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Impacts of Text Shadowing in Developing EFL Young Learners' Speaking Skills

¹Nguyen Tien Phung  and ²Vo Thi Kim Ngan

¹ Office of Undergraduate Training, Quy Nhon University, Quy Nhon City, Vietnam

² Cat Tuong Secondary School, Phu Cat Town, Binh Dinh Province, Vietnam

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the impacts of Text Shadowing technique in developing the English speaking skills of young learners. To pursuit the aim, the research employed a quasi-experimental method with the participation of seventy-eight Grade 2 pupils who were divided into an intervention group and a non-intervention group. The data analysis indicates improvements in speaking performance among both groups after eight weeks of intervention. Particularly, the intervention group achieved higher improvement than the non-intervention in terms of memorizing the initial letter sounds, clearly pronouncing words and having better intonation. Besides, the majority of the participants in the intervention group held positive attitudes toward learning and improving their pronunciation and fluency by Text Shadowing technique. Most of them found interest and confidence in learning and speaking English. The article ends with a suggestion that further studies should consider a larger sample size to obtain a better picture of the reality of the effect of Text Shadowing technique on speaking skills.

Keywords: text shadowing, young learners, primary school students, speaking skills, EFL

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¹Correspondence author: Nguyen Tien Phung

Email: nguyentienphung@qnu.edu.com

1. Introduction

Speaking is considered to be one of the most challenging skill facing learners of English, especially young ones. Young learners often fail to pronounce each word correctly and remember the whole sentences or structures. Moreover, when they are individually asked to answer the previously learned structures aloud in front of the class, some of their voices are too faint to be heard or they cannot answer the questions. Only few individuals have the courage to answer aloud voluntarily. These facts suggest that many young learners might believe that they do not have the aptitude to learn English, and therefore they lack confidence in speaking English (Lin, 2009).

Several attempts have been made to improve the primary school students' speaking ability and to empower their confidence according to students' needs and context, one of which is the use of Shadowing

and Text Shadowing (Anis, 2021; Ekayati, 2020; Hamada, 2012, 2014; Hamzar, 2015; Hsieh et al., 2013; Leonisa, 2020; Wahdini, 2015; Win, 2020). Text Shadowing is a variant of shadowing technique by providing listeners or shadowers with a written text to immediately repeat or simultaneously imitate what is heard. The main difference between Text Shadowing and Shadowing is that the former has text while the latter does not. In these previous studies, Shadowing rather than Text Shadowing was used to improve college or high school students' pronunciation, listening, speaking or reading abilities because these learners had gained a certain proficiency level so that they might not face too many difficulties when doing shadowing.

Particularly, with regards to deploying Shadowing to enhance speaking skills, Hsieh et al. (2013) discovered that self-studying and practicing shadowing with My English Tutor (MyET) enhanced word pronunciation, fluency, and intonation. The findings of Hsieh et al. (2013) were further supported by later studies conducted by Hamzar's (2015), Leonisa (2020) and Win (2020). Whereas Hamzar's (2015) found that the use of shadowing approach increased students' speaking ability in terms of accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility, and shadowing technique inspired students to speak English, Leonisa (2020) stressed shadowing as an effective technique to support students' pronunciation at the tenth-grade students of SMAN 1 Jetis Ponorogo, and Win (2020) claimed that shadowing is a good strategy for teaching speaking skills because it helps students recognize stress patterns in speaking.

In the context of Vietnam, a couple of studies have been conducted to investigate the effects of shadowing on foreign language learning. In an investigation into the use of shadowing technique in listening lessons to improve the pronunciation, Mai (2016) deployed two tests, a questionnaire, interviews to collect data about the non-English major students' and teachers' attitudes and the efficacy of using shadowing technique in teaching and learning pronunciation. She found that the technique could greatly improve the student's pronunciation in English and this technique is highly evaluated by both teachers and students. In line with these findings, Tran (2021) indicates that students' memory, pronunciation, vocabulary, and awareness of growing their word banks, as well as their pronunciation skills and vocabulary practice are all improved by shadowing on BBC Six-Minute English. Luu and Do (2023) discovered that speaking plus shadowing improved speaking abilities. All of these studies in Vietnam have been conducted on students at universities. In fact, no empirical research has been conducted so far on EFL primary school learners to examine the effects of Text Shadowing in developing their speaking skills in Vietnam.

