

Effectiveness of using shadowing technique on improving students' speaking skill

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Abstract: The objectives of this study were to examine the effectiveness of using shadowing technique to improve speaking skill for students in learning English as a foreign language. Accordingly, the research was conducted as an experimental research which consisted of two groups. Each group consisted of 30 students studying at Thainguyn University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Vietnam, in which the experimental group was taught using shadowing technique while the control group was taught using traditional lecture method. After 4 weeks of learning speaking, the pre-test and posttest were used as instruments for data collection for students' speaking learning results. The statistical package for the social sciences, version 20 was utilized to analyze the mean and standard deviation which were to check the differences between pre-test and post-test; the Pair sample T-tests which were to check the impact of the treatment; and the correlation coefficients finding out the significant correlation of the study. The result of the research presented that the students of experimental group performed better in speaking course than students of control group. Finally, the study found that there was a positive improvement of using shadowing technique in speaking skill in terms of the four dimensions including fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar; thereby this research suggested that shadowing technique should be widely implemented in teaching and learning English to improve students' speaking performance.

Index terms: improving, shadowing technique, speaking skill, students, Thainguyn

I. INTRODUCTION

It is undeniable that English has become the international language which can be used as a tool to communicate all over the world. In English language learning, speaking plays an important role in acquiring knowledge and skills because speaking is the ability to express ideas, convey thoughts and feelings... However, the researcher stated that it is very complicated since it includes many aspects such as grammar, pronunciation, fluency and vocabulary. According to Kayi (2006), speaking is the productive ability in the oral form; therefore, the goal of speaking skill instruction is to improve the students' speaking abilities and communicative competence.

There are some ways to improve English speaking skill and one of them is shadowing technique which gains a lot of attention in teaching English as a foreign language. Listening and speaking cannot be separated from shadowing because it covers all the real-life situations, and everyone can apply it in learning English.

The curriculum of Thainguyn University of Medicine and Pharmacy includes English as a required subject. However, a lot of students had troubles in learning English, particularly speaking skill. They frequently felt self-conscious and unnatural when speaking in front of the teacher and the whole class. Additionally, they lacked the knowledge necessary to apply various transactional and interactional terms in various contexts. Some of them were hesitated in speaking and exchanging information. Some others said that they lacked the vocabulary necessary to communicate what they wanted to convey. To address the aforementioned issues, new approaches must be used

to help students generate their own learning by involving them in a variety of activities that match their interests, physical and psychological development.

Therefore, shadowing is supposed to address the problem. Everyone can use the shadowing approach to learn English because it is so straightforward. According to Karasawa (2010: 209), shadowing is a common technique for teaching interpreters. It involves practicing listening to a voice and, as much as possible without pausing, following the sound like a shadow. Besides, Shiota (2012: 78) claims that one of the training methods utilized to enhance interpreting abilities is shadowing which is becoming as a popular training method. Hence, the researcher hypothesized that shadowing would benefit the students in learning speaking process. To facilitate the study, the study was conducted to find out if there were the improvements of the students' speaking skill by using shadowing.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Shadowing techniques

As "shadowing" calls for both listening and speaking proficiency, the shadowing technique, which was first developed in Europe as a training method for simultaneous interpreting, has attracted the attention of language educators looking to enhance learners' listening and speaking abilities (He et al., 2021). In the 1970s, Japan was the country where it was first widely applied. It took twenty years for it to be pedagogically adopted in the area of language teaching, and just lately second and foreign language educators have become interested in it.

Shadowing is an active and highly cognitive behavior in which students follow the spoken word and attempt to pronounce it as clearly as possible at the same time as they hear it, according to Tamai (1997). According to this justification, shadowing forces students to listen and repeat the speech while tracking it.

According to Casillas (2020), "shadowing" is a listening activity in which students follow spoken words and accurately repeat them while paying close attention to what is being said.

In short, shadowing is a classroom activity paradigm that helps students accustomed to this speed of native speeches so their skills can be improved.

