuals), with 191 learning Chinese dialects, and ethnic minority languages accounting for 7.2%. Regarding the age of initial English learning, most students began learning English in primary school (53.9%), with 35.1% starting in junior high school and 11% starting in kindergarten.

### 3.2 Questionnaire Design

After reviewing a substantial amount of literature, this study developed scales and designed a questionnaire based on these scales. The questionnaire, written in Chinese, is an adapted version used to obtain quantitative data. It is divided into three parts. The second part employs a five-point Likert scale, requiring participants to choose from 1 (Disagree) to 5 (Agree). The scale consists of three sections: the first section collects background information, including university name, age, gender, ethnicity, and self-assessed language proficiency; the second section is the L2 grit scale for college students, designed based on Teimouri Y et al.'s scale [3], to measure students' L2 grit. This scale includes two dimensions: interest in learning and effort in learning; the third section is the oral English learning engagement scale, designed based on Zhou S et al.'s scale[16], to measure students' oral English learning engagement. This scale includes three dimensions: behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. The scales must possess a certain level of reliability and validity.

As shown in Table 2, L2 grit can be divided into two dimensions: interest in learning (20, 18, 16, 22) and effort in learning (14, 17, 15, 19, 21). Oral English learning engagement can be divided into three dimensions: behavioral engagement (27, 44, 41, 24, 35, 38), emotional engagement (46, 25, 40, 28, 30, 36, 26, 34), and cognitive engagement (29, 39, 37, 33, 31, 32, 43, 45, 23, 42).

Table 2 Dimension and Distribution

	Dimension	Distribution
L2 Grit	Interest	20,18,16,22
	Effort	14,17,15,19,21
English Learning Engagement	Behavioral Engagement	27,44,41,24,35,38
	Emotional Engagement	46,25,40,28,30,36,26,34
	Cognitive Engagement	29,39,37,33,31,32,43,45,23,42

### 3.3 Reliability and Validity of the Questionnaire

The second part of the questionnaire consists of the L2 grit scale and the oral English learning engagement scale. The L2 grit scale was designed by Teimouri Y et al., and the oral English learning engagement scale was designed by Zhou S et al. Since the L2 grit scale measures college students' L2 grit levels, and the oral English learning engagement scale detects college students' oral English learning engagement, these scales can be regarded as psychometric tools. Through the

analysis of survey data, reliability and validity analyses were conducted on the L2 grit and oral English learning engagement scales in the questionnaire. The results indicate that the L2 grit scale and the oral English learning engagement scale used in this study possess high reliability and validity. The consistency or reliability of the measurements was assessed using Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient, which ranges from 0.00 to 1.00. Generally, a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient greater than 0.7 is considered acceptable. That is, the higher the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient, the better the internal consistency and the higher the reliability. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value for the L2 grit scale is 0.805, and for the oral English learning engagement scale is 0.854, both very close to 1.00, indicating high reliability of the questionnaire.

Regarding the validity of the questionnaire, the KMO value for the L2 grit scale is 0.870, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant ( $df = 36$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ). The KMO value for the oral English learning engagement scale is 0.932, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant ( $df = 276$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ). This indicates high validity of the scales, as the KMO values are 0.870 and 0.932, respectively, both greater than 0.8, which can be regarded as excellent.

To test whether L2 grit and oral English learning engagement are normally distributed, descriptive analyses of skewness and kurtosis were conducted on the data. These two indicators are crucial predictive metrics; when their absolute values are less than 3, the data can be considered normally distributed. The skewness and kurtosis for L2 grit are -0.329 and 1.895, respectively, and for oral English learning engagement are -0.163 and 3.7, respectively, both close to 3, indicating that the data are normally distributed. Therefore, it can be concluded that the collected data conform to a normal distribution.

### 3.4 Data Collection

Data collection was conducted from June 10, 2024, to July 10, 2024. With the assistance of supervisors, questionnaires were distributed at Lijiang Culture and Tourism College and Yunnan Normal University, and surveys were conducted in different regions and schools through personal recommendations. To ensure the authenticity of the data collection, the questionnaires comprehensively surveyed and analyzed students' L2 grit levels and oral English learning engagement through various questions. Participants actively cooperated with the survey.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

To achieve the research objectives, this study used SPSS 26.0 to analyze the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires. Firstly, frequency analysis was employed to process participants' background information. Then, descriptive analysis was used to explore means and standard deviations to reflect college students' L2 grit levels and oral English learning engagement. Secondly, correlation analysis was used to examine whether there is a correlation between L2 grit levels and oral English learning engagement.