The overall aim of this study is to investigate the impacts of using Text Shadowing in developing EFL young learners' speaking skills at a primary school in Binh Dinh province. To achieve its aim, it seeks to answer two research questions:

1. *What are the effects of using Text Shadowing technique in developing EFL primary school students' speaking skills?*

2. What are students' attitudes towards teachers' use of Text Shadowing in developing speaking skills?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Speaking and teaching speaking

Speaking is a process that involves constructing meaning that includes producing, receiving, and processing information (Burns & Joyce, 1997). Speaking in a classroom involves the interaction between teachers and students or among students that is dependent on the manner in which classroom activities are conducted. Speaking abilities are typically associated with listening abilities. Listening and speaking are complementary and reciprocal, however, they utilize different mental processes (Nunan, 2010). In most conversations, we do not simply listen or speak; we observe and communicate. Speaking or oral communication involves the two processes of speaker and listener involving productive and receptive skills (Byrne, 1984). We can define speaking as a process of combining sounds in a recognized and systematic way, according to language-specific principles, to form meaningful utterances (Cornbleet & Carter, 2001).

Brown and Abeywickrama (2004) proposed five basic types of speaking namely Imitative, Intensive, Responsive, Interactive, and Extensive : (i) *Imitative*, the most basic type of speaking taught to beginners, includes imitation of a word or phrase or sentence ; (ii) *Intensive* focuses on the use of prosodic elements such as intonation, stress, and rhythm ; (iii) *Responsive* concerns how to respond effectively in limited-length conversations ; (iv) *Interactive* concentrates on a longer conversation in which both speakers and listeners exchange information ; (v) *Extensive* often involves interacting with a listener who is not present in an overt manner.

Speaking is a complicated skill because it involves components of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and comprehension (Harmer, 2007). Grammar is a set of rules that describe the way we speak a language. The goal of grammar is also to learn how to acquire expertise in language in both spoken and written forms. As a result, grammar is necessary for students to construct a proper sentence in conversation. Vocabulary is the appropriate diction employed in conversations. Without a comprehensive vocabulary, people cannot communicate effectively or express their ideas in both written and oral forms. Pronunciation is the process of producing clear language when speaking. It concerns the phonological process that involves the components of grammar that consists of the elements and principles that determine how sounds vary and pattern in a language. Fluency is the ability to speak fluently and accurately. A speaker who has achieved fluency speaks quickly with few pauses and no “ums” or “ers”. These signs indicate that the speaker does not need to search for words, which makes their message clearer. Finally, comprehension is an act of power that improves people's understanding, and can be tested through testing. The study focuses on using Text Shadowing technique to develop students' pronunciation and fluency in speech patterns.

Developing speaking skills requires more careful consideration and further discussion among teachers of young learners to find guidelines that will keep students engaged and interested in learning a foreign

language. Learning to communicate in a foreign language is a process of complicated activities of language learning. For young learners, starting to learn a foreign language is like starting to learn your native language. They need more time to listen to foreign languages in class, and they should also have more opportunities to repeat some of the words they hear.