2.2. Steps of shadowing technique

The following table 1 lists the 10 steps involved in using the shadowing approach, according to Hayakawa as reported in Sugiarto et al. (2020).

Num.	Steps
1	Listening and understanding the given audio
2	Listening and viewing the script of the audio and marking the pronunciation aspects
3	Listening while attempting to shadow the soundtrack at a low volume
4	Viewing the audio's script to understand those parts you don't understand yet
5	Looking up the definitions of challenging words or phrases in dictionaries
6	Attempting to shadow the audio by pronouncing every word as closely as possible to the audio
7	Smoothly shadowing and having a good comprehension of the audio's substance
8	Recording the shadowing process
9	Listening to the recording and checking
10	Reviewing the error parts and making improvements

2.3. Speaking skill and its components

According to Widdowson (1978), speaking has two distinct meanings. It first refers to the way that language is expressed. Second, it describes how language is used to achieve communication (p. 58).

Some linguists define speaking ability as the capacity to use a language in oral communication based on the viewpoint that a language is a tool of communication among people. According to David Nunan (1999), it relates to the capacity for language use, which is typically defined in terms of speaking the target language. Speaking implies telling someone about one's thoughts and when someone is speaking in a conversation, the other person will listen to them and then switch roles. Speaking is also referred to as a social skill because

it involves communication between multiple persons who send and receive messages from one another.

According to Byrne (1984), speaking is an oral form of communication. It involves both the productive and reactive abilities of understanding and is a two-way process between speaker and listener. Based on this concept, it is clear that speech allows a person to explain himself and help understand each other.

Speech must be used to learn a basic language because it is the primary mode of communication. Knowing how to understand speech makes it vital to also understand how to talk. For instance, a student learning to speak in class is developing skills vertically in addition to horizontally. It suggests that while they are capable of fully expressing their ideas and messages, their word choices are not always accurate, which results in poorly constructed meanings.

Brown (2001) comprised some aspects of speaking such as pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, accent, and grammar, should be practised to speak better. Therefore, the standards for judging speaking ability can include these criteria.

2.3.1. Fluency

Fluency, as defined by Mary, Spratt and colleagues (2005:34), is the ability to speak without hesitating, repeating oneself, or using connected speech with ease. It addresses the degree of comfort and ease with which students talk, as well as the frequency of large pauses and gaps in their speech.

2.3.2. Accuracy

Accuracy in speaking is the use of correct form of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

One fundamental aspect of learning a language, particularly when speaking, is pronunciation. It has to do with how to pronounce, explain, absorb, emphasize, and stress words. Pronunciation errors may impede communication and hinder our ability to make meaningful statements.

Vocabulary is the base of a language. A meaningful remark or sentence must employ the right language to convey its meaning. In other words, understanding vocabulary is a prerequisite for students who wish to have good speaking abilities.

Nunan (2003:154) claims that grammar is typically seen as a system of rules that define the proper word order at the sentence level. If there are numerous grammatical errors in our communication, it will be difficult for your views to be understood. Students who study grammatical rules will undoubtedly talk more clearly. These three components are crucial for achieving accuracy in the endeavor to have good speech.

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2.3.3. Accent

Language accent of one speaker is different from each other. In other words, each person has a unique way of expressing themselves based on their cultural background.

In short, these criteria were used to evaluate the research participants' speaking abilities. However, some of these criteria were used, such as pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary, based on the evaluation from English modules at the institution.

2.4. Effectiveness of using shadowing

The practice of shadowing has several benefits as an English method.

Although acknowledging that its application in training was debatable, Lambert recommended shadowing as an effective technique in the early phases of interpretation training at the beginning of the 1990s. It was not until this decade that shadowing caught the attention of language teachers and was implemented in the teaching of foreign languages.

Suzuki (2007) found that employing the shadowing strategy enhanced students' capacity for listening comprehension. This agrees with what Chung (2010) found.

The results of several studies (Hamada, 2018; Yahya, 2021) demonstrate that using shadowing techniques enhances students' speaking ability.

