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The Effects of TED Talk-Based Instruction on Thai EFL Learners' Listening and Speaking Skills

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Abstract. This study investigated the effects of TED Talk-based instruction on Thai learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in terms of listening skills, speaking skills, and overall oral communication performance. A pretest-posttest control group experimental design was employed with 82 second-year English major students who were divided into an experimental group ($n = 41$) and a control group ($n = 41$). The experimental group received TED Talk-based instruction, while the control group received conventional instruction. Data were collected using listening comprehension tests and analytic speaking performance assessments and analyzed using descriptive statistics and t -tests. The results revealed that the experimental group achieved significantly higher listening scores ($M = 23.15$) and speaking scores ($M = 22.87$) than the control group ($M = 15.48$ and $M = 16.12$, respectively; $p < .05$). In addition, the experimental group demonstrated superior overall oral communication performance ($M = 46.02$) compared to the control group ($M = 31.60$). These findings provide empirical support for the effectiveness of TED Talk-based instruction in enhancing EFL learners' oral communication skills in higher education contexts.

Keywords: TED Talk-based instruction; listening comprehension; English as a Foreign Language (EFL); oral communication

1. Introduction

English has become an essential global language for academic development, international communication, and professional success. In Thailand, English is taught as a foreign language and is a compulsory subject across all levels of education. Despite prolonged exposure to English instruction, many Thai learners continue to demonstrate limited proficiency, particularly in oral communication skills. Among the four language skills, listening remains one of the most

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challenging for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, as it requires the ability to process spoken language in real time (Hamouda, 2013).

Thai learners often experience difficulties in understanding authentic spoken English due to rapid speech, unfamiliar accents, and limited exposure to natural language use. In many EFL classrooms, instruction still emphasizes grammar, reading, and writing, while listening practice and exposure to authentic input receive comparatively less attention (Kantisa, 2020). As a result, students frequently lack confidence in understanding spoken English and face challenges when engaging in real-life communication. With the rapid development of digital technology, language learning environments have expanded beyond traditional classrooms, providing learners with access to multimedia resources and authentic materials. Video-based learning has been shown to support listening comprehension by integrating auditory and visual input, allowing learners to interpret meaning through contextual cues such as gestures and facial expressions (Brook, 2022). Such multimodal input may also enhance learner engagement and motivation.

Among various multimedia resources, TED Talks have gained increasing attention as effective instructional materials in EFL contexts. TED Talks provide authentic language input, diverse accents, and engaging content from real-world speakers. In addition, features such as subtitles and transcripts can support learners at different proficiency levels (Chang & Huang, 2019). These characteristics suggest that TED Talk-based instruction may offer valuable opportunities for improving learners' listening and speaking skills.

Although previous studies have explored the use of TED Talks in language learning, limited experimental research in Thailand has systematically examined their combined effects on both listening and speaking development over an extended instructional period. Furthermore, many studies have focused primarily on speaking performance or learner attitudes rather than investigating listening and speaking as integrated skills. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the effects of TED Talk-based instruction on Thai EFL learners' listening skills, speaking skills, and overall oral communication performance.

The study addressed the following research questions:

- a. Does TED Talk-based instruction significantly improve the listening skills of EFL learners compared to traditional instruction?
- b. Does TED Talk-based instruction significantly improve the speaking skills of EFL learners compared to traditional instruction?
- c. Is there a significant difference in overall oral communication performance between students taught using TED Talk-based instruction and those taught using traditional methods?

2. Literature Review

2.1 English Education in Thailand and Persistent Challenges

English is essential in Thailand for worldwide communication, academic progress, and career progression. In the context of globalization and regional

integration, especially within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), English proficiency has emerged as a crucial metric for human capital development and international competitiveness. Consequently, English has been established as a mandatory subject throughout all educational tiers, from primary education to higher education. Thai universities are anticipated to provide graduates with proficient English communication abilities that facilitate academic pursuits, professional interactions, and lifetime learning. Notwithstanding these policy initiatives and extended exposure to English instruction, the general proficiency of Thai learners—particularly in oral communication—remains comparatively low against international standards, suggesting a persistent gap between policy expectations and actual learning outcomes.