Slattery and Willis (2001) believe that repetition prepares children for meaningful communication by helping them get used to speaking language, allowing them to practice intonation patterns, and enabling them to gain confidence, especially when teachers give lots of praise. Accordingly, it is suggested for teacher of young learners to open chances and more time for them to listen words, utterances, set of phrases as a process of improving their speaking skill. As young learners are like sponges and take in what we say and how we say it, teaching them is actually not as hard as we think. Teachers' ability to pronounce words, phrases, and sentences correctly is crucial since young students will mimic precisely what they hear. It's thought that early lessons learnt by young students are hard to undo later. The instructor is able to implement the rules, to apply them gradually and consistently through ongoing revision and recycling. The laid-back and upbeat environment in young learners' classrooms is also something that teachers should take care of, as it plays a critical role in helping students achieve their best outcomes. A wide range of activities, including as conversations, songs, poetry, rhymes, choral review, and chants, can be used to improve students' pronunciation and speaking skills. When educators work with younger students and include the aforementioned tools into their lessons, they should focus more on the learners' engagement as a means of learning (Arifin, 2018).

2.2. Shadowing

Considered as one of twelve teaching methods used in the initial stages of interpreting programs, Shadowing has been used to improve foreign language skills for many years (Lambert, 1992). Shadowing is an auditory tracking task that involves the verbal repetition of a message presented through headphones (Lambert, 1992). This includes saying the words exactly as they are heard, in the same language, like a parrot. Hamada (2009) further stated shadowing as *"the act or task of listening in which learners track heard speech and vocalize it as clearly as possible, while listening attentively to the incoming information"* (p.1).

Shadowing can be classified into three types, namely phonemic, lag-adjusted, and phrase-shadowing (Lambert, 1992). Phonemic shadowing is the practice of repeating the exact words that were spoken immediately following the speaker to facilitate the shadower's comfort while hearing the target language, then improve their pronunciation as well as fluency, and finally have near-native intonation and stress patterns. Adjustment lag shadowing is a technique in which shadowers are asked to stay the required number of words behind the speakers. The longer lag shadowers shadow, the more likely they can memorize content information at the end of the exercise. This method is considered as one of the most effective ways

to increase short-term memory capacity. Phrase shadowing refers to the need for shadowers to maintain a lag time so they can identify an idea, phrase or chunk. This practice helps train people in how to listen and absorb information at the same time because it requires them to repeat after a meaningful unit. Generally, phonemic shadowing is best suited for beginners, adjustment lag shadowing can be used by intermediate learners, and phrase shadowing should only be attempted by advanced learners.

Text Shadowing is a sub-type of shadowing by offering written text for listeners or shadowers to repeat immediately and/or imitate simultaneously what they hear. Three other terms that have the same or similar meaning as Text Shadowing are shadow reading, synchronized reading and simultaneous shadowing. Shadow reading is where “*students read the text aloud, in a relatively soft voice, at exactly the same time as the voice on the tape*” (Ricard, 1986, p. 247). Synchronized reading is where “*listeners shadow the audio, reading aloud the script, simulating every sound and intonation*” (Hamada, 2012, p. 5). Simultaneous shadowing or Text Shadowing involves language learners listening to and reading text simultaneously in order to read out what they hear (Hamada, 2012). Because text/simultaneous shadowing provides learners with written text, which creates an auditory context for them to match words and sounds, it is expected to help students better understand the contents of a text as well as their own pronunciation and vocabulary use.

Shadowing and Text Shadowing have proven to be effective in enhancing foreign language skills, such as reading comprehension (Wahdini, 2015), listening comprehension (Chen, 2006; Hamada, 2014; Lin, 2009; Mai, 2016), oral fluency (Hamzar, 2015; Hsieh et al., 2013; Leonisa, 2020; Lin, 2009; Luu & Do, 2023; Murphey, 2001; Tran, 2021; Win, 2020), and pronunciation abilities (Anis, 2021; Cheng, 2010; Lin, 2009).

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

The study follows a quasi-experimental research design with the pre-test and post-test. The study involves two groups of participants labelled the intervention and non-intervention group, consisting of 78 students from four intact classes who studied English for two years. Both quantitative approach and qualitative approach were employed to answer the research questions. The intervention of the study lasted for 8 weeks. During the intervention, both groups received traditional face-to-face instruction of English from Unit 8 to Unit 10 of the course book (i-Learn Smart Start Grade 2).

