



Developing EFL Speaking Fluency of Secondary Stage Students Using TED Talks-Based Instruction

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بحث مشتق من الرسالة الخاصة بالباحثة

ABSTRACT

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The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of using TED talks-based instruction in developing EFL speaking fluency among secondary stage students. The design of the study is one group, pre and posttest. The participant of the study consisted of second year secondary stage students at Integrated Distinct Governmental Language Secondary School in Shebin Elkom (N=30). The instruments and material used included: an EFL speaking fluency checklist required for second year secondary stage students, two EFL speaking tests (used as a pre and a posttest) and an analytic rubric for scoring them and a teacher's guide for using TED talks-based instruction. The EFL speaking pretest was administered to the participants. The participants were taught using TED talks-based instruction to develop their EFL speaking fluency. Then, the posttest was administrated again. t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the pretest and the posttest of the study participants. Results of the study revealed that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the study participants in the pre and post assessment of EFL speaking fluency in favor of the post assessment, so the EFL speaking fluency of the participants was developed as a result of using TED talks-based instruction. Therefore, it can be concluded that using TED talks-based instruction was effective in developing EFL second year secondary stage students' speaking fluency.

Keywords: *EFL speaking fluency, TED talks, TEDed, secondary, Egypt*

1- Introduction

The English language is used all over the world. It is widely used in the field of scientific research, education, business, the internet, medicine, engineering, technology, entertainment, and so on. Learners have to acquire four basic skills to master the language; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and reading are passive skills or receptive skills, whereas speaking and writing are active skills or productive skills. The main goal of teaching English is increasing students' proficiency in the foreign language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Speaking is the process of producing and sharing messages, thoughts, ideas and feelings by using verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts. It is an important part of language learning and teaching, (Mohamed, Abdel-Haq, & Helwa, 2020).

Speaking fluency is the ability to produce language smoothly and spontaneously, and to speak with few pauses. It also refers to expressing thoughts or feelings without much hesitation. The main aim of fluency skills is enhancing students' speed and producing language without being afraid of making mistakes (Byrne, 1986; Gad, 2012). One of the challenges teachers and students face in EFL classes is speaking fluently. It is assumed that problems of fluency are due to students' low motivation, their shyness to speak in front of others, the lack of practice in authentic context, as well as limited use of speaking strategies (Buitrago, 2017). Thus, speaking classes should pay attention to engage students more in authentic contexts to improve their fluency. Consequently, the present study intends to develop EFL fluency skills among the study participants through using TED Talks-based instruction.

2- Literature review and related studies

The speaking skill is the most important skill in language learning which gives learners opportunities to practice, speak fluently and arrange sentences (Abdelsalam, 2020). By speaking, one can convey messages, express his thoughts and share opinions. So we can expect listeners to realize the meaning of the message that requires different abilities, such as the ability to select suitable vocabulary to the topic, pronounce the words correctly, arrange the words into phrases or sentences, convey the content of the messages, and use formal and informal expressions,

Speaking is an important skill as it helps learners to use the appropriate forms of language in particular situations such as giving

opinions, reasons or explanations as learners take into account the needs of listeners and talk to large audience. It helps learners to acquire and produce more extensive repertoire of words; moreover it helps learners to be able to organize what is said. It helps the learners to communicate thoughts (Brown, 2001). Harmer (2010) determined three reasons why students learn to speak in the class, the first reason is that speaking activities give learners opportunities to use real-life situations in the safety of the classroom. The second reason is speaking activities provide feedback for students and teacher. Finally, if the learners have opportunities to activate the different factors of language that have been stored in their brains, their use of these elements will become autonomous. As a result, students gradually become autonomous language users. This means that they will be able to use words and phrases fluently without very much conscious thought.

Fluency refers to the smoothness, rapidness, effortless use of language, flow and automaticity. It is “automatic procedural skill” (Sato, 2020). Fluency as refers to the ability to produce language at a natural rate, smoothly and without hesitation. Fluency also refers to the ability to speak easily, and think more about the meaning than the language itself (Harmer, 2001; Skehan, 2009; kirk, 2014; Onoda, 2014). Segalowitz (2010) suggested three different categories of fluency and identified seven factors which affect fluency; the three categories of fluency are cognitive fluency, utterance fluency, and perceived fluency. Cognitive fluency deals with the cognitive processes that are not observable and involved in producing speech. Utterance fluency refers to the features of fluency such as speed, making pauses, and hesitation, reformulation and repairs. Perceived fluency is to what extent the listeners understand the speech they hear or the speaker level of fluency.