Thai EFL learners face significant difficulties in listening and speaking inside classroom settings. These issues are often associated with insufficient exposure to genuine English input and the prevalence of teacher-centered teaching methods based on grammar-translation and examination-focused practices (Kantisa, 2020). Such methodologies emphasize grammatical precision, vocabulary retention, and written examination success, while the conversational use of English is frequently sidelined. As a result, learners may acquire passive knowledge of English without the capacity to use the language proficiently in practical contexts. This disparity leads to diminished confidence, hesitation in verbal expression, and restricted communicative proficiency (Sukhakul, 2019).

Additionally, Thai university students often find it challenging to comprehend spontaneously spoken English because of unfamiliar accents, rapid speech rates, shortened forms, and discourse elements that are never presented in textbooks or scripted audio resources (Chaiyapanya et al., 2023). While some studies report gradual improvements in receptive skills, oral communication remains a consistent challenge, particularly in authentic listening situations. These challenges exacerbate learners' nervousness and reluctance toward oral communication.

2.2 Listening Comprehension as a Neglected but Complex Skill

Listening comprehension is an essential element of verbal communication and a pivotal skill in second language learning. It entails more than mere auditory receipt; instead, it necessitates that learners actively build meaning by synthesizing language input with cognitive and contextual understanding. From a cognitive standpoint, listening comprehension involves the concurrent application of bottom-up processes—such as auditory discrimination, lexical recognition, and syntactic analysis—and top-down processes, including inferencing, forecasting, and schema activation (Hamouda, 2013). This integration must transpire swiftly and incessantly, particularly in genuine conversational circumstances when speech is spontaneous, unstructured, and frequently unpredictable. Consequently, listening imposes significant demands on learners' working memory, attention, and processing speed.

Despite its pivotal role in communication, listening has traditionally been underestimated in language education, resulting in its characterization as a “Cinderella skill” (Chastain, 1971). In numerous EFL classes, listening teaching is

restricted to responding to comprehension questions instead of cultivating listening strategies or promoting deeper engagement with auditory texts. Students are frequently anticipated to comprehend spoken language without instruction on how to navigate challenges such as unfamiliar terminology, rapid speech, or accent differences. Academics contend that proficient listening education must encompass organized instructional phases, explicit approach training, and continual exposure to genuine spoken materials (Field, 2008).

Recent study underscores the significance of multimodal input, especially video-based resources, in improving listening comprehension. Visual cues, including gestures, facial expressions, and environmental images, offer supplementary information channels that alleviate cognitive load and facilitate meaning creation, thus rendering listening more accessible and less anxiety-provoking for learners (Brook, 2022). These challenges highlight the need for instructional materials that provide authentic and multimodal input such as TED Talks and support listening development in EFL contexts better.

2.3 Speaking Skills, Learner Difficulties, and the Listening-Speaking Relationship

Speaking is a complicated ability that necessitates the real-time coordination of linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural resources by learners. Effective speaking necessitates simultaneous management of fluency, grammatical precision, lexical selection, pronunciation, and interactional competence while effectively responding to social context and communicative intent (Bygate, 2009). Its considerable intricacy renders speaking one of the most arduous abilities for EFL learners to acquire. Numerous learners encounter challenges in rapidly generating ideas, accessing suitable linguistic structures, and ensuring accuracy while under time constraints. These issues are frequently exacerbated by restricted opportunities for genuine oral practice in classroom environments.

Affective issues exacerbate speaking difficulties. Speaking anxiety is frequently observed among EFL learners and is typically linked to the fear of errors, apprehension regarding negative assessment, and diminished self-confidence (Horwitz, 2010). This anxiety can impede learners' willingness to communicate, resulting in the avoidance of speaking tasks and diminished involvement. Consequently, learners may become ensnared in a cycle where insufficient practice results in diminished skill, thereby exacerbating worry and avoidance behaviors. Listening and speaking abilities are intricately linked, and advancement in one can promote improvement in the other.

Enhanced listening comprehension offers learners more substantial linguistic input, a broader vocabulary, and exemplars of authentic conversation, pronunciation, and intonation that can be used to oral production (Nation & Newton, 2009). Instruction that intentionally combines listening input with speaking output allows learners to convert comprehension into production. Video-based education enhances this link by providing contextualized input and observable models of spoken engagement, therefore facilitating more fluent and comprehensible speech (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). However, previous studies have often focused on either listening or speaking separately, and fewer studies

have examined their integrated development within a single instructional approach.

