

TEACHING SPEAKING USING TED TALKS EDUCATION: EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

Trisna Hadi Saputra
Universitas Ibn Khaldun Bogor
Saputratrisna9@gmail.com

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi persepsi siswa EFL terhadap penggunaan TED Talks Education dalam mengembangkan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris. Penelitian dilakukan di salah satu universitas swasta di Kota Bogor, Indonesia dengan melibatkan tujuh mahasiswa semester empat dari Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan instrumen berupa kuesioner tertutup dan wawancara semi-terstruktur untuk mengumpulkan data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa secara umum memandang TED Talks Education sebagai sumber belajar tambahan yang bermanfaat. Mereka melaporkan adanya peningkatan dalam penguasaan kosakata, keakuratan pelafalan, kesadaran terhadap komunikasi non-verbal, serta peningkatan motivasi belajar. Siswa juga mengapresiasi input otentik dan gaya penyampaian pembicara TED yang inspiratif, sehingga proses pembelajaran terasa lebih menarik dan relevan. Namun, ditemukan juga beberapa kendala seperti kecepatan berbicara, aksen yang sulit dipahami, dan kurangnya interaksi dua arah yang berdampak pada kepercayaan diri saat berbicara. Meskipun demikian, siswa merasa bahwa TED Talks Education sangat membantu dalam membangun keterampilan dasar berbicara. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa TED Talks Education dapat menjadi alat bantu yang efektif dalam pembelajaran EFL jika dipadukan dengan aktivitas interaktif dan latihan berbicara secara rutin.

Kata kunci : TED Talks Education, siswa EFL, keterampilan berbicara, persepsi

ABSTRACT

This study explores the perceptions of EFL students regarding the use of TED Talks Education to develop their speaking skills. Conducted at one of the universities in Bogor, Indonesia, the research involved seven fourth-semester students from the English Education Department. A qualitative descriptive method was used, utilizing both a close-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to gather data. The results indicate that students generally view TED Talks Education as a beneficial supplementary resource for language learning. They reported improvements in vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation accuracy, non-verbal communication awareness, and motivation. Students also appreciated the authentic input and inspiring delivery styles of TED speakers, which made learning more engaging and relatable. However, some limitations were noted, such as difficulties in understanding fast-paced speech and unfamiliar accents, and a lack of two-way interaction which affected speaking confidence. Despite these challenges, students found TED Talks Education helpful in building foundational speaking skills. The study concludes that TED Talks Education can serve as an effective tool in EFL classrooms when combined with interactive activities and regular practice.

Keyword: TED Talks Education, EFL students, speaking skills, perceptions

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the fundamental skills in English language learning. It allows learners to communicate ideas, express emotions, and interact with others effectively. This supports (Ilyosovna, 2020) view that language functions as the key means of communication, enabling the exchange of ideas and thoughts. For EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students, mastering speaking skills is crucial among the four language competencies, as it enables effective communication in our increasingly globalized society (Redjeki and Muhajir, 2022). Without adequate speaking skills, students will struggle to communicate their ideas clearly (Redjeki et al., 2023).

However, many EFL students in non-native contexts often face challenges in developing speaking fluency (Hibatullah, 2019). Limited exposure to authentic English language and insufficient practice opportunities are among the main causes. The conventional classroom setting does not always provide realistic language interaction, which is essential in building communicative competence which involves the simultaneous creation, acquisition, and processing of information (Harmer, 2015; Burns and Joyce, 1997).

To address these challenges, language educators have increasingly turned to multimedia and technology-based resources. Among them, TED Talks has gained popularity as a pedagogical tool. YouTube offers a channel called TED Talks. TED Talks is a multimedia resource in the form of speeches given by professional speakers. TED Talks offers a platform filled with authentic, inspirational, and intellectually stimulating speeches that cover a wide range of topics (Karimah et al., 2022; Hubert, 2020). These talks not only present learners with real-world English but also introduce them to various pronunciation styles, body language cues, and rhetorical techniques. For EFL learners, this exposure can be instrumental in enhancing speaking proficiency (Farid, 2019; Kozińska, 2021).

According to (Nation, 2009; Celce-Murcia et al., 2010), the use of authentic materials in language learning has long been encouraged by language educators due to

their potential to simulate real communication. Furthermore, they serve not only as listening resources but also as speaking models, especially when followed by reflective or productive language tasks. TED Talks is considered effective authentic resources because it exposes students to diverse speech styles, spontaneous delivery, and can also motivates them (Karimah et al., 2022; Lestary, 2022).

(Kozińska, 2021) emphasized that TED Talks facilitates the improvement of listening, speaking, and interactional skills due to their multimedia nature and contextual richness. Meanwhile, (Salem, 2019) reported that TED Talks improved students' oral presentation skills, vocabulary retention, increased confidence, reduced anxiety, and higher motivation in speaking English after watching and analyzing TED Talks. Similarly, (Qomar, 2022) argued that TED Talks enhances speaking fluency by promoting meaningful language use in academic settings.

In terms of theoretical underpinning, the Input Hypothesis by (Krashen, 1982) supported the notion that comprehensible input is crucial for second language acquisition. TED Talks, being slightly above students' current proficiency level yet understandable with support, provides the type of input that fosters language growth. Likewise, from a social learning perspective, (Bandura, 1977) emphasized the importance of observational learning, imitation, and modeling. TED Talks can serve as models for learners to observe and imitate pronunciation, gestures, and speech delivery when combined with interactive classroom practices such as discussion and role-play.

