Research Article

Using the shadowing technique to improve English-majored sophomores' English-speaking skills at Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment

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Abstract

This research investigates the effectiveness of the shadowing technique in improving the English-speaking skills of second-year English-majored students at Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment (HUNRE). The study was motivated by the observation that many students struggle with fluency, pronunciation, and confidence in speaking English, as reflected in the average scores of the Speaking components in the Listening-Speaking 1 and 2 courses. Alt-hough the shadowing technique has been proven to be beneficial in enhancing speaking proficiency in various interna-tional contexts, limited studies have been conducted within the Vietnamese educational setting, particularly at HUNRE. The study employed a mixed-method approach. A pre-survey was conducted with 66 students to assess their speaking habits, challenges, and awareness of the shadowing technique. Based on these findings, 60 students were introduced to the technique and practiced it over a six-week period using structured materials. A post-survey designed around lin-guistic, cognitive, and sociocultural theoretical perspectives, was then administered to evaluate improvements in fluen-cy, pronunciation, automaticity, and learner motivation. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with six stu-dents representing different proficiency levels to explore their experiences and perceptions in greater detail.

Keywords

1. Introduction

English speaking proficiency is a crucial skill for English-majored students, especially in an academic and professional context. Brown and Yuke (1983) say, "Speaking is the skill that the students will be judged upon most in real life situations". Speaking is a complex process. Speaking is also "an interactive process of con-structing meaning that involves

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producing and receiving and processing information" (Brown, 1994). However, many sophomores at Hanoi University of Natural Re-sources and Environment (HUNRE) struggle with fluency, pronunciation, and confidence when speaking English. Traditional learning methods, such as grammar-focused instruction and passive listening, often fail to provide students with sufficient opportunities for active speaking practice. Therefore, linguistic researchers have continu-ously studied foreign language teaching methods to solve these problems.

The shadowing technique, a language learning method that involves listening to and simultaneously re-peating spoken language, has gained recognition as an effective approach to improving speaking skills. This technique enhances pronunciation, rhythm, and intona-tion, helping learners develop a more natural and fluent speaking style. Despite its potential benefits, the use of shadowing remains limited in many university curricula, including at HUNRE.

In recent years, English-speaking skills have become increasingly important for English-majored stu-dents, especially in the era of global communication. However, at HUNRE, many English-majored sophomores still face difficulties in speaking English fluently and confidently. This is clearly reflected in the results of their final assessments in the Listening – Speaking 1 and Lis-tening – Speaking 2 courses, where the speaking compo-nent remains relatively low compared to other skills.

Despite the critical role of speaking proficiency, there has been limited focus on effective methods to en-hance it within the university's current teaching approach. Furthermore, no existing research at the university has examined the application of the shadowing technique, a method in which learners listen to and immediately repeat spoken English, as a strategy for improving speaking skills.

Numerous studies around the world have demonstrated the effectiveness of the shadowing tech-nique in developing pronunciation, rhythm, and fluency. As a low-cost, accessible, and proven method, shadowing has strong potential to address the speaking limitations observed in current students. This study aims to fill a gap in both academic research and classroom practice by ex-ploring the impact of shadowing on English-majored sophomores' speaking performance.

Therefore, investigating the application of the shadowing technique to English practice in general, and speaking skills in particular, is both relevant and neces-sary. Moreover, there has been no research at HUNRE specifically focusing on the use of this technique. Moti-vated by this gap, the authors decided to conduct the study entitled "Using Shadowing Technique to Improve English-Majored Sophomores' English Speaking Skills at Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment.

This study aims to identify whether the Shadowing technique enhances the speaking skills of English-majored sophomores at HUNRE.

Research Questions: How effective is the shad-owing technique in improving the speaking skills of English-majored sophomores at Hanoi University of Nat-ural Resources and Environment?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Review of previous studies

2.1.1. Studies conducted by Vietnamese researchers

Here are a few Vietnamese studies that provide verifiable evidence of the "Shadowing" technique's effectiveness in improving pupils' English language proficiency.