2.4 TED Talks as a Theoretical and Pedagogical Resource

This study is theoretically based on Krashen's Input Hypothesis and Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML). Krashen's Input Hypothesis posits that language acquisition transpires when learners encounter intelligible input that slightly exceeds their existing competence level ($i+1$) within an environment characterized by minimal affective barriers (Krashen, 1985). TED Talks offer valuable insights through well-structured, interesting content that is accompanied by subtitles and adaptable replay features. These capabilities enable learners to regulate the pace of input, review problematic areas, and alleviate anxiety related to understanding challenges. Mayer's CTML posits that learning is optimized when information is processed via dual channels—visual and auditory—while cognitive overload is mitigated (Mayer, 2005). TED Talks closely adhere to these principles by integrating spoken language with images, gestures, and narrative storytelling, therefore enhancing cognitive processing and memory.

From an educational standpoint, TED Talks have garnered heightened acknowledgment as valuable teaching tools in EFL environments. Their genuine language application exposes learners to realistic speech, varied accents, and real-world conversational patterns that are sometimes lacking in conventional textbooks (Chang & Huang, 2019). The theme material of TED Talks often encompasses motivational and socially pertinent issues such as perseverance, resilience, creativity, and identity, which may augment learner engagement and intrinsic motivation (Duckworth, 2013; Mazari, 2014). Empirical studies consistently demonstrate the efficacy of video-based and TED Talk-based instruction in enhancing listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, speaking fluency, and pronunciation (Chaiyapanya et al., 2023; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Samaranayake & Phonlakoon, 2023; Sukrutrit, 2025).

However, many previous studies have focused on short-term interventions or general video-based instruction, making it unclear whether the observed effects are specifically related to the unique features of TED Talks. Furthermore, experimental research in Thailand that has systematically examined the combined effects of TED Talk-based instruction on both listening and speaking skills over an extended instructional period is limited. Therefore, this study aimed to address this gap by investigating the integrated development of oral communication skills in a Thai EFL context.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed an experimental research design using a pretest-posttest control group design to investigate the effects of TED Talk-based instruction on Thai EFL learners' listening and speaking skills. The independent variable was TED Talk-based instruction, while the dependent variables were the students' listening skills and speaking skills. Two groups were involved: an experimental

group, which received instruction through TED Talk-based learning, and a control group, which received traditional listening and speaking instruction.

The study used intact classes due to administrative and scheduling constraints; therefore, random assignment of individual participants was not feasible. One intact class was designated as the experimental group while another served as the control group. Although this approach reflects authentic classroom conditions, it may introduce potential threats to internal validity. These include teacher effects, diffusion of treatment between groups, and the Hawthorne effect where participants may modify their behavior due to awareness of being studied. To minimize these threats, both groups were taught using comparable instructional time, similar course content, and consistent assessment procedures throughout the study period.

3.2 Participants

The subjects of this study were chosen from undergraduate students participating in the English for Communication program at Rajamangala University of Technology Srivijaya. In total, 82 second-year English major students were selected as participants for the study, having completed foundational English language courses and being at a suitable stage to enhance their listening and speaking abilities. Choosing students of equivalent academic standing facilitated a relatively uniform linguistic background and educational experience among participants. The participants consisted of 82 students (Experimental group, $n = 41$; Control group, $n = 41$), with ages ranging from approximately 19 to 21 years. All participants were Thai EFL learners who had studied English as a foreign language for at least six years prior to entering university.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who fulfilled the inclusion criteria, which comprised enrollment as a second-year English major student at Rajamangala University of Technology Srivijaya, consistent attendance in English courses, and a commitment to participate for the study's duration. Students absent from the pretest or post-test sessions, or those who did not fulfill all instructional tasks were eliminated from the final data analysis. While purposive sampling ensured that participants met the specific study criteria, it may have limited the generalizability of the findings to broader populations.

The participant selection approach guaranteed the relevance, consistency, and reliability of the data that were used to assess the impact of TED Talk-based education on learners' listening and speaking abilities. To ensure initial equivalence between groups, pretest scores were compared prior to the intervention. The results indicated no statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups in both listening and speaking performance ($p > .05$), suggesting comparable baseline proficiency.