The study consisted of three phases. Phase 1 lasted for two weeks before the intervention. Phase 2 was where the actual intervention took place, lasting for 8 weeks. Phase 3 followed after the intervention. In Phase 1, participants were randomly assigned to either the intervention group or the non-intervention group. The Read Aloud and Interaction Test was administered with two experienced EFL teachers assessing the results to measure the speaking skills of the participants. In Phase 2, the intervention lasted eight weeks,

corresponding to the teaching time of the textbook units. Students from the intervention group learned sentence patterns or structures through Text Shadowing. In phase 3, a post-test was conducted on the intervention group and the non-intervention group to measure their oral English ability. Afterwards, a questionnaire was conducted for the intervention group to investigate their attitudes on the use of Text Shadowing in developing their oral language skills. Finally, six participants of the intervention group had an interview with the researcher to provide the researcher with more in-depth information about the impacts of the intervention on their speaking development.

3.2. Data collection

The data for analysis in this study was gained through the employment of three research instruments, including two speaking tests, questionnaire and interview.

The Read Aloud and Interaction Test was deployed to assess participants' speaking performance before and after the study. The test had 10 parts including 7 ones for Read Aloud part and 3 ones for Answer The Questions part. Besides, the total score of the test was 20.00, 10.00 for Pronunciation and 10.00 for Fluency. For each error, participants were subtracted 1 point. The content of the pre-speaking test and post-speaking test was the sentences or patterns of Units 8, 9 and 10 that students have learned from the course book.

The questionnaire was administered to the participants in the intervention group. It was used to find out the students' attitude toward using the Text Shadowing technique in improving speaking performance, the learning motivation, the sentence patterns and the practice time for using this technique to learn to speak English. The questionnaire consists of two main parts. The first part of the questionnaire was about general information of the participants such as their full name, their gender, their age, their email and how long they have spent for studying English. The second part of the questionnaire was based on a 5-point Likert scale with a hope to have the unity with the previous section of learning strategies. In particular, items 6, 7, 8 and 9 were asked about their opinions on the attitude to the effectiveness of Text Shadowing in learning pronunciation. Items 10 and 11 focused on the participants' attitude in using Text Shadowing in improving fluency. Items 12, 13 and 14 focused on the views of the students about the learning motivation and suitability of the practice context. Items 15 and 16 focused on the duration of practice time.

The semi-structured interviews was conducted to provide the researcher a deeper insight into the entire process of the students' learning via Text Shadowing as well as students' experience and perception of using this technique in learning speaking English. Six out of 39 students in the intervention group were selected for interview. The six students were two students achieving the highest scores, two the average and two the lowest in the post-speaking test. The participants were expected to comment on what they found useful or least useful with Text Shadowing technique, what they liked or disliked about the technique, what challenges they encountered while using this technique and suggested how to improve speaking performance with Text Shadowing to get better achievements.

3.3. Data analysis

SPSS version 20 was employed for analysis of the data collected from two speaking tests. With regard to the data from the questionnaire, the statistical analysis results of each question were summarized and read through graphs in order to provide a comprehensive view of how the subjects of the study responded. In term of the data from the interviews, first they were recorded, then transcribed and analysed thematically to reach interpretation for answering to the research questions.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Effects of using Text Shadowing in developing EFL primary school students' speaking skills

4.1.1. Students' speaking performance between two groups before the intervention

Table 1 showed that in the pre-test, the mean score of the non-intervention group ($M=12.698$) was a little bit higher than the mean score of the intervention group ($M=12.646$). This means that the difference in the students' speaking performance in the pre-test between the two groups was not statistically significant. The two groups were distributed homogenously before the intervention.

Table 1. Students' speaking performance between the two groups before intervention

	Group	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Pre-test	Intervention	10,0	16,0	12,646	0,8487	39
	Non-intervention	10,0	16,0	12,698	0,8294	39

4.1.2. Students' speaking performance between two groups after the intervention

It is indicated from Table 2 that there are differences of means in the pre-test and post-test ($M_{pre}=12.698$, $SD=0.8294$; $M_{post}=14.472$, $SD=0.9588$). The mean score of the post-test was higher than that of the pre-test. It can be concluded that after eight weeks of intervention, students' speaking performance of non-intervention group has improved.