Students have problems in speaking because they have negative attitudes towards participation, low language proficiency, anxiety, learning style, unfamiliarity with using English to communicate their ideas, and lack of practice (Tsou, 2005; Thein, 1997; Yousif & Kobeil, 1997) Consequently, many researches were conducted for developing EFL speaking fluency through using different approaches and strategies such as (Al-Khuli, 2000; Amin, 2007; Zuheer, 2008; Hassan, 2009; Ali, 2010; Selim, 2011; Diyabb, 2013; Helwa, 2013; Ibrahim, 2019; ELsadek, 2020; Megria, 2021). Consequently there is a need today to move from the traditional way of teaching to new approaches which

depend on technology to help students to develop their speaking fluency skills.

TED (Technology, Education, and Design) is the technology that offers innovative presentations with attractive and wide range of topics or ideas from native speakers that can inspire. The ideas are arranged and delivered by speakers who do their best to make amazing presentation (Sailun, & Idayani, 2018; Uicheng & Crabtree, 2018; Nikmah, 2020). The videos are provided with a transcription and a translation into several languages (ElMiedany, 2019). TED Talks website is the fourth most popular technology website in the world. It aims to offer in no longer than 18 minutes a powerful idea that introduces a problem and tries to present a solution to this problem. This length is chosen by TED organizers as they think that this time is enough for the presenter to introduce his idea and this time is also enough to make the audience not get bored. The purpose of TED Talks is to inform the audience, to persuade, to inspire, to disseminate ideas and knowledge, and to entertain. Their slogan is “ideas worth spreading” (Arifin, 2020).

TED talks have an educational focus. TED-Ed is a group of lessons created by educators and professional animators who collaborate with the TED-Ed team to develop a script and produce animated lessons. Topics are selected from ideas of experts. The lesson is produced in four steps “Watch” students watch the video and analyze it, “Think” students are given some related questions to the topic, “Dig Deeper” more resources and more information, and “Discuss”. The content for the Think, Dig Deeper, and Discuss section is also created through this process typically, it takes two months to develop a lesson and another 6-8 weeks to create animated film. The teacher can build his own lesson or use a prepared lesson.

Li (2015) determined 5 advantages of TED Talk as follows: 1- Free selecting of topic; it has variety of topics that learners can choose. 2- Effective language input; as TED’s speakers are native speakers so the videos can be served as a linguistic input for language learners. It helps students to practice their listening and learn new words. 3- Assimilation; students can repeat over and over again until they catch the sentence to learn by writing a note. Imitation; students can imitate the speaker to increase their communication. Self-evaluation and feedback; students know their strength and weakness.

3- Context of the Problem

Despite the importance of EFL speaking fluency, there is still a lack of it among secondary school students. This problem was indicated in the following studies Kassem (2006), Marzouq (2012), El Nagggar (2016), Ammar (2017), Moussa (2018), Kassem (2018), Abdel Salam (2019), Megria (2021). They investigated the problems of EFL speaking fluency and introduced different interventions and solutions for developing EFL speaking fluency. The researchers ascertained that students encounter difficulties in speaking such as poor fear from participating in a conversation, lack the ability to respond to one's utterance. Based on related studies, it was found that students used limited vocabulary, took much time to arrange statements, and hesitated to speak. There were many mistakes in pronunciation, and most of them preferred to keep silent. They rarely answered the question given by the teacher orally.

To document the problem of the present study, a pilot study was conducted to find out the lack of the EFL speaking fluency among second-year students at the secondary stage. The pilot study was conducted at Islam Negm secondary school, Shebin Elkom Educational Administration Menoufia Governorate. It included the EFL speaking fluency test adopted from Ben (2017). The results of the pilot study showed that there was a lack of EFL speaking fluency among second-year secondary stage students. The performance of the students' speaking test was low. Some students had a lack of the desire to speak because of their shyness and low confidence levels, so the present study suggested using TED talks-based instruction for developing EFL speaking fluency among second-year secondary school students.

Study Problem

The problem of the study could be identified in the inability of second year secondary stage students in EFL speaking fluency skills. Therefore, this study aimed to develop these skills through the use of TED Talks-based instruction. The present study attempted to answer the following main question:

Questions of the Study:

- 1- What are the EFL speaking fluency skills required for second year secondary stage students?

- 2- What is the effectiveness of using TED talks-based instruction for developing EFL speaking fluency skills among second-year secondary school students?

4- Method of the study

a- Participants of the Study

The participants of the present study were selected from second year secondary stage students (N=30) at Integrated Distinct Governmental Language Secondary School, Shebin Elkom Educational Administration Menoufia Governorate during the second term of the academic year 2020/2021. Students were selected because they have been studying English for 11 years, but they still unable to speak fluently.

b- Delimitation of the study:

This study was be delimited to the following:

- 1- A group of second-year secondary stage students at Integrated Distinct Governmental Language Secondary School, Shebin Elkom Educational Administration Menoufia Governorate during the second term of the academic year 2020/2021.
- 2- Some EFL speaking fluency skills that are required for second-year secondary school students.

c. Instruments and Materials of the Study

A) The EFL Speaking fluency skills checklist:

The aim of the EFL speaking fluency skills checklist was to determine the EFL speaking fluency skills that were suitable and required to second year secondary school students. The checklist included five sub- skills. The EFL fluency skills checklist was submitted to a panel of jury members of EFL specialists in curriculum and methods of teaching English (n= 10) to identify its validity and to determine the degree of importance of each skill. Moreover, the jury members were requested to add, omit or modify to the checklist any comments they considered important. The jury members showed that the EFL speaking fluency skills checklist is valid.