3.3 Research Instruments

This research used four tools to investigate the impact of TED Talk-based training on students' listening and speaking abilities. A standardized listening-comprehension assessment was employed to evaluate students' proficiency in understanding spoken English, encompassing the grasp of main

ideas, precise details, vocabulary, and contextual meaning. A speaking performance assessment rubric was used to evaluate learners' oral production for fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, grammatical accuracy, coherence, and general comprehensibility. The experimental group used TED Talk-based lesson plans as their instructional resources. The lesson designs included organized pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening speaking exercises aimed at fostering active participation and significant language application. An expert validation form was used to confirm the content validity and suitability of all study instruments through assessment by specialists in English language instruction.

Before the implementation of the research instruments, content validity was carefully examined to ensure consistency with the study's objectives. The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was employed to validate the listening and speaking tests and the questionnaire. Three experts evaluated the instruments; all were university-level English instructors with more than 10 years of teaching experience and extensive research expertise in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The results of the IOC analysis indicated a high degree of content validity, with average IOC values of 0.97 for the listening and speaking pre- and posttests and 0.82 for the questionnaire, both exceeding the accepted threshold of 0.50.

In addition to content validity, the reliability of the listening test was examined using internal consistency measures, yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87, which indicates acceptable reliability. The analytic speaking rubric was also reviewed by these experts and refined based on their feedback prior to use in the main study. To ensure scoring consistency, two trained raters independently evaluated a subset of speaking performances. Inter-rater reliability was calculated using the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC), which indicated a high level of agreement between raters (ICC = 0.89). In cases where scoring discrepancies occurred, discussion was conducted to reach consensus.

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected from 82 second-year English major students enrolled in the English for Communication program at Rajamangala University of Technology Srivijaya. Prior to the instructional intervention, all participants completed listening and speaking pretests to establish baseline levels of oral proficiency. The listening test measured learners' ability to comprehend spoken English, while the speaking test assessed oral performance using an analytic speaking rubric encompassing fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, and overall comprehensibility.

The speaking performances in both the pretests and posttests were evaluated using an analytic rubric consisting of five assessment criteria, each rated on a five-level scale ranging from 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent). This analytic approach enabled a detailed and systematic evaluation of learners' speaking ability across multiple dimensions rather than relying on a single holistic score. The rubric was adapted from established speaking-assessment frameworks, including the Speaking Band Descriptors of the International English Language Testing System

(IELTS) and other widely recognized models of analytic speaking assessment (Brown, 2015; Luoma, 2004). Minor modifications were made to ensure that the descriptors were appropriate for the proficiency level of Thai EFL university students and were aligned with the objectives of the present study.

Following the pretesting phase, participants were assigned to either an experimental group or a control group. The experimental group received TED Talk-based instruction over an eight-week period, while the control group received traditional listening and speaking instruction based on the regular curriculum. After the completion of the instructional period, listening and speaking posttests, equivalent in format and level of difficulty to the pretests, were administered to both groups under controlled classroom conditions.

All test scores were systematically recorded, anonymized, and prepared for analysis. The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were calculated to summarize participants' performance and to observe changes between pretest and posttest scores. To examine within-group improvement, paired-samples *t*-tests were conducted. In addition, independent-samples *t*-tests were employed for the comparison of the posttest scores between the experimental group and the control group.

Prior to conducting inferential analyses, statistical assumptions were examined. The normality of score distributions was assessed using the Shapiro-Wilk test, and the homogeneity of variance was evaluated using Levene's test. The results indicated that the data met the assumptions required for parametric testing. All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS (Version 29), with the level of significance set at .05. This analytical procedure provided empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of TED Talk-based instruction in enhancing learners' listening and speaking skills.

4. Results and Findings

Table 1 presents the comparison of the listening pretest and posttest scores between the experimental group and the control group.

Table 1: Comparison of listening pre- and posttest scores

| Test Type | Group | <i>N</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>t</i> (80) | <i>p</i> | Cohen's <i>d</i> |
|-----------|-------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|---------------|----------|------------------|
| Pretest | Experimental Group (TED Talk) | 41 | 15.02 | 3.10 | 0.42 | .675 | 0.06 |
| | Control Group (Traditional) | 41 | 14.85 | 3.05 | | | |
| Posttest | Experimental Group (TED Talk) | 41 | 23.15 | 3.21 | 4.18 | < .001 | 2.45 |
| | Control Group (Traditional) | 41 | 15.48 | 3.06 | | | |

p < .05 was considered statistically significant.