Table 2. Mean difference of students' speaking performance within non-intervention group

Group	Tests	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Non-intervention	Pre-test	39	10,0	16,0	12,698	0,8294
	Post-test	39	11,0	18,2	14,472	0,9588

Similarly, there are also remarkable differences in students' speaking performance of intervention group as demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Mean difference of students' speaking performance within intervention group

Group	Tests	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intervention	Pre-test	39	10,0	16,0	12,646	0,8487
	Post-test	39	12,0	19,2	15,394	1,0225

To evaluate students' speaking performance between the two groups after the intervention, the Descriptive Statistic Test and the Paired-Samples T Test were carried out. First, the results of the Descriptive Statistic Test are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Mean Difference (the gain score) between Intervention and Non-intervention Group

Group	Pre-test	Post-test	Differences
Non-intervention group	12,698	14,472	1,774
Intervention group	12,646	15,394	2,748

Table 4 revealed that the students' speaking performance between the two groups was different after the intervention. After eight weeks of intervention, the gain score of the post-test of both groups has highly improved (Mpost=14.472 for the non-intervention group, Mpost=15.394 for the intervention group), but the gain score of the students' speaking performance of the intervention group is higher than the non-intervention one (15.394>14.472). Two groups' speaking performance performed a noticeably small gap (non-intervention group M=12.698; intervention group M=12.646) at pre-test. This result was quite reasonable since participants from both groups experienced nearly similar language competence. While the post-test showed a surged trend in both groups' speaking performance mean score, it could not be denied that post-test result of non-intervention group (M=14.472) was a quite lower than intervention one's (M=15.394).

Subsequently, the result of the Paired-Samples T Test in Table 5 indicated that the sig. value of 2-tailed 0.00 is smaller than 0.05, which means that H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the two groups after the intervention.

Table 5. The Results of the Paired-Samples T Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-speaking test - Post-speaking test	-1,1308	,4157	,0471	-1,2245	-1,0370	-24,024	77	,000

It is clearly seen that there was significant difference about the level of speaking performance between the two groups after the intervention. It can be concluded that there was a significant difference in students'

speaking performance taught using Text Shadowing technique and students' speaking performance not being taught using it. Specifically, it is obvious that students can memorize the initial letter sounds, pronounce words more clearly and have better intonation. In other words, the Text Shadowing technique was effective on students' speaking skills improvement. The results resonate with previous studies' findings (Anis, 2021; Hsieh et al., 2013; Luu & Do, 2023; Win, 2020) in terms of improving students' speaking performance after trying out the shadowing technique.

4.2. Students' attitudes towards teachers' use of Text Shadowing in developing speaking skills

4.2.1. Text Shadowing in improving pronunciation

The majority of the participants thought that the practice during the research helped them have better pronunciation (132 out of 156 of the respondents' answer claimed "Strongly Agree" and "Agree"). In details, for Question 6, 35 respondents strongly agreed and agreed that Text Shadowing helped them easily remember the initial letter sounds while there were only 4 of the respondents had "Neutral" attitude and especially, no "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" answer was recorded. Similarly, it can be inferred from Question 7 that Text Shadowing helped most students pronounce words clearer and more legible with 36 strong agreement and agreement responses and only 3 neutralities. For Question 8, 27 respondents strongly agreed and agreed that Text Shadowing helped them correct their pronunciation errors such as the omission of linking sounds or ending sounds while 7 of the students had "Neutral" attitude and only 5 had strongly disagreed and disagreed about the effectiveness of the practice. For Question 9, 34 respondents said that they strongly agreed and agreed towards the usefulness of Text Shadowing technique that made their intonation better and more natural relating to the rise and fall in pitch or tone, word stress or sentence stress while there was only 1 "Disagree" answer, none "Strongly Disagree" answer to this practice and 6 "Neutral" ones.