According to the research article by Nguyen Thi Minh Hang (2018), Shadowing and Speaking Skill En-hancement in Vietnamese EFL Learners. Nguyen Thi Minh Hang (2018) conducted a study on the effectiveness of the shadowing strategy in improving the speaking skills of second-year English majors at a Hanoi university. The study specifically examined how shadowing influ-ences pronunciation accuracy and speaking fluency among Vietnamese EFL learners. Here are some key findings from the research:

• Pronunciation Improvement: Students who practiced shadowing demonstrated better articulation of consonant and vowel sounds, particularly in areas where Vietnamese learners commonly struggle, such as final consonants and stress patterns.

• Enhanced Fluency: Participants showed faster speech rates and fewer hesitations, indicating a smoother and more natural speech flow.

• Positive Student Perceptions: Most students reported that shadowing boosted their confidence in speaking English and helped them imitate native-like pronuncia-tion and intonation.

• Challenges Identified: Some students found it diffi-cult to keep up with native speakers during the initial phase of shadowing. However, gradual exposure and re-peated practice helped them overcome this challenge.

Nguyen Thi Minh Hang (2018) concluded that shadowing is a highly effective technique for Vietnamese EFL learn-ers, particularly in enhancing pronunciation and fluency. The study recommended incorporating shadowing into English-speaking courses to maximize students' oral pro-ficiency and confidence.

According to the research article by Le Thi Lan & Pham Quang Huy (2020), The Impact of Shadowing on Vietnamese University Students' Speaking Skills, Le Thi Lan and Pham Quang Huy 2020 conducted a study on the effectiveness of the

shadowing technique in improving the speaking abilities of Vietnamese university students. Their research focused on how shadowing influenced pronunciation, fluency, and overall speaking confidence among English-majored students in Vietnam. Their key findings are really useful:

• Pronunciation Development: Students who practiced shadowing showed notable improvements in phoneme articulation, stress patterns, and intonation. The tech-nique helped learners mimic native-like pronunciation, reducing common pronunciation errors influenced by Vietnamese phonology.

• Fluency Enhancement: The study found that stu-dents who engaged in shadowing exercises spoke more smoothly, with fewer pauses and hesitations. Their speech rate increased, and they were able to construct sentences more naturally.

• Boost in Confidence and Engagement: Many stu-dents reported feeling more comfortable speaking Eng-lish after shadowing practice. The structured repetition helped them overcome anxiety and develop greater self-assurance in communication.

• Challenges Observed: Some participants struggled with fast-paced audio materials, especially in the early stages of the study. However, gradual exposure and adap-tive shadowing techniques allowed them to adjust and improve over time.

Le Thi Lan and Pham Quang Huy (2020) concluded that shadowing is an effective and practical technique for Vi-etnamese EFL learners, particularly in enhancing fluency and pronunciation. They recommended integrating shadowing into English-speaking courses as a comple-mentary practice to improve learners' oral communication skills.

According to the research by Dang Thi Hong Nhung (2021), Shadowing for First-Year English Majors in Da Nang, Dang Thi Hong Nhung 2021 conducted a study on the effectiveness of the shadowing approach in improving the speaking skills of first-year English majors at a university in Da Nang, Vietnam. The research aimed to evaluate how shadowing influences pronunciation, fluency, and learners' attitudes toward speaking practice. Here are some key findings from the research:

• Fluency Development: Participants demonstrated reduced hesitation and increased speech rate, leading to more natural and confident speaking.

• Listening-Speaking Connection: The repetitive na-ture of shadowing strengthened students' listening com-prehension, enabling them to process spoken English more quickly and respond more effectively.

• Learner Perceptions: Most students found shadow-ing enjoyable and beneficial. They expressed that the technique helped them become more comfortable speak-ing English, reducing their anxiety and improving their

willingness to participate in oral communication activi-ties.

• Challenges Faced: Some students initially struggled with keeping up with native speakers' speed. However, gradual exposure and consistent practice helped them adapt over time.