The findings in the research of Ulfa and Fatimah, 2019 showed that the shadowing technique was effective in improving students' English pronunciation skills.

In short, these show that shadowing has a lot of positive effects on English skills and thus has a high potential of enhancing and improving students' speaking skills in particular.

Based on the findings above, the study investigated that students were able to improve speaking skills for students at Thainguayen University of Medicine and Pharmacy.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research questions

To achieve the aim of the study, some questions are addressed:

- What is the effectiveness of using shadowing on improving the students' speaking skill?
- Are there statistical differences in using shadowing on improving students' speaking skill according to the four dimensions between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group?
- Are there statistical differences in using shadowing on improving students' speaking skill according to the four dimensions between the pre-test and post-test of the control group?
- Are there statistical differences in using shadowing on improving students' speaking skill between the post tests of both the control group and experimental group?

3.2. Descriptions of variable

The study contains the following variables:

- Independent variable: group variable in experimental group and control group.
- Dependent variable: the total of the grades for the post-test after using shadowing in teaching speaking.

3.3. Research design and its sample

The study employed an experimental research design to compare the result. This method will indeed require two groups that are actually experimental and control groups.

Sixty students were specifically chosen for the study at Thai Nguyen University of Medicine and Pharmacy based on their needs and goals for speaking improvement. They were split into two groups: the experimental group, which received shadowing instruction to improve their speaking abilities, and the control group, which received conventional instruction. There were 30 students in each group.

3.4. Data collection Instrument

The researcher designed a pre-test and a post-test for speaking based on the given topics they have been learning in the curriculum. The pre-test was applied before using shadowing and the post-test was utilized after using shadowing technique. The students in the group received intensive training of listening, pronouncing, correcting each other's mistakes and giving some suggestions to improve speaking in terms of pronunciation, fluency, grammar and vocabulary via speaking topics using shadowing to learn speaking skill. The researcher's job as a teacher was to administrate the whole work including correcting, commenting and giving for presenting ideas in a better way.

To calculate the data, the researcher used scale to measure the students' speaking skills. In this experiment, the five level rating scales proposed by David P. Harris (1969) were employed. However, to suit the context of teaching and the needs of taking Cambridge-Preliminary English Exam, the rating scale was adapted as follows:

Table 1: The rating scale

Scores	Pronunciation	Grammar	Vocabulary	Fluency
5	Has few traces of foreign accent	Makes few (if any) noticeable errors of grammar or word order	Use of vocabulary and idioms is virtually that of a native speaker	Speech as fluent and effortless as that of a native speaker

4	Be intelligible, though one is conscious of a definite accent	Occasionally makes grammatical and word order errors which do not, however, obscure meaning	Sometimes uses inappropriate terms and/ or must rephrase ideas because of lexical inadequacies	Speed of speech seems to be slightly affected by language problems
3	Pronunciation problems necessitate concentrated listening and occasionally lead to misunderstanding	Makes frequent errors of grammar and word order which occasionally obscure meaning	Frequently uses the wrong words; conversation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary	Speed and fluency are rather strongly affected by language problems
2	Very hard to understand because of pronunciation problems. Must frequently be asked to repeat	Grammar and word order errors make comprehension difficult. Must often rephrase sentences and/ or restrict to basic patterns	Misuse of words and very limited vocabulary make comprehension quite difficult.	Usually hesitant often forced into silence by language limitations
1	Pronunciation problems so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible	Errors in grammar and word order so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible	Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make conversation virtually impossible	Speech is very halting and fragmentary as to make conversation virtually impossible

The score of the speaking test was measured according to the scale and then it was doubled to get the final score of the test.

3.5. Study design

The researcher used two groups, the experiment group and control group, symbolized as followed:

G1: O1 X O2
 G2: O1 --- O2

G1 stands for group 1: the experiment group while G2 stands or group 2: the control group. X represents the treatment using shadowing; O1 is the pre-test and O2 is the post-test.