4.2.2. Text Shadowing in improving fluency

There were a large number of respondents who agreed and strongly agreed about the effectiveness of Text Shadowing in improving fluency while learning English. There were 54 "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" answers collected in comparison with 11 "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" ones about the participants' fluency improvement during the research. In details, for Question 10, 28 respondents strongly agreed and agreed that Text Shadowing helped them speak English more smoothly while there were only 5 of the respondents having "Neutral" attitude and a small number of respondents (only 4 "Disagree" answers and 2 "Strongly Disagree" answers) having negative attitude about this effectiveness of the practice in improving fluency. For Question 11, 28 respondents said that they strongly agreed and agreed towards the usefulness of Text Shadowing that helped them limit repetitions and pauses when speaking English while there were only 5 ones claiming "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" to this practice and 6 responded as "Neutral" ones.

4.2.3. Attraction and motivation of the practice

It is apparent from the data related to Question 12 that the practice made the students interested in learning speaking English using Text Shadowing technique and also they seemed to be encouraged to be more confident to speak English. 34 respondents said they strongly agreed and agreed with the idea that the practice interested them, compared to 2 “Neutral” answers, only 3 “Disagree” answers and none “Strongly Disagree” one collected. In addition, 30 of the participants thought that the practice made them more confident to speak English while only 5 got “Neutral” answers and 4 strongly disagreed and disagreed. Thus, it was understood that the practice brought the participants a great interest so that they were encouraged to be more confident to speak English.

4.2.4. The content of the practice lessons

Most of the students thought that the content of practice lessons carried out during the research were very close and practical. 31 respondents showed their agreement with the answer and 3 of respondents showed strong agreement. Therefore, in total, the number of the respondents who thought that the practice lessons used during the research were useful and effective was 34 while only a small number (2 respondents) disagreed and there was no “Strongly Disagree” answer. Furthermore, just 3 of the participants had neutral attitudes to the usefulness and effectiveness of the practice lessons carried out during the research.

4.2.5. The amount of time for the practice

Twenty-nine of the participants including the ones with agreement and strong agreement responses claimed that the amount of time delivery for each practice lesson in class was suitable, only 3 had the “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree” answers and 7 claimed the “Neutral” ones. For Question 16, there was 2 respondents strongly disagreed that they should spend more time practicing Text Shadowing at home and one more claimed the “Disagree” answer, compared with 25 of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed as well as 11 had neutral attitude. Therefore, it was obvious from the data that the participants believed the practice time in class was appropriate to practice Text Shadowing. Besides, they also would like to spend more time to apply this technique to learn English at home.

4.2.6. Text Shadowing in learning speaking skills – its benefits and challenges

In-depth interviews with six participants (two ones A and B with high speaking competence, two ones C and D with medium speaking performance and the other two ones E and F with low ability in speaking through the posttest’s result) revealed that most of the participants enjoyed Text Shadowing. For example, Participants A, B, C and E explained that

“...I feel very happy, I see that my classmates also like it.” - (Participant A)

“...I like listening to native speakers’ talks and imitate them.” - (Participant B)

“...I get to **compete with my friends** to see who speaks **better and clearer** while practicing.” - (Participants A and C)

“...After using this technique, I find I **like learning English more**.” - (Participants C and E)

When asked whether the participants were more confident to speak English after using Text Shadowing, four out of six participants said “Yes”. For instance, Participant A assumed that “Before reading some words, I was still afraid of making mistakes. I didn't remember how to read clearly, so I didn't dare read. Now **I am confident** to show off to my mother that **I can speak English**.” Besides, Participants C and D had the same thought that they seemed to like learning English more. They expressed that they wanted to practice Text Shadowing with audio and wished to speak English as well as audio. From Participant B's statement the researcher mentioned above that he enjoyed listening to native speakers communicate and was willing to imitate them, it is obvious that he was also more confident to speak English when practicing via Text Shadowing. On the other hand, it seemed like both Participants E and F were not confident enough to speak English even though their English speaking ability quite improved after using that technique, which was related to their ability to memory, their period of time participating in the intervention (Participant E) or their ability to absorb lessons quickly or slowly (Participant F).