• Pronunciation Enhancement: The study revealed that shadowing significantly helped students improve their pronunciation accuracy, particularly in word stress, sentence rhythm, and intonation.

Dang Thi Hong Nhung (2021) concluded that shadowing is an effective tool for improving pronunciation, fluency, and confidence among Vietnamese EFL learners, particu-larly first-year university students. The study recom-mended including shadowing as a core technique in speaking courses to help students build stronger oral communication skills from an early stage in their aca-demic journey.

2.1.2. Studies conducted by foreign scientists

Standing at the center of language learning re-search, shadowing has been put under several analyses; in fact, this wide-ranging research examines the effec-tiveness of this technique across different skills, profi-ciency levels, and linguistic contexts. Below is the review of key works that will serve as the backbone for findings, contributions, and significance.

According to the research by Foote and McDonough (2017) - Shadowing and Oral Proficiency Development conducted a study on "the impact of the shadowing technique on the speaking skills of university students in Canada". Their research focused on how shadowing influences oral fluency, pronunciation, and speech confidence among learners of English as a second language (ESL). Foote & McDonough (2017) concluded that shadowing effectively improves spoken English pro-ficiency, particularly for learners struggling with pronun-ciation and fluency. They suggested that incorporating shadowing into classroom activities can help ESL stu-dents develop more natural speech patterns. Here are some achievements from their study:

• Pronunciation Gains: The study found that students who practiced shadowing demonstrated improved seg-mental (individual sounds) and suprasegmental (intona-tion, rhythm, and stress) pronunciation features.

• Fluency Improvement: Participants who engaged in regular shadowing exercises spoke with fewer pauses and hesitations, indicating enhanced fluency.

• Increased Speech Confidence: Students reported feeling more comfortable speaking English after shad-owing practice, which reduced anxiety and hesitation.

• Challenges Noted: Some students initially found shadowing difficult due to the speed of native speakers in audio materials. However, with progressive training, they adapted and showed improvement.

According to the research by Hamada (2016) – Shadowing and Pronunciation Development, Hamada (2016) conducted an empirical study to investigate the impact of shadowing on pronunciation accuracy and in-tonation. The study involved Japanese EFL learners who underwent a six-week shadowing training program. Par-ticipants engaged in various shadowing exercises, in-cluding full shadowing and silent shadowing. The study's findings revealed several key benefits:

• Participants demonstrated improved pronunciation, particularly in vowel and consonant articulation.

• There was a noticeable enhancement in speech rhythm and intonation, leading to more natural spoken English.

• Learners reported increased confidence in their ability to speak without hesitation.

Hamada concluded that shadowing is particularly beneficial for improving prosodic features of spoken English, such as stress, rhythm, and intonation.

According to the research by Kato (2009), Cog-nitive Processing and Shadowing Efficiency, Kato 2009 conducted a study on how the shadowing technique af-fects cognitive processing and oral proficiency in second language (L2) learners. The research focused on Japanese EFL learners and examined how shadowing contributes to listening comprehension, automaticity in speech produc-tion, and overall speaking fluency. Below are some re-sults of the research:

• Improved Cognitive Processing: Kato found that shadowing helps learners develop better real-time speech processing skills, allowing them to quickly decode and produce spoken language.

• Enhanced Listening-Speaking Connection: The study highlighted that shadowing improves phonetic awareness and helps learners transition from passive listening to active speech production more efficiently.

• Fluency Gains: Participants demonstrated a faster speech rate and reduced hesitation, indicating a positive impact on speaking fluency.

• Differences in Learner Proficiency: The study also found that higher-proficiency learners benefited more from shadowing than lower-proficiency learners, sug-gesting that prior exposure to spoken English may influ-ence shadowing effectiveness.

Kato (2009) concluded that shadowing not only enhances fluency and pronunciation but also plays a crucial role in developing automaticity in language production. The findings support the idea that consistent shadowing prac-tice can accelerate the internalization of language struc-tures, making it a valuable tool for learners aiming to im-prove their spoken English.