3.6. Statistical Analysis

To answer the questions of the study, the statistical measures were used:

- Pair sample T-tests were to check the impact of the treatment.
- Correlation coefficients were to find out the significant correlation between the pre-test and the post-test.

3.7. Validity and Reliability

Pertaining to pursuing a high degree of content validity, the writer administered tests in relation to measure the students' speaking achievements. Chronpach Alpha was used to test the reliability of control and experimental test. The correlation was calculated for each of the four dimensions before and after applying the tool and the total score of the exam. It was found that there was a significant correlation between the pre-test and the post-test as shown in the table below.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients Distributed by the four dimensions before and after applying the tool.

Correlation	Number	Description
0.735	60	Pre-test fluency & Post-test fluency
0.689	60	Pre-test pronunciation & Post-test pronunciation
0.852	60	Pre-test vocabulary & Post-test vocabulary

0.787	60	Pre-test grammar & Post-test grammar
0.821	60	Pre-test total average & Post-test total average

The correlation coefficient is used to affirm the correlation between two variables. The data showed that there was a high correlation between the pre-test and the pos-test at 0.821. Of the four dimensions, the highest correlation was at 0.852 in terms of vocabulary characteristics while the lowest was 0.689 in the pronunciation description. These findings confirmed that there was a high rate in the content validity of the test.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Respondents' profiles

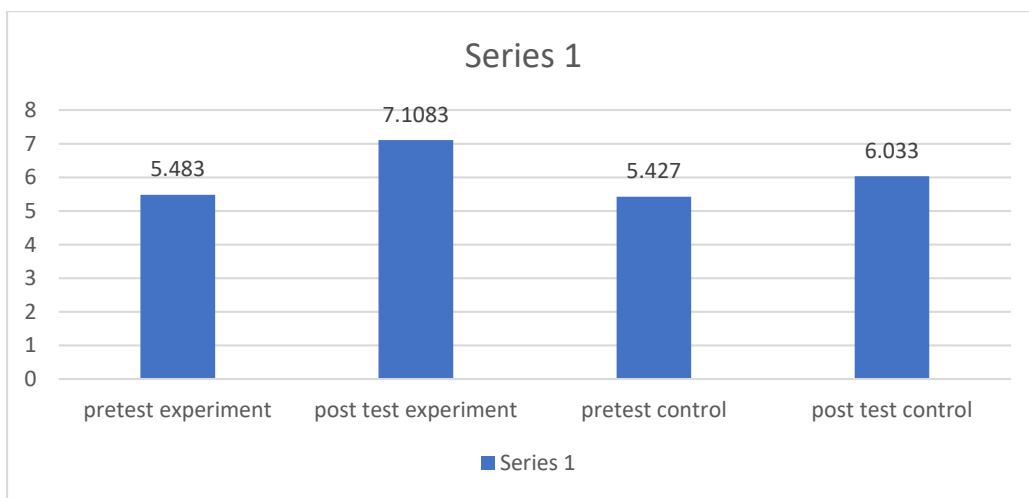
Sixty students aging from 21 to 23 years old and consisting of 46 females and 14 males were divided in two groups, of which thirty ones were collected to learn speaking skill through shadowing to get the data of the study and the rest of the students were taught speaking in a traditional way. All of them were the students studying Pharmacy, Medicine and Nursing programs in classes which were administered as practical teaching by the researcher at TUMP. Through talking and discussing with them during some first lessons of the term, they confessed that of all the four skills, they found speaking the most difficult and they wanted to join the group to improve their English, especially speaking skill. Most of them wanted to learn English to improve their speaking skills to enhance their learning outcome at university and they wanted to get B1 certificate in English when they graduate. Therefore, they joined the course learning speaking for free. The research worked as a teacher to support them during the course after five weeks of learning speaking through shadowing, they were each required to take a speaking test to explore how this technique improved their speaking skill.