## 4. Results and discussion

### 4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

As shown in Table 3, this study employed descriptive statistics to obtain the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation values. The overall mean scores for both college students' English proficiency and English learning motivation on the five-point Likert scale were below the neutral value of 3, indicating that college students' oral English proficiency is at an above-average level.



Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of participants' English Level

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perceived English Level	538	1	5	2.63	0.954
Perceived oral English Level	538	1	5	2.44	1.014
Frequency	538	1	5	2.22	0.970
Learning Motivation	538	1	5	2.51	1.064
Motivation to Improve Oral English	538	1	5	2.52	1.082

From the table 3, it can be observed that English proficiency has the highest mean score ( $M=2.63$ ,  $SD=0.954$ ), followed by oral English proficiency ( $M=2.44$ ,  $SD=1.014$ ), learning frequency ( $M=2.22$ ,  $SD=0.954$ ), learning motivation ( $M=2.51$ ,  $SD=1.064$ ), and motivation to improve oral English ( $M=2.52$ ,  $SD=1.082$ ). In summary, the mean scores for all dimensions of students' English proficiency are close to the neutral value of 3, indicating that college students' English learning proficiency is at an above-average level.

From the table 4, it can be seen that the mean scores for students' L2 grit ( $M=2.985$ ,  $SD=0.651$ ) and oral English learning engagement ( $M=2.885$ ,  $SD=0.464$ ) are both close to the neutral value of 3, indicating that college students' L2 grit and oral English learning engagement are at an above-average level.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of Grit and Engagement

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
L2 Grit	538	1.00	5.00	2.9851	0.65136
Oral English Learning Engagement	538	1.08	5.00	2.8850	0.46434

The second research question focuses on the correlation between L2 grit and oral English learning engagement. Therefore, this study employed Pearson correlation analysis to analyze the relevant quantitative data.

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 Correlations

	English Learning Engagement
L2 Grit	.350**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
N	538

From Table 5, it can be observed that the correlation between the predictor variables is significant at the 0.001 level, indicating an interaction and positive influence between the predictor variables.

From the table (correlation between L2 grit and engagement is .350\*\*), it can be seen that there is a correlation between college students' L2 grit and their oral English learning engagement.

## 4.2 Discussion

This study surveyed college students from different regions, schools, and majors, collecting a total of 538 valid questionnaires. The research data were collected using the L2 grit Scale and the English Learning Engagement Scale, and descriptive statistics and correlation analyses were conducted using SPSS statistical software. This study yielded the following two main findings:

This indicates that college students with higher levels of L2 grit exhibit more positive learning attitudes and higher levels of engagement in oral English learning. Cognitively, they are more willing to actively explore the rules and techniques of oral English learning. Emotionally, they hold more positive attitudes towards oral English learning and can effectively overcome negative emotions such as anxiety. Behaviorally, they actively seek opportunities for oral practice and participate in oral English-related activities [17].

This reflects that college students, as a group, generally possess certain characteristics of L2 grit, although there is still room for improvement. This suggests that students with higher levels of L2 grit are more likely to achieve better results in oral English learning. Descriptive statistics show that the mean score for L2 grit is 2.98 (SD=0.65), indicating that college students' L2 grit is at an above-average level. Compared to Teimouri Y. et al.'s previous study, the mean value in this study is slightly lower than their reported mean of 3.90 (SD=0.60)[3]. By comparing with Teimouri Y. et al.'s study, some similarities and differences were identified:

Teimouri Y. et al.'s study focused on Persian-speaking students, while this study focuses on Chinese college students [3]899. There are significant differences in learning environments, learning pressures, and learning autonomy between Persian-speaking students and college students. Persian-speaking students may rely more on teacher guidance and instructional arrangements, whereas college students require stronger self-management and autonomous learning abilities. These differences may lead to different manifestations of L2 grit at different stages and different mechanisms affecting oral English learning engagement.