B) The pre and post EFL fluency tests

The purpose of EFL speaking fluency pre and posttests were to measure students' EFL speaking fluency skills before and after implementing the intervention to investigate its effect on developing EFL speaking fluency skills among second year secondary stage students. Two equivalent forms of the EFL speaking fluency test were prepared. Each one consisted of main items for measuring EFL fluency skills. The test consisted of two questions. It assesses their ability to 1) speak smoothly (without hesitation, repetition and pauses). 2) Use different linguistic forms to express a variety of function orally. 3) express ideas in complete and clear sentences orally. 4) Participate in discussions on familiar topics. 5) Describe events and characters orally.

Validity of EFL Speaking Fluency Test: EFL speaking fluency tests were submitted to a panel of jury members specialized in curricula and methods of teaching English. They were asked to indicate the suitability of the test content for second year secondary stage students and the clarity of the instructions for each part of the test. They indicated the suitability of the tests and that the tests assess the skills intended to measure. Most of the jury members also indicated the suitability of the tests to their main objectives. According to the jurors' opinions and suggestions, the modifications were performed to the tests' content to get its final form.

Reliability of the tests

The reliability of the tests was measured using the test-retest method. The test was administered to group of second year secondary stage students (N=30) at an Integrated Distinct Governmental Language Secondary School, Shebin Elkom Educational Administration Menoufia Governorate (other than the study group who received the intervention) during the first term of the academic year 2020/2021 then it was re-administrated to the same group again after two weeks. The Pearson correlation between the two administrations was (0.947**) which is significant at the 0.01 level. This means that the EFL Speaking fluency pre-test is reliable.

C) The rubric for scoring the students' fluency in EFL speaking tests

The rubric was used to score the students' performance in the EFL speaking fluency tests. The rubric consisted of five parts scored on a five point Likert scale ranging from "5" to "1" marks. The students were given a rating between 1 and 5 for their performance in the EFL speaking test. The students were given 5 marks when their performance is high. They were given 4, if they have minor mistakes. They were given 3 if they have some mistakes. They were given 2, if they usually did mistakes, and 1 mark when their performance is low. The rubric was used to assess students' speaking fluency.

D) TED talks-based instruction

The program was designed to developing EFL fluency skills among second year secondary stage students. The program was implemented in the second semester of the academic year 2020/ 2021. It lasted for 2 weeks. The time of each session was 30 minutes. The program was implemented through 6 stages:

Procedures of Implementing TED talk in the Class

Ted talks based instruction went through six stages:

1. Preparation:

The teacher uses the search bar function on TED, choose an interesting video then tell students that they are going to watch a video. Mention the title of the video. Ask them some questions about what they think the speaker will be saying and why they think this. Presenting and explaining the objectives of the session. Making a list of unknown words.

2. Watch:

Teacher asks students to watch the video. Students watch the video and take their notes. They analyze the video through focusing on the movements of the mouse, the pauses and the backward or forward movements. Students write down the unknown words. Guessing the meaning of some new words and expressions. Determining -signposting (first, second, then) Linking words such as (because of - but – and). Then repeat each sentence over and over again.

3. (dig deeper) presentation:

After viewing the video, teacher presents the lesson and gives clear and detailed illustration to achieve the objectives. Teacher motivates students to study through adding additional resources. Giving them

additional information and Focusing on the new vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation or Functional Language.

4. discussion:

Teacher divides the class into groups. Students choose leader for each group. Teacher asks them to interpret the information individually and discuss in groups through exchanging information they understood with each other, then determine what they will say or do. The cycle goes on through all sessions of training.

5. practice:

The study participants are involved in various activities and tasks to practice what they have learned. The teacher chooses activities such as role play, information gap. She gives students terms or simple phrases to use (as a key words). They work in pairs and in groups. The teacher helps learners to formulate what they wanted to say. The students then engage in improvised task based on these sample phrases.

6. production and evaluation:

Teacher motivates students to participate. Students participate in groups to produce their speech and express themselves. They produce their speech in front of others. Listening carefully to their classmate's speech. Students self-assess their performances and their peers. Teacher tracks students' progress and gives corrective feedbacks

5- Findings of the study

To test the hypothesis "There is a statistically significant difference at the (0.01) between the mean scores of the study participants in EFL fluency in the EFL speaking proficiency pre and post-test applications in favor of the post application", paired sample t- test was used. The participants' mean scores, standard deviations (S.D), t- value, the effect size (η^2) and level of significance in the pre-post assessment of the fluency were presented in the following table (11). To calculate the total size of the intervention on overall EFL speaking proficiency, the effect size (η^2) was calculated.