Before the intervention, the two groups showed comparable listening performance. An independent-samples *t*-test indicated no statistically significant difference at the pretest stage ($t = 0.42, p = .675$), suggesting that both groups began with a similar level of listening proficiency. After the eight-week instructional period, the experimental group (TED Talk-based instruction) obtained a substantially higher mean posttest score ($M = 23.15, SD = 3.21$) than the control group (traditional instruction) ($M = 15.48, SD = 3.06$). The posttest difference was statistically significant ($t = 4.18, p < .001$). The effect size was very large (Cohen's $d = 2.45$), indicating that TED Talk-based instruction had a strong practical impact on learners' listening performance.

Table 2 presents the comparison of the pretest and posttest speaking scores between the experimental group and the control group.

Table 2: Comparison of pretest and posttest speaking scores

| Test Type | Group | <i>N</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>t</i> (80) | <i>p</i> | Cohen's <i>d</i> |
|-----------|-------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|---------------|----------|------------------|
| Pretest | Experimental Group (TED Talk) | 41 | 15.10 | 3.18 | 0.39 | .689 | 0.06 |
| | Control Group (Traditional) | 41 | 14.92 | 3.11 | | | |
| Posttest | Experimental Group (TED Talk) | 41 | 22.87 | 3.45 | 4.18 | < .001 | 2.06 |
| | Control Group (Traditional) | 41 | 16.12 | 3.27 | | | |

$p < .05$ was considered statistically significant.

Prior to the instructional intervention, the pretest results indicated that the mean speaking scores of the experimental group and the control group were comparable. The independent-samples *t*-test revealed no statistically significant difference between the two groups at the pretest stage ($p > .05$), suggesting that both groups had a similar level of speaking proficiency before the treatment.

Following the instructional intervention, the posttest results showed a substantial difference in speaking performance between the two groups. The experimental group, which received TED Talk-based instruction, obtained a considerably higher mean speaking score ($M = 22.87, SD = 3.45$) than the control group, which received traditional instruction ($M = 16.12, SD = 3.27$). The independent-samples *t*-test indicated that this difference was statistically significant ($t(80) = 4.18, p < .001$). The effect size was large (Cohen's $d = 2.06$), indicating a substantial instructional impact. These findings suggest that TED Talk-based instruction had a significant positive effect on learners' speaking skills.

Table 3 presents the comparison of the overall oral communication performance between the experimental group (TED Talk-based instruction) and the control group (conventional instruction).

Table 3: Comparison of overall oral communication performance between groups

| Group | <i>N</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>t(df)</i> | <i>p</i> | Cohen's <i>d</i> |
|--|----------|----------|-----------|--------------|------------|------------------|
| Experimental Group (TED Talk-based instruction) | 41 | 46.02 | 5.18 | 5.03 | $p < .001$ | 2.85 |
| Control Group (Conventional instruction) | 41 | 31.60 | 4.92 | | | |

$p < .05$ indicates a statistically significant difference between groups.

The experimental group obtained a higher mean score ($M = 46.02$, $SD = 5.18$) than the control group ($M = 31.60$, $SD = 4.92$). An independent-samples *t*-test showed that this difference was statistically significant ($t(80) = 5.03$, $p < .001$), with a very large effect size (Cohen's $d = 2.85$). These results suggest that TED Talk-based instruction substantially improved learners' overall oral communication performance compared with conventional instruction.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that TED Talk-based instruction contributed to noticeable improvements in Thai EFL learners' listening skills, speaking abilities, and overall oral communication performance when compared with conventional teaching methods. Learners who were exposed to TED Talk-based activities generally performed better than those receiving traditional instruction, suggesting that the integration of authentic and multimodal materials can play an important role in enhancing oral language proficiency in EFL contexts.

The improvement in listening skills among the experimental group may be attributed to the exposure to authentic spoken input. TED Talks provide access to natural speech, a range of accents, and real discourse patterns that are often absent in textbook-based materials. Such exposure may help learners to become more familiar with real-life language use, thereby reducing the gap between classroom learning and actual communication. This finding is consistent with Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which proposes that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input slightly above their current level.