2.2. Theoretical background

2.2.1. Definition of speaking skills

Speaking skills refer to the ability to communi-cate effectively in a spoken language. Various researchers have defined speaking skills in different ways, empha-sizing different aspects such as fluency, accuracy, pro-nunciation, and interaction. Below are some key defini-tions from scholars in the field of language learning and linguistics:

Richards & Renandya (2002), Speaking is one of the most complex skills in language learning because it requires real-time processing of ideas, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

Siahaan defines speaking as a productive skill. It means that in a speaking activity, a speaker produces a language that is in the form of sounds of words that can be understood by the listener. Additionally, Fulcher gives the definition that speaking is a tool of communication.

According to Lynch, speaking is the ability to express ideas, feelings, and emotions to other people. It functions as a means for individuals to make themselves understood in communication. As a communicative skill, speaking allows a speaker to transfer ideas effectively to listeners. Language serves as the primary tool in this process, enabling the expression of one's thoughts. The effectiveness of communication largely depends on the speaker's ability to clearly and accurately deliver their message.

Meanwhile, the sociocultural theory emphasizes the role of social interaction and cultural context in language use. It argues that speaking is not merely an individual cogni-tive act but a socially situated practice where meaning is co-constructed between speakers (Vygotsky, 1978; Lan-tolf & Thorne, 2006). Effective English communication, therefore, requires not only linguistic and cognitive competence but also an awareness of social norms, cul-tural expectations, and the ability to adjust language use according to the communicative situation

2.2.2. Definition of Shadowing

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, shadowing is a term derived from the English word "shadow". This technique can be understood in the literal sense of the word; the shadow is the dark shape that something creates between the object and the light.

Shadowing is a language learning technique that involves immediate repetition of spoken language, developed by American professor Alexander Arguelles, which means that the learner tries to repeat what they hear as quickly and accurately as they hear it. Professor Alexander Ar-guelles is a well-known polyglot and linguist recognized for his structured and disciplined approach to language learning. One of his most famous techniques is Shadow-ing, which he describes as a powerful method for im-proving pronunciation, intonation, and listening com-prehension in a foreign language.

Shadowing is a re-search and learning technique where an individual closely follows or observes a subject, often in real-time, to gain insights into their behavior, language, or work process. This method is commonly used in linguistics, psychology, education, and workplace studies.

Linguistic Shadowing (Lambert, 1992) argued that shadowing is 'a paced, auditory tracking task which involves the immediate vocalization of auditorily pre-sented stimuli'. A learner repeats what he/she is listening to, just as a shadow follows someone walking. Most im-portantly, learners must simultaneously replicate what they hear without written scripts. Wallace E. Lambert in-troduced shadowing as a technique to improve sec-ond-language acquisition by having learners mimic spo-ken language quickly. Lambert's work suggested that shadowing accelerates language acquisition by improving phonetic awareness and automaticity in speech produc-tion. His studies indicated that students who practiced shadowing demonstrated better fluency and listening comprehension compared to those using traditional methods.

In conclusion, the shadowing technique requires learners to shadow someone else's speech, which means learners repeat what the speaker says.

2.2.3. The Effectiveness of Shadowing in Enhancing English Skills

In the field of language learning, finding effec-tive techniques that not only enhance specific skills but also make the process more engaging is crucial. Among these techniques, shadowing has gained attention for its significant impact on learners' speaking and listening abilities. By repeating what they hear almost simultane-ously, learners can improve their pronunciation, intona-tion, and listening concentration. This method is particu-larly valued for creating an interactive and motivating learning experience. The following sections highlight three major benefits of the shadowing technique:

Improving Speaking Skills - Shadowing is an es-sential exercise for language learners to enhance their speaking skills. Wiltshier (2007) notes that it "gave them the opportunity to effectively practice speaking English" (p. 501), enabling students to communicate, express opinions, and convey messages with greater ease. Spe-cifically, Jullian (2012) emphasizes that shadowing is a highly effective technique "for becoming proficient at speaking."