4.2. Results

4.2.1. What is the effect of using shadowing technique on improving students' speaking skill?

To find out the effect of using shadowing on improving students' speaking skill, the average grades for every student were used to get the result as presented in Table 1:

Figure 1: The total average of the Pre-test and the Post-test Grades distributed by the experimental group



To answer the main question of the study which is related to the effectiveness of using shadowing technique on improving speaking skill, it can be seen clearly that there was an relatively equal average in the pre-test between the control group at 5.42 and the experimental group at 5.48; however, Figure 1 indicated that the total average of the post-test was higher than the pre-test in the experimental group and the total average of the pre- test and post-test of the experimental group was also higher than the one of the control group, by the mean grades at 7.11 compared with 6.03. It means that the students had better performances in the experimental group after learning speaking through shadowing.

Compared with the total average results in the control group, it can also be illustrated clearly that the average of post-test in the

experimental group was also higher than the result of post-test in the control group. This finding indicated that the use shadowing technique had a positive effect on students' speaking skill. This progress could also mean that the students participated, cooperated through activities of shadowing, which had better results in their speaking performance than students sitting in rows in class and learning in the traditional way.

Besides, to investigate the effectiveness of using shadowing on improving students' speaking skills, statistical differences in using shadowing on improving students' speaking skill according to the dimensions and the total of average between pre-test and post-test of the experimental group were also found. The results were illustrated in question 2.

4.2.2. Are there statistical differences in using shadowing on improving students' speaking skill according to the four dimensions between the pre test and post test of the experimental group?

Pair sample T-test was utilized to investigate the significances of differences according to the four dimensions and the total average grade for the tool of the study by measuring the mean of the students' grades on the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group. The result was illustrated in table 3 below.

Table 3: Paired Sample T-test of the students' grade mean on the Pre-test and the Post-test of the experimental group according to the dimensions and the total average

Sig. (2-tailed)	T	Degrees of freedom	Standard Deviation	Mean	Exam
0.000	-5.074	58	1.299	5.33	Pre-test fluency
			1.285	7.07	Post-test fluency
0.000	-5.353	58	1.205	5.60	Pre-test pronunciation
			1.329	7.33	Post-test pronunciation
0.000	-3.823	58	1.403	5.63	Pre-test vocabulary
			1.486	7.13	Post-test vocabulary
0.002	-3.201	58	1.206	5.57	Pre-test grammar
			1.276	6.6	Post-test grammar
0.000	-4.483	58	1.290	5.50	Pre-test total average
			1.286	7.04	Post-test total average

The above table showed that there were statically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the effectiveness of using shadowing on improving students' speaking skills according to the four dimensions and the total average between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group. Testing this question showed that using shadowing for improving students' speaking skill of the experimental group had a positive result on the achievement of the students in favour of the post- test grades according to the four dimensions and the total average. This result indicated that there was a great effect of using shadowing on improving the students' speaking skill.

It means that the students made a big progress in terms of pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary and grammar after learning speaking through shadowing because the results in terms of pronunciation, fluency and vocabulary scores were higher in the post test compared with the pre-test scores in this group. In detail, the mean values in terms of pronunciation and vocabulary ranged from 7.13 to 7.33 were

higher than the ones of fluency and grammar. It means that by using shadowing, students can made bigger progress in learning pronunciation and vocabulary according to the given topics using shadowing. The exercises about pronunciation and vocabulary could help them remember and recall it in related topics.

4.2.3. Are there statistical differences in using shadowing on improving students’ speaking skill according to the four dimensions between the pre-test and post-test of the control group?

Paired Sample t-test was used to figure out the significance of the differences of means of the three dimensions and the total average grade for using shadowing learning in improving the student’s speaking skill by measuring the means of students’ grades in the pre-test and post-test of the control group. The results are illustrated in the following table.