Previous studies have similarly reported that authentic video materials can support listening comprehension by providing contextualized and meaningful input (Alemi & Ebadi, 2016; Chaiyapanya et al., 2023). However, it should be noted that the observed improvement may not be solely due to the use of TED Talks. Factors such as increased learner motivation, novelty of instructional materials, and greater engagement in classroom activities may also have contributed to the improvement in listening performance.

In addition to listening, the experimental group demonstrated significantly higher speaking performance than the control group. This finding highlights the close relationship between listening and speaking skills, as listening provides essential input that can support language production. The use of TED Talks may have offered learners useful models of pronunciation, intonation, and discourse organization that they could apply in their own speaking. Furthermore, the inclusion of post-listening speaking activities, such as summarizing and group

discussion, may have provided opportunities for learners to transform input into output. This result is in line with previous studies indicating that video-based instruction can enhance speaking fluency and confidence (Sukrutrit, 2025; Takaesu, 2013). Nevertheless, it is possible that the improvement in speaking performance was also influenced by increased opportunities for practice and interaction rather than the instructional material alone. Additionally, individual differences among learners such as confidence levels and prior proficiency may have resulted in uneven improvement across participants.

The findings related to overall oral communication performance further support the potential of TED Talk-based instruction as an integrated approach to language learning. By combining listening input with speaking practice, the instructional design may have helped learners to develop both receptive and productive skills simultaneously. This result can be interpreted in view of the CTML, which suggests that learning is enhanced when information is presented through both visual and auditory channels. The visual elements of TED Talks, including gestures and presentation slides, may have supported comprehension and reduced cognitive load, thereby facilitating language processing. Similar findings have been reported in previous research, which indicates that multimedia instruction can strengthen the connection between listening and speaking skills (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Samaranayake & Phonlakoon, 2023). However, it is important to consider that the relatively short duration of the intervention (eight weeks) may limit the extent to which long-term improvements in oral communication can be observed.

Overall, the results suggest that TED Talk-based instruction can serve as a useful supplement to traditional EFL teaching, particularly in contexts where exposure to authentic English is limited. At the same time, the findings should be interpreted with caution. The improvement observed in this study may reflect not only the effectiveness of the instructional materials but also the influence of contextual factors such as learner engagement, task design, and classroom interaction. Future research may, therefore, explore longer intervention periods, different learner populations, and more detailed analyses of specific speaking sub-skills to understand better how and under what conditions TED Talk-based instruction can be most effective.

6. Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of TED Talk-based instruction on Thai EFL learners' listening and speaking abilities in a higher education context. Overall, the findings support the use of TED Talks as an instructional resource that can help strengthen oral communication development through authentic input and structured classroom practice. In practical terms, TED Talks can be integrated into listening-speaking lessons to promote active listening, maintain learner engagement, and provide opportunities for meaningful speaking tasks such as summarizing, discussion, and short presentations.

Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted cautiously. The participants were drawn from one university and one program, which may limit the generalizability

of the results. In addition, the intervention lasted for a relatively short period and may not fully reflect longer-term development. Future research should, therefore, include learners from different majors, proficiency levels, and institutions and extend the duration of the treatment and examine whether the gains are sustained over time. Further studies may also explore which components of speaking (e.g., fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, or grammar) improve most under TED Talk-based instruction

7. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Notwithstanding the contributions of this study, the findings should be interpreted with appropriate caution. The sample was limited to English-major undergraduates from a single university, and the intervention was implemented over a relatively brief period; therefore, the extent to which the observed benefits transfer to other learner populations or remain stable over time cannot be assumed. In addition, the study relied primarily on quantitative test outcomes, which provided robust evidence of performance change but offered limited insight into learners' experiences during the instructional process.

From a practical standpoint, the results support the pedagogical use of TED Talks as an authentic, multimodal resource that can be integrated into structured listening-speaking sequences. In particular, educators may consider selecting talks that are aligned with learners' proficiency and interests, scaffolding comprehension through pre- and while-listening support and designing post-listening speaking tasks (e.g., brief summaries, guided discussion, or short presentations) to encourage meaningful output and sustained engagement.