Improving Listening Comprehension - Shadow-ing provides students with extensive listening practice and, more importantly, helps them focus on what they are listening to, thereby enhancing their listening compre-hension. Moser highlights that shadowing is an effective exercise for improving listening concentration (cited in Snell-Hornby et al., 1994). Additionally, Hamada (2014) notes that "shadowing is effective for improving listening

comprehension skills" (p. 4). Several researchers empha-size the role of shadowing in developing listening com-prehension, particularly in classroom settings. This tech-nique aids in maintaining concentration and helps learn-ers focus on the content of the material. Tamai states that "compared to dictation as a classroom task, shadowing demonstrated a higher level of efficiency in improving students' listening skills" (cited in Wiltshier, 2007, p. 499).

Providing an Interactive and Engaging Learning Experience - Instead of learning a language in a monot-onous way like traditional learning methods, just focus-ing on reading and writing skills, learners can choose the fields they love, and find listening materials about those issues. Then with the shadowing method, learners can practice speaking skill as well as grammar, and vocabu-lary through the content they imitate. By setting objec-tives related to student engagement and motivation, the research seeks to explore how the shadowing technique can create a more dynamic and enjoyable learning expe-rience, ultimately leading to better speaking outcomes.

2.2.4. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in a combination of linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural theories, which together offer a comprehen-sive foundation for understanding the effectiveness of the shadowing technique in language learning, particularly in improving speaking skills.

From a linguistic perspective, the shadowing technique supports the Input Hypothesis proposed by Stephen Krashen (1985), which emphasizes that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to compre-hensible input slightly above their current level (i+1). By listening to and simultaneously repeating authentic spo-ken English, learners engage with continuous input that fosters natural language internalization. Shadowing also helps learners develop prosodic features such as intona-tion, stress, and rhythm, key components in spoken flu-ency.

From a cognitive viewpoint, the theory of Auto-maticity (Segalowitz, 2003) is especially relevant. Shad-owing encourages rapid and repeated practice, which supports the proceduralization of language knowledge, turning conscious language processing into automatic responses. This aligns with information processing theory, where frequent and meaningful practice reduces the cog-nitive load during speech production. As a result, learners can speak more fluently, with less hesitation and more confidence.

From a sociocultural perspective, Vygotsky's So-ciocultural Theory (1978) highlights the importance of interaction, imitation, and scaffolding in language de-velopment. Shadowing mimics the natural process of language acquisition where learners imitate more com-petent

speakers, internalize language patterns, and grad-ually move toward independent speech production. Alt-hough shadowing is often practiced individually, it can simulate the presence of a native speaker or instructor, creating a form of mediated learning that fosters speaking development.

By integrating these three theoretical lenses, the study establishes a solid foundation for investigating the pedagogical benefits of shadowing and its potential to improve the speaking skills of English-majored students at HUNRE.

3. Method

3.1. Quantitative Research Method

3.1.1. The pre-survey (Google Form of Pre-survey – English Speaking Skills)

This survey was conducted to investigate the current status of English speaking skills among sec-ond-year English-majored students at HUNRE, particu-larly those in classes ĐH13NA1 and ĐH13NA2 with a total of 96 students participating, mainly based on six key aspects: Practice Frequency, Self-Evaluation, Speaking Challenges, Methods Used, Awareness of Shadowing, and Experience with Shadowing. The Pre-survey was con-ducted over a period of one week, from 16th December 2024 to 22nd December 2024, using a Google Form dis-tributed among second-year English-majored students at HUNRE. The objective of this survey was to investigate the current status of students' English speaking skills and gain deeper insights into their learning habits and chal-lenges.

The survey was carefully structured around six key as-pects:

• Practice Frequency – to determine how often students practice speaking English outside of class.

• Self-Evaluation – to understand how students perceive their own speaking abilities.

• Speaking Challenges – to identify common dif-ficulties they face when speaking English.

• Methods Used – to explore the various tech-niques students employ to improve their speaking.

• Awareness of Shadowing – to assess whether students are familiar with the shadowing technique.

• Experience with Shadowing – to find out if students have ever applied shadowing in their learning process.