In TED Talks, many themes are discussed, such as education, business, politics, science, technology, art, health, psychology, and more. One of them is education. There is a program called TED Talks Education. This article specifically explores how TED Talks Education is perceived by students in the context of speaking skill development. The research aims to provide insight into the effectiveness of TED Talks Education as a complementary resource in language classrooms, especially in EFL settings.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive design to explore students' perceptions of TED Talks Education in developing their speaking skills. The study was conducted at one of the universities in Bogor, Indonesia, involving seven students from the fourth semester of the English Education Department. These participants were selected purposively based on their active participation in speaking-related coursework that included TED Talks Education in its materials. The researcher asked the participants to watch TED Talks Education videos first before giving them statements and questions in the form of questionnaire and interview.

Data collection techniques included a close-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire focused on students' general responses and attitudes toward using TED Talks Education, while the interviews explored deeper insights into their individual experiences. Interview questions revolved around perceived benefits, challenges faced, and suggestions for more effective use of TED Talks Education in class.

Data analysis was carried out through thematic analysis. The researcher identified key themes that emerged across participants' responses. These themes were then interpreted in relation to relevant theories and previous studies. Triangulation was used by comparing questionnaire results with interview data to ensure the validity of findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings are organized into five main thematic categories derived from both close-ended questionnaire responses and semi-structured interviews. Each theme is supported by both quantitative data (frequency of agreement/disagreement) and qualitative narratives (direct quotes from the interviews), providing a comprehensive understanding of how TED Talks Education is perceived by EFL students as a medium for speaking practice and development.

Vocabulary and Pronunciation Development

All participants (100%) agreed that TED Talks Education played a significant role in improving vocabulary and pronunciation. According to the interviews, TED Talks Education exposed students to rich, contextual vocabulary and clear pronunciation. Participant 1 stated, *"I learned vocabulary like 'curiosity' and 'adaptability'."* Participant 3 noted, *"I often come across idioms such as 'think outside the box'."* In terms of pronunciation, Participant 2 mentioned, *"The pronunciation of the speakers is very clear, and I can imitate it to improve my own."* These findings support the role of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982) and observational learning (Bandura, 1977) in language acquisition.

Non-Verbal Communication Awareness

Based on the questionnaire, 6 out of 7 participants (85.7%) agreed that TED Talks Education enhanced their awareness of non-verbal communication. TED speakers often use gestures, facial expressions, and body language. Participant 5 said, *"I often observe the use of hands or fingers to emphasize important points."* These observations align with findings from (Kozłowska, 2021) and (Karimah et al., 2022) who emphasized the role of body language in enhancing communicative effectiveness.

Increased Motivation and Engagement

According to the questionnaire, 6 out of 7 participants (85.7%) agreed that TED Talks Education increased their motivation. Participant 2 remarked, *"TED Talks Education often discusses inspirational and relevant topics. Therefore, it motivates me and makes me more enthusiastic in developing my speaking skills."* Participant 7 added, *"The content is often inspirational, and the way it's delivered also excites me."* These findings are consistent with (Salem, 2019) who reported that TED Talks increase learner motivation and reduce anxiety.

Challenges Faced

Despite the benefits, challenges were reported by students. Five participants (71.4%) agreed that TED Talks Education supported their confidence, while two (28.6%) disagreed due to the lack of

interaction. Participant 6 noted, *"Because it's not two-way communication, I still don't know if I would be confident speaking English in public."* Furthermore, students found fast-paced speech and varied accents difficult to understand. These concerns align with (Lestary, 2022), who emphasized the need for subtitles and guided comprehension activities.

Classroom Integration Strategies

All participants (100%) agreed that TED Talks Education should be combined with other learning strategies. Participant 7 suggested, *"It would help more if the teacher asked us to retell or summarize the talk."* Students recommended pre-teaching vocabulary, group discussion, and post-viewing tasks. These ideas are supported by (Kusumastuty et al., 2019), who stressed the importance of interactive application after exposure to TED Talks.

The findings indicate that TED Talks Education is generally perceived positively and plays a supportive role in developing EFL students' speaking skills. The findings of the present study are consistent with previous studies, particularly regarding the enhancement of pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and learner engagement. Participants in this study demonstrated increased motivation and reported benefits from observing native speakers' delivery, gestures, and real-world language usage.

However, unlike the previous studies that emphasized improvements in confidence and fluency, this study revealed that several students still struggled with confidence due to the non-interactive nature of TED Talks Education. The lack of real-time interaction and feedback limited the students' ability to practice speaking in authentic communicative settings. This suggests that while TED Talks Education is highly beneficial for input and modeling, it is most effective when paired with classroom activities that promote output, such as discussion, presentations, and peer feedback.

Challenges also remain in terms of accessibility and comprehensibility. Some students found the speed of the speech and certain accents challenging to follow, which

at times reduced their comprehension. These issues point to the need for supplementary support, such as transcripts, subtitles, and guided scaffolding by instructors.

TED Talks Education offers valuable support for EFL students to develop their speaking skills through authentic exposure, engaging content, and motivational storytelling (Jaelani & Umam, 2021). Its effectiveness is maximized when integrated into a broader language learning strategy that includes interaction, feedback, and regular practice.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore how EFL students perceive the use of TED Talks Education in developing their speaking skills. Based on the findings from questionnaires and interviews, it can be concluded that students generally have positive perceptions toward TED Talks Education. They reported improvements in vocabulary, pronunciation, non-verbal communication awareness, motivation, and engagement. These benefits are supported by both linguistic input and motivational content provided by TED Talks Education. However, some challenges were also noted, such as the lack of interactive features and the difficulty in understanding fast speech and diverse accents. Despite these limitations, students acknowledged that TED Talks Education remains a helpful resource, especially when paired with interactive classroom activities like discussion, presentations, and feedback. In short, TED Talks Education contributes meaningfully to the development of EFL students' speaking skills and is best utilized as part of an integrated and reflective learning approach.

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