To strengthen the evidence base, future research is recommended to (a) include participants from different majors, institutions, and proficiency levels; (b) extend the intervention period and adopt longitudinal designs to examine retention of gains; and (c) incorporate qualitative or mixed-methods data (e.g., interviews, reflective journals, or classroom observations) to explain better how motivation, engagement, and task participation contribute to learning outcomes. Further studies may also examine whether certain TED Talk characteristics (topic, difficulty level, accent variety) and task types (e.g., shadowing, debate, presentation) yield differential effects, and explore the added value of combining TED Talk-based instruction with technology-supported feedback, including learning management systems or AI-assisted tools.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Appendix 1

Listening Comprehension Test The Effects of TED Talk-Based Instruction on Thai EFL Learners' Listening and Speaking Skills

Purpose of the Test:

This listening test is designed to assess students' English listening comprehension skills for research purposes. The test measures learners' ability to understand spoken English, including comprehension of main ideas, specific details, vocabulary, pronunciation features, and implied meaning.

This test consists of listening passages followed by comprehension questions.

- Listen carefully to each audio recording.
- You may listen to each passage as instructed by the examiner.
- Answer all questions based on the information you hear.
- Do not use dictionaries, electronic devices, or external assistance.
- Write your answers clearly in the space provided.

Time Allocation: ____30____ minutes

Scoring: Total Score: ____30____ points

(This test is used for research purposes only and will not affect course grades.)

Confidentiality Notice: All responses will be kept strictly confidential and used solely for academic research. Participants' identities will not be disclosed in any reports or publications.

You will listen to three short talks adapted from TED/TEDx presentations.

- You will hear each talk **twice**.
- For each talk, read the questions before listening.
- Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D).

Part 1: "Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance" - Angela Duckworth

1. Why did Angela Duckworth leave her job in management consulting?

- A. She wanted to earn more money.
- B. She wanted a less stressful job.
- C. She wanted to become a teacher.
- D. She wanted to study psychology.

2. What surprised her about her students' performance?

- A. The hardest-working students always had the highest IQ.
- B. Students with high IQ always got the best grades.
- C. Some students with an average IQ outperformed those with a higher IQ.
- D. IQ and performance were always perfectly matched.

3. What conclusion did she reach after teaching for several years?

- A. Teachers should focus more on IQ tests.
- B. Motivation and psychology are important in understanding learning.
- C. Math is too difficult for most students.
- D. Students should be separated by ability.

4. What is the best definition of "grit" according to the talk?

- A. Natural talent and quick learning.
- B. Passion and perseverance for long-term goals.

- C. The ability to make friends easily.
- D. Physical and emotional strength.

5. What does Angela say about talent and grit?

- A. Very talented people are always gritty.
- B. Talent and grit are always strongly related.
- C. Talent makes grit unnecessary.
- D. Talent does not guarantee grit, and sometimes they are not related.

Part 2: "Turning Adversity into Opportunity" – Muniba Mazari

6. What event changed Muniba Mazari's life completely?

- A. Losing her job.
- B. A serious car accident.
- C. Moving to another country.
- D. Being rejected from university.

7. What was one of the biggest emotional challenges she faced in the hospital?

- A. The nurses ignored her.
- B. Her family could not visit her.
- C. Many people she expected to stay left her.
- D. She had no access to art materials.

8. How did painting influence her during her recovery?

- A. It made her forget her injuries completely.
- B. It became a way to add color and meaning to her life.
- C. It helped her earn a great deal of money quickly.
- D. It allowed her to leave the hospital earlier.

9. What message does she want to send about people with disabilities?

- A. They always need sympathy and help.
- B. They cannot live a normal life.
- C. They should be hidden from the media.
- D. They are human beings who deserve respect, not pity.

10. What does she say about being "caged"?

- A. Everyone is physically caged by something.
- B. Her body is limited, but her mind and spirit are free.
- C. She feels caged by society more than by her body.
- D. Being caged is a good motivation for success.

Part 3: "What Makes You Special?" – Mariana Atencio

11. Why did Mariana's father send her and her sister to a summer camp in the U.S.?

- A. To improve their math skills.
- B. To experience different cultures and languages.
- C. To visit famous tourist attractions.
- D. To live with relatives in America.

12. How did the other children at the first summer camp react to Mariana and her sister?

- A. They immediately welcomed them as friends.
- B. They ignored them completely.
- C. They were curious and asked naive questions.
- D. They were openly aggressive and bullying.

13. What important mistake did Mariana realize she made with her roommate Fatima?

- A. She tried too hard to be like Fatima.
- B. She judged Fatima without trying to understand her.
- C. She taught Fatima how to dance.
- D. She avoided speaking English with Fatima.