Throughout the week, the survey was shared via institutional communication channels and classroom groups to ensure broad participation. A total of 66 re-sponses were collected, forming the foundational data for evaluating the feasibility and relevance of using the shadowing technique to support students' speaking de-velopment.

3.1.2. The post-survey (Google Form of the post-survey on the Effectiveness of the Shadowing Technique)

The post-survey questionnaire was designed us-ing a 5-point Likert scale to investigate the perceived effectiveness of the shadowing technique in enhancing the English-speaking skills of second-year Eng-lish-majored students at HUNRE. The use of a Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disa-gree" enabled the study to measure the degree of agree-ment with each statement, allowing for a clear analysis of overall trends and individual perceptions. This instru-ment was chosen for its ability to efficiently capture rel-evant quantitative data, which could be triangulated with the qualitative findings from in-depth interviews to pro-vide a more comprehensive understanding of learners' experiences and the impact of the shadowing technique.

The post-survey (Google Form of post-survey about Effectiveness of Shadowing Technique) was de-signed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Shadowing technique in improving English speaking skills among 60 second-year English-majored students at HUNRE, partic-ularly those in classes ĐH13NA1 and ĐH13NA2. The lower rate in the post–survey compared to the pre–survey can be attributed to several factors, including a decline in students' motivation or sustained interest following six weeks of practice, as well as competing academic obliga-tions and time constraints that limited their availability to complete the survey.

Before distributing the post-survey, the group of authors conducted an introductory session on the Shad-owing technique to ensure that participants had a clear understanding of the method and were able to apply it correctly during the trial period. This process included:

• A brief presentation prepared by the group of authors, introducing the concept of Shadowing, its bene-fits, and theoretical foundations from linguistics. The questionnaire items were constructed based on three the-oretical perspectives: Linguistic, Cognitive, and Soci-ocultural.

• Demonstrations and practical examples pro-vided during class time to show how Shadowing is per-formed, focusing on simultaneous listening and repetition with attention to accuracy and intonation.

• The distribution of sample audio materials and practice guidelines, compiled by the researcher, including selected speeches, conversations, and listening resources appropriate for English learners.

• A recommended practice schedule encouraging participants to engage in Shadowing for at least 20–30 minutes daily over the course of six weeks.

Methodology: Application of the Shadowing Technique: Our research team proposes practical steps for the shad-owing method to achieve effective results. Follow these steps:

- Step 1: Choose the material

Students need to find practice materials that are appropriate for their levels, and only choose videos or audio within 5 minutes to avoid frustration. Students can use the resources provided by the teachers or choose their own hobby topics. Students should use a variety of listening materials from podcasts, TV shows or movies, or reliable YouTube channels such as TED, BBC...

- Step 2: Listen and analyze

In this step, students listen 1-2 times to get fa-miliar with the voice in the original file. In addition, stu-dents can combine studying the listening script during the listening process and look up new words to under-stand the content. In particular, with the guidance of the teacher, they can analyze the meaning and pronunciation of vocabulary, and understand the rules of sound: rhythm, tone, stress, rhyme rules, linking sounds, ...

- Step 3: Practice

Learners start practicing at the sentence level, then the entire text. Shadowing speed is performed from slow to the original speed of the original file. During Shadowing practice, learners pay attention to imitate pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm, ... and mark diffi-cult parts to remember to repeat more times.

- Step 4: Record and compare

Record what you have imitated. Then listen to it again and compare it with the sample to find mistakes and make adjustmenSts. Keep adjusting until the speech is as similar to the original as possible in terms of pronuncia-tion, intonation, pauses, speed...

This preparatory stage was essential to ensure that the data collected through the post-survey would reflect participants' actual experience and engagement with the Shadowing technique. It also helped to enhance the validity of the study by minimizing variation in how the technique was understood and applied.