In addition, all the interviewees talked positively about using Text Shadowing and all participants were prone to improve their English skills. For example, Participant A emphasized that “Before, I had to try hard to remember how this word is pronounced and how that word is pronounced, but now as soon as I think of a word in my head, my mouth can say a sentence containing that word. For example, **seeing** a pencil case **makes my mind think of the sentence** “Pick up your pencil case.” And **I can say it myself**.” In the same vein, Participants B, C, E and F revealed that they could “**imitate** to pronounce the patterns **as closely as possible**”, focusing on the omission of the linking sounds and the final sounds (as pointed out by Participant B)

““Pick up” is read slowly as **/pɪk/ /ʌp/** but read quickly as **/pɪkʌp/**.”

“... must **pronounce correctly, do not omit final sounds**, such as the /s/ sound. When practicing, I hear the /s/ sound a lot and I **try to pronounce it as closely as possible**...”

and “**follow** the speakers’ **rising and falling intonation** in the audio when speaking”.

Furthermore, Participants D and F mentioned that they could somewhat remember the vocabularies, the sentence patterns, the mini-songs and the meaning of the sentences.

Five students admitted that they applied Text Shadowing technique when studying English at home. Most of them had to ask their parents for help. The time Participants A, B, C and D respectively spent on practicing Text Shadowing at home was *3-4 times a week* (according to A), *5-10 minutes a day (before sleeping)* (according to B), *2-3 times a week* (according to C) and *when having free time* (according to D). It was obvious that Participants A, B, C and D spending time practicing more at home resulted in their

higher speaking performance than Participants E and F not spending time practicing at home. Besides, it can be seen that Participants A and B performed better than Participants C and D after the intervention because Participants A and B spent more time practicing at home than Participants C and D. It can be concluded that those who spent more time practicing the method at home would have better results in improving their English speaking skills than others.

Besides that, the participants also posed some challenging while learning with Text Shadowing technique at home. As mentioned earlier, the students needed the help from their parents; however, most of them were busy at work. Therefore, self-study and self-practice was the problem that many participants aged between 8 and 9 mentioned. As Participants A, B, D, E and F respectively said,

".....My friends' parents go to work so they can't guide them in their studies."

"...Every day, it's not until evening that my parents come home from work, I just borrowed my dad's phone so I could practice for a little bit and then it's time to go to sleep."

"...My parents are at work and I don't have a phone at home to open the audio file for practicing."

"...I often got sick, so when I returned to class, I felt like I couldn't keep up with my friends because I do not participate in regular practice like my classmates..."

"...My parents don't know English so no one can teach me how to learn it...I practiced all the time but I couldn't speak as well as the machine and there was no one to teach me then I tended to pause learning and had a look on other functions of the application to play."

"...My parents work far away, I stay at home with my grandparents. My grandparents also don't know English so they can't guide me in learning."

In addition, the participants also mentioned several problems they encountered when using Text Shadowing technique. For instance, Participants A, D and E respectively pointed out

"...At first, my mother didn't know where to open the audio file to practice..."

"There were some sentences that were too long for me to remember, so when the machine spoke a little fast, I couldn't keep up."

"...While studying, there were times when I worried that if I couldn't keep up with the speakers' speed, I would encounter some words that were read so quickly or were so strange that I couldn't recognize them."