Teimouri Y. et al.'s study had a sample size of 191 participants, which is 347 fewer than the number surveyed in this study[3]. Additionally, the research participants were different. Teimouri Y. et al.'s study focused on junior high school students, while this study's participants are college students from different regions. The mean value in this study is slightly lower than that in Teimouri Y. et al.'s study. This may be due to the different learning stages of the participants. Persian-speaking students may have a stronger sense of novelty and curiosity in language learning, exhibiting higher levels of grit in certain aspects; while college students face more complex learning and life pressures, which may affect their enthusiasm and engagement in second language learning.

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1 Summary of Main Findings

This study aimed to explore the phenomenon of L2 grit and engagement in college students' oral English learning. The main findings are summarized as follows:

Firstly, in terms of various dimensions of English proficiency, perceived English proficiency has the highest mean score ( $M=2.63$ ), followed by perceived oral English proficiency ( $M=2.44$ ), learning frequency ( $M=2.22$ ), learning motivation ( $M=2.51$ ), and motivation to improve oral English ( $M=2.52$ ). Overall, the mean scores for all dimensions of English proficiency among the respondents are below the neutral value of 3. The mean scores for L2 grit ( $M=2.985$ ) and English learning engagement ( $M=2.885$ ) are also below the neutral value of 3, indicating a moderately low level.

Secondly, the correlation between the predictor variables is significant at the 0.001 level

(correlation between L2 grit and engagement is .350\*\*), indicating an interaction and positive influence between the predictor variables.

## 5.2 Implications for College Students' Oral English Learning

To improve college students' oral English proficiency, enhance their L2 grit, and increase the efficiency of oral English learning, the following points should be noted during the learning process:

College students should set clear learning goals based on their own situations and establish specific, measurable oral English learning goals to stimulate learning motivation and enhance perseverance in the face of difficulties [18]. At the same time, they should cultivate a positive learning attitude, recognizing that oral English learning is a long-term process, viewing difficulties as challenges, and maintaining an optimistic and confident mindset. Additionally, they need to develop self-discipline, formulate reasonable learning plans, and strictly adhere to them, ensuring learning engagement through setting tasks and self-assessment.

To this end, authentic language environments can be created, and students can actively participate in English corners, club activities, and communicate with foreign teachers or classmates. They can also increase language input by watching English movies, listening to English broadcasts, and reading English books. Diversified learning methods should be adopted, with students choosing appropriate methods based on their own characteristics, such as imitation, recitation, dialogue practice, using online resources and software for autonomous learning, or participating in training courses [19]. They should enhance learning initiative, actively seek learning opportunities, participate in English speech contests, serve as volunteers, etc., to boost confidence and initiative.

Teachers should focus on cultivating students' L2 grit, inspiring them to establish firm beliefs by sharing success stories and personal experiences, paying attention to students' progress, and providing encouragement and support. They should design diverse and engaging teaching activities, such as group discussions, role-plays, and scenario simulations, to enhance students' interest, oral expression abilities, and cooperative skills. Timely and effective feedback should be provided, pointing out students' strengths and weaknesses and offering specific improvement suggestions to help them adjust strategies and enhance learning outcomes.

In summary, improving college students' oral English proficiency requires the joint efforts of students, teachers, and schools. By cultivating L2 grit, increasing learning engagement, and strengthening teacher guidance, college students' oral English abilities will undoubtedly be significantly enhanced.

## 5.3 Research Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Firstly, the sample size of this study is relatively small. Future research could include a more diverse sample of students from different universities, majors, and language backgrounds. Secondly, this study employed a survey research method, which may not capture the dynamic changes in L2 grit and oral English learning. Future research could adopt longitudinal studies or observational methods to more comprehensively investigate the dynamic changes in these two areas. Additionally, this study was conducted within the context of classroom education. Future research could explore the relationship between L2 grit and oral English learning in workplace language learning or informal language learning environments. Furthermore, the questionnaire used in this study was relatively uniform, presented only in written form, with relatively fixed content and format, which somewhat limited students' space to express subjective views. Therefore, future research could consider adopting methods such as interviews, field observations, and case studies. Finally, it is believed that the survey participants should not be limited to students but should also include

teachers and school staff, as they have a certain understanding of students' basic situations and their views are relatively objective. Additionally, the survey scope should not be limited to undergraduates but should also include elementary, middle, and high school students. Future research could combine quantitative and qualitative methods, such as exploring students' experiences and perspectives on grit and oral English learning through qualitative interviews, thereby more comprehensively understanding the relationship between the two. By expanding the survey scope, the accuracy of the survey results can be improved.

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