The questionnaire items were constructed based on three theoretical perspectives: Linguistic, Cognitive, and Sociocultural. From the Linguistic Perspective, the survey aimed to assess whether shadowing helped stu-dents receive more comprehensible input and improve specific pronunciation features. From the Cognitive Per-spective, it explored how the technique influenced stu-dents' speaking fluency and automaticity in language production. Finally, from the Sociocultural Perspective, the survey examined whether imitation and internaliza-tion processes central to language acquisition in social contexts were fostered through the use of shadowing. The findings from this post-survey serve to measure not only the overall impact of shadowing but also to understand which aspects of language development it supports most effectively, thereby providing practical insights for teaching and learning speaking skills.

3.2. Qualitative research method: Interviews

In-depth interviews will be conducted with a to-tal of six students, representing three different levels of English-speaking proficiency: two high-level, two mod-erate-level, and two average-level students. The interview questions are designed based on the content of the post-survey and aim to explore in greater detail the stu-dents' experiences and perceptions while applying the shadowing technique to improve their English speaking skills.

- Purpose and Interview Design

In-depth interviews were conducted to gain a deeper un-derstanding of the effectiveness of the Shadowing tech-nique from the learners' perspective. The purpose was to explore how students at different levels of Eng-lish-speaking proficiency perceived their experiences using Shadowing to improve their speaking fluency, pro-nunciation, and overall confidence.

- Participants: A total of six second-year Eng-lish-majored students from HUNRE were selected, repre-senting three different proficiency levels: two high-level, two moderate-level, and two average-level students

- The interview questions were carefully designed based on the post-survey content and categorized into three main theoretical frameworks: Linguistic Perspective (e.g., pronunciation, comprehensible input); Cognitive Perspective (e.g., fluency, automaticity); Sociocultural Perspective (e.g., imitation, internalization)

Each interview consisted of five open-ended questions aimed at uncovering positive insights into the application of the shadowing technique.

- Interview Procedure

The interviews were conducted individually in a quiet setting to ensure comfort and focus. Each session lasted between 10–15 minutes, and permission was ob-tained for audio recording. Responses were then tran-scribed and coded thematically. Efforts were made to en-sure students felt comfortable sharing their honest opinions.

4. Result

After collecting the students' learning outcomes and conducting a pre-survey with 66 students and a post-survey with 60 second-year English-major students at HUNRE, specifically from classes ĐH13NA1 and ĐH13NA2, we received 96 valid responses in the pre-survey and 60 in the post-survey. All responses were carefully reviewed and considered for analysis. This chapter presents the key findings of the survey, which aimed to evaluate the current state of speaking skills and the effectiveness of the shadowing technique in improv-ing speaking proficiency, explore how students apply this technique, and determine its overall impact

on their Eng-lish-speaking skills.

The data collected provides valuable insights into students' current speaking practices, the challenges they face, and their awareness and use of the shadowing technique. Both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed to offer a comprehensive understanding. The following sections include visual representations such as tables and charts to support the interpretation of the results.

4.1. Analysis of the current status of speaking skills of English–majored sophomores at Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment.
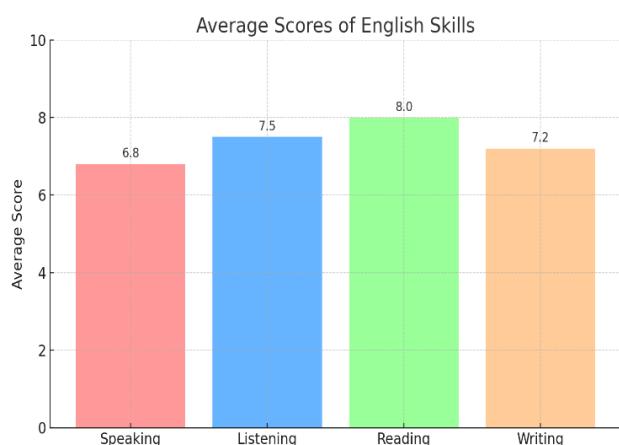
Bar Chart 1: *Average Scores of the Four English Skills*

Evaluation of Speaking Skills Based on Defined Criteria: Students' speaking performance is assessed ac-cording to four specific criteria:

• Fluency and Coherence
• Content and Idea Development
• Lexical Resource and Grammatical Range
• Pronunciation

These criteria are based on standardized frame-works such as the CEFR and are applied consistently in both formative and summative assessments.