When asked, the participants all agreed that they will continue to learn English with Text Shadowing technique. Participant A, for example, intended to continue learning to speak English via Text Shadowing in the upcoming summer. According to Participant D, he explained the reason why he would use this technique then was that this technique helped him *"practice speaking English faster and remember the key terms more easily".* Similarly, participant E also shared that: *"Because I found it fun to learn to speak English by use of Text Shadowing. It motivated me to not only read in time with the audio but read correctly as well. If the teacher continues to use that method next year, we will be happy to learn, otherwise*

we will be lazy to self-study because no one can help us to study, teacher.” On the other hand, both Participants C and F showed their approval for using Text Shadowing to learn English as long as they have the teacher’s encouragement.

All the evidence above proved that the participants understood the benefits and challenges that Text Shadowing technique brought about, but they all found interest and confidence in learning and speaking English with Text Shadowing. In detail, most students improved their vocabularies, pronunciation and intonation; however, their progress levels are not the same. Some reasons may account for these results. For students having high and medium progress of speaking performance, they showed their interest in the technique during the intervention so they spent more time practice the technique at home. Meanwhile, for students having low level of speaking performance, they often missed classes because of their illness, which affected the intervention of this technique on students’ progress.

The findings revealed that students had high positive attitude toward using Text Shadowing in developing their speaking skills. The results obviously showed those who spent more time applying Text Shadowing technique when studying English at home would have better results in improving their English speaking skills than others. The participants understood the benefits and challenges that Text Shadowing technique brought about, but they all found interest and confidence in learning and speaking English with Text Shadowing. This finding was also reported by Mai (2016) who analyzed teachers and students’ attitudes and the effectiveness of teaching and learning pronunciation with shadowing technique.

The data collected from the questionnaire and semi-structure interviews of the present study also pointed out that they enjoyed listening to native speakers communicate and were willing to imitate them. It was obvious that they were also more confident to speak English when practicing via Text Shadowing. This technique gives students more interest and motivation in interacting with English speaking. Text Shadowing requires the use of electronic devices and internet connection (if needed), which might pose many unexpected problems. The present study also revealed some challenges that participants might encounter while learning with Text Shadowing. The most challenging problem was that the participants’ age was too young. This required their parents’ support to help them practice Text Shadowing with the electronic devices. Besides, another problem that students faced while practicing this strategy was their anxiety in making mispronunciation to speak English, as stated by Mai (2016). Last but not least, the present study also mentioned a problem when they could not keep up with the speed which correlates with the finding of Ekayati (2020). It is worth noticing that teachers who are interested in using shadowing technique for their classroom should prepare for the possible drawbacks.

In terms of the likelihood that students will continue shadowing in the future, the result indicated that almost all participants agreed that they will continue to learn English with Text Shadowing technique while a very small number of respondents showed their approval for using Text Shadowing to learn English as

long as they have the teacher's encouragement. This finding matched with Luu and Do (2023) claimed that 80% of students clearly want to use this strategy in future practice to improve their English-speaking talents. Shadowing has been shown to increase participants' speaking skills in areas such as pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is demonstrated in this study that Text Shadowing has positive impacts on the development of students' speaking skills. The study also indicates students' favorable attitudes regarding utilizing Text Shadowing to improve their speaking abilities. The study may also shed light on some experience in creating speaking tasks that encourage students to see and remember patterns more thoroughly and for longer. It is recommended that English teachers should give opportunities to all students to speak in-class speaking practice to avoid some students' domination. Teachers also need to help students build their confidence, thus reducing anxiety and fear of making mistakes, and further encourage students' activeness in classroom activities to better express their thoughts, and opinions in speaking practice.

The principal drawback of the present study is that it was carried out in the actual environment of English instruction at a primary school in Binh Dinh, where the researcher worked. As a result, random sampling was compromised. The participants were drawn from four intact classes at the beginning of the academic year along with prior to the research. Second, there were only 78 participants in the research. Therefore, the study could not achieve generalized results to all primary school students of English. Last but not least, because the research was conducted in a limited amount of time, it could not show the best of the technique as well as the effectiveness of the research. It is recommended that a bigger and more in-depth study should be carried out with more participants. For more reliable statistics, the time spent performing and gathering data should be longer.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest

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