14. What does Mariana say about labeling others as “different”?

- A. It helps us to understand people better.
- B. It motivates people to work harder.
- C. It can dehumanize them and turn them into “the other.”
- D. It is necessary for social order.

15. What is Mariana’s final message about difference and humanity?

- A. We should all try to be as normal as possible.
- B. Only some groups deserve to be accepted.
- C. Our differences make us special, but we are all human.
- D. Being different is always a disadvantage.

Appendix 2

Speaking Performance Test The Effects of TED Talk-Based Instruction on Thai EFL Learners' Listening and Speaking Skills

Purpose of the Test:

This speaking performance test is designed to assess students' English-speaking ability for research purposes. The test evaluates learners' oral communication skills, including fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, coherence, and overall comprehensibility.

Instructions:

1. This test requires you to speak in English in response to the given task(s).
2. You will be given preparation time before speaking, as specified by the examiner.
3. Speak clearly and respond as fully as possible to each task.
4. You may not use dictionaries, mobile phones, or written notes during the speaking task unless permitted.

Your responses will be audio-recorded for scoring and analysis purposes.

Time Allocation: Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Speaking Time: 5 minutes

Scoring: Total Score: 30 points

Confidentiality Notice:

All spoken responses will be kept strictly confidential and used solely for academic research. Participants' identities will not be disclosed in any reports or publications.

Instructions

You will complete three speaking tasks.

- You will have 5 minutes to prepare before Tasks 1 & 2.
- You may make brief notes, but you cannot read a script.
- Try to speak clearly, naturally, and in full sentences.

Task 1: Summary of a TED Talk (1.5–2 minutes)

Choose **ONE** of the following TED Talks:

- *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance* (Angela Duckworth)
- *Turning Adversity into Opportunity* (Muniba Mazari)
- *What Makes You Special?* (Mariana Atencio)

In your own words, briefly summarize the following:

1. Who the speaker is
2. What the main story or message is
3. One or two key examples used in the talk

Task 2: Opinion and Reflection (1.5–2 minutes)

1. Do you agree with the speaker's main message? Why or why not?
2. How can this message apply to your own life, your studies, or your future career?

Task 3: Discussion Questions (3–4 minutes)

- From Angela's talk:

"Do you think grit is more important than talent? Why or why not?"

- From Muniba's talk:
"How can people turn their difficulties into opportunities in real life?"
- From Mariana's talk:
"Have you ever felt 'different'? How did that experience change you?"

Appendix 3

Analytic Speaking Rubric

| Level | Fluency | Pronunciation | Vocabulary | Grammar | Comprehensibility |
|----------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| 5 - Excellent | Speaks smoothly with natural pace; very few hesitations; ideas well connected | Highly intelligible; accurate sounds, stress, and intonation; occasional minor slips | Wide range of vocabulary; uses appropriate and precise words; rare errors | Uses a wide variety of structures accurately; errors are minor and do not affect meaning | Very easy to understand; no effort is needed by the listener to follow ideas |
| 4 - Good | Generally fluent; some pauses to think but not distracting; ideas mostly organized | Mostly clear; occasional mispronunciation but does not interfere with understanding | Good range; mostly appropriate word choice; occasional repetition or minor errors | Uses a range of correct structures with some noticeable errors but meaning usually clear | Easy to understand; listener needs to make a little effort to follow |
| 3 - Fair | Noticeable pauses and hesitations; sometimes searching for words; ideas somewhat disorganized | Intelligible overall but with several pronunciation problems; some interference | Limited range; some inappropriate or repeated words; meaning sometimes unclear | Frequent grammatical errors; uses simple structures; errors sometimes cause confusion | Generally understandable but listener must make some effort to follow |
| 2 - Poor | Frequent long pauses; fragmented speech; hard to maintain flow of ideas | Difficult to understand at times; many pronunciation errors affecting intelligibility | Very limited vocabulary; frequent incorrect word choice; often unclear | Many serious errors; very simple or incorrect structures; meaning often unclear | Often hard to understand; listener must work hard to follow |
| 1 - Very Poor | Very limited speech; single words or short memorized phrases; cannot express ideas | Largely unintelligible; pronunciation interferes severely with understanding | Extremely limited vocabulary; cannot express basic ideas | Almost all utterances contain serious errors; communication breaks down | |