Table 4: Paired Sample T-test of the students’ grade mean on the Pre-test and the Post-test of the control group according to the dimensions and the total average

Sig. (2-tailed)	T	Degrees of freedom	Standard Deviation	Mean	Exam
0.533	-0.644	58	1.233	5.37	Pre-test fluency
			1.186	5.60	Post-test fluency
0.583	-0.543	58	1.224	5.50	Pre-test pronunciation
			1.144	5.77	Post-test pronunciation
0.080	-1.777	58	1.224	5.40	Pre-test vocabulary
			1.368	6.10	Post-test vocabulary
0.111	-1.567	58	1.323	5.43	Pre-test grammar
			1.302	5.97	Post-test grammar
0.288	-1.191	58	1.195	5.43	Pre-test total average
			1.190	5.89	Post-test total average

The table showed that there were no statically significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in learning speaking skills in terms of the four dimensions and the total average between the pre-test and the post-test of the control group.

The data showed that there was a little progress in the results of the students in the control group in comparison with the results of the students in the experimental group. The mean scores of grammar and vocabulary ranging from 5.97 t to 6.10 were higher than the mean scores in the category of fluency and pronunciation ranging between 5.60 and 5.77. It referred that the students emphasized more on accuracy than on fluency when learning speaking in the traditional way. However, there were no statically significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in values collected from the data.

4.2.4. Are there statistical differences in using shadowing on improving students’ speaking skill between the post tests of both the control group and experimental group?

To find out the significance of the mean differences of both post-tests in using shadowing on improving students’ speaking skills with regard to the control group and the experimental group of the total average grade and the four categories. Table 5 was used to display the results of the post-test of the students of the experimental group and the students of the control group.

Table 5: (independent T-test) the mean of the post-test due to the Control and the Experiment Group

Significance*	(t)	Control group		Experimental group		Total average
		Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	

0.000	5.467	1.196	5.53	1.299	7.03	Post-test fluency
0.000	5.932	1.149	5.70	1.299	7.37	Post-test pronunciation
0.005	3.023	1.388	6.07	1.497	7.03	Post-test vocabulary
0.039	2.163	1.202	5.93	1.276	6.60	Post-test grammar
0.000	4.214	1.195	5.81	1.299	7.01	Post-test total average

The data showed that there were statically differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the post-tests of the two groups according to the average value. The results from the dimensions also displayed that there was a positive effect on the achievement of speaking performance in the experimental group in comparison with the control group.

It can be referred that the students made higher improvement after learning speaking though shadowing in the four criteria of the speaking test compared with the results of the post-test in the control group. It seems that learning though communicative approach is more effective for students than learning in traditional way, especially in learning speaking. Shadowing could bring an interactive and motivating environment for students to encourage them use English in communicative way and the shadowing activities could help students know how to develop their speaking performance after a period of practicing. The results of the study agreed with the findings of Hamada, 2018 and Yahya, 2021 about enhancing speaking skills by using shadowing technique.

V. CONCLUSION

The conducted study examined the effect of using shadowing on improving speaking skill for the students at Thainguayen University of Medicine and Pharmacy. The results of the study shed some light on concerning issues using communicative approach to enhance interaction and collaboration in learning in general and learning speaking skill in particular. In details, the study showed that there were effective and obvious effects in using shadowing on improving speaking skill for students in terms of fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar characteristics. The main results can be summarized as followed:

- There was an obvious effect of using shadowing on improving the students' speaking performance.
- There were statistical differences in using shadowing on students' speaking skill between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group.
- There were no statistical differences in using traditional way on students' speaking skill of the control group.
- There were correlation coefficients between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group.

Accordingly, the following points are suggested and recommended as followed:

Firstly, teachers should set the specific time allowed for activities using shadowing to avoid time consume. In addition, they should choose engaging topics that are close to students' everyday life to enhance motivation and encouragement for them to speak. They should also explain to the students the criteria which are using for assessing their speaking. Last but not least, they should give the deadline so that students can concentrate and spend time to complete the task.

Besides, students should not worry too much about the mistakes in speaking because mistakes are inevitable and they can learn from these mistakes. In plus, they should listen more because listening is considered as a vital key for pronunciation and fluency in speaking. Moreover, they should cooperate with each other so that they could get benefits from others' ideas or mistakes in an enthusiastic way through shadowing technique.

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