Table (1) findings of t- test comparing the pre and posttest mean scores of the participants in the EFL speaking fluency

	Test	No.	Mean	Std.	t-value	DF	α Sig	η^2
				Deviatio n				
EFL fluency	Pre	30	17.40	3.00	10.194	29	0.01	0.7 82
	Post	30	24.97	2.30				

As revealed in Table (1), there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the study participants in the pre-and post-assessment of EFL speaking fluency in favor of the post assessment, where t-value is (10.194), which is significant at the (0.01) level. Thus this hypothesis is supported. The participants showed improvements in their EFL speaking fluency skills .This is due to the use of TED talks based instruction, where the "t" value was significant at the level of (0.01). In addition, the effect size of the experimental treatment η^2 was (0.782) which is a high and appropriate value. This indicates that a large proportion of the difference are due to the intervention. Thus, there is a highly significant effect of the intervention on fluency.

6- Discussions

The results of the study revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the study participants' fluency in the post assessment of the EFL speaking fluency test and the pre-assessment. This improvement can be due to using TED talks-based instruction. The sessions of fluency were introduced to students. As the topic of the video was chosen, the teacher mentioned the title of the video, asking students some questions about what they think the speaker will be saying and why they think this through knowing the title of the video. Students watched TED talks videos. The teacher added more explanations and additional resources. Furthermore, each session contained a fruitful discussion about a given topic Thus, students were asked to express their own knowledge, beliefs, and experience regarding the topic. They also exchanged their ideas within small groups. The teacher introduced group work activities and pair work activities such as description and discussions as they make a discussion and brainstorm their ideas. The teacher guided students to formulate their sentences and speech. She shared a summary of the responses. They also talked about specific topics. Students repeated the activities or parts of them and

reassessed their performances. These activities enabled students to be fluent speakers. The teacher gave the students the chance to practice what they listened to in another situation. The participants were able to speak in English fluently and through a smooth spontaneous speech flow. Students' ability to speak spontaneously without hesitations was improved. Also the atmosphere which had no threat or fear from speaking or being tested helped students to speak fluently. These results agreed with previous studies which proved the great contribution of TED talks-based instruction in developing fluency such as (Li, et.al, 2016; Arifin, 2020; Dinillah, 2020).

Conclusion

Previous researches had proved that TED talks-based instruction has a significant and effective role in EFL learning and teaching. Accordingly, the starting point from which this study was based on the increasing emphasis on the outstanding role of TED talks-based instruction in EFL learning and the great gains from incorporating it into EFL contexts. Based on the results and findings of this study, it can be concluded that TED talks-based instruction had positive effects on developing EFL speaking fluency among second year secondary stage students. Thus, using TED talks-based instruction developed students' ability to speak smoothly (without hesitation, repetition and pauses), use different linguistic forms to express a variety of function orally, participate in discussions on familiar topics. The effectiveness of using TED talks- based instruction may be due to using technology, listening to native speakers and practicing activities that encouraged students to develop their speaking fluency. They used activities such as discussion, description, role-play, information gap ...etc. The students' cooperated well using activities.

Recommendations of the study

Based on the results of the present study, the following recommendations can be offered:

1. TED talks-based instruction should be implemented in teaching EFL speaking fluency to secondary stage students.

2. TED talks-based instruction should be implemented not only in EFL speaking course but also in all other language skills courses such as listening and writing.
3. EFL teachers should provide students with enough opportunities to practice language.
4. EFL teachers should encourage students to log into the internet and listen to authentic videos at home.
5. Teachers should choose familiar topics for students as they will be easier to comprehend than completely new ones.
6. Teachers should determine students' language level then determine if a particular TED Talk would suit students' language level as certain talks have been easier to comprehend than others.
7. The duration of the talk must be filtered by the length of talk (0-6, 6-12, 12-18) according to students' language level. . For more advanced students, longer talks may be more suitable. For lower level students, lower talks may be more suitable.
8. Students should practice activities related to their lives and interests to be able to express their ideas freely.
9. Provide a good atmosphere in the class encourages students to speak and improve their achievement.

Suggestions for further research

Based on the results of the present study, the e following are suggestions for further research:

- 1- Investigating the effect of using TED talks-based instruction on improving EFL speaking proficiency among faculty students or post graduate students.
- 2- Investigating the effect of using TED talks-based instruction on improving other language skills: listening, reading and writing.
- 3- Investigating the effect of using TED talks-based instruction on improving students' attitude toward EFL speaking skills.

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