Identification of Common Difficulties in Speaking: This section investigates the most common challenges stu-dents encounter when speaking English. These include linguistic limitations (e.g., vocabulary shortage, grammar errors), psychological factors (e.g., anxiety, low confi-dence), and practical barriers (e.g., limited speaking op-portunities, lack of interaction in class).

Based on preliminary observations, surveys, and assessment scores of the subject sections Listening - Speaking 1, and Listening – Speaking 2, the speaking proficiency of second-year English Language students at HUNRE varies

widely. While some students demonstrate good fluency and pronunciation, a significant number still struggle with core aspects of spoken communication. The proficiency levels can be categorized as follows:

Table 1: *Overview of Students' Speaking Proficiency Based on Final Course Grades of Listening - Speaking 1, and Listening – Speaking 2*

Proficiency Level	Criteria	Percentage of Students
High Proficiency	Fluent speaking, accurate pronunciation, logical coherence	~12.5%
Moderate Proficiency	Fair fluency, frequent grammar/ pronunciation errors, moderate coherence	~45%
Low Proficiency	Struggles with fluency, pronunciation, and lacks confidence	~35%

Survey Results on English speaking habits and Eng-lish practice methods of second-year English major stu-dents at Hanoi University of Natural Resources and En-vironment.
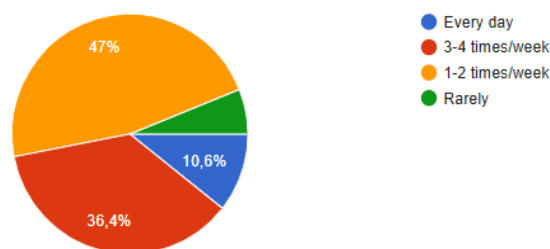

Pie Chart 1: *Practice Frequency*

This pie chart illustrates how frequently students practice speaking English on a weekly basis.

• The largest group, 47%, reported practicing only 1–2 times per week, indicating limited engage-ment with regular speaking activities.

• 36.4% of students practice 3–4 times per week, which shows a more consistent, though still moderate, effort to improve.

• Just 10.6% practice every day, highlighting a small number of highly committed learners.

• A small portion, 6% (not labeled numerically but implied from remaining data), reported practic-ing rarely, suggesting minimal exposure to active speaking.

The data reveal that most students are not practicing speaking English regularly enough to build fluency, with only a small percentage engaging in daily prac-tice. This infrequent practice could be a contributing factor to the challenges identified in pronunciation, confidence, and vocabulary (as

shown in previous charts).
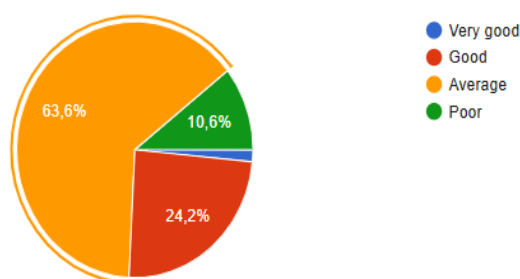
Pie Chart 2: Self-Evaluation

The pie chart illustrates students' self-assessment of their current English speaking skills.

•	A majority of students (63.6%) rate themselves as "Average", indicating a moderate level of confidence in their speaking ability, possibly re-flecting limited exposure or inconsistent prac-tice.

•	24.2% consider their skills to be "Good", sug-gesting a smaller group feels relatively confident and competent in communicating.

•	10.6% rate their ability as "Poor", indicating a need for more foundational support or practice opportunities.

•	Only 1 respondent (1.5%) evaluated their speaking as "Very good", highlighting that few students feel they have mastered spoken English.

From the pie chart, most students do not see themselves as highly proficient speakers. The dominance of "Aver-age" and "Good" responses suggests that while some progress has been made, there is still significant room for improvement, especially in confidence-building and vo-cabulary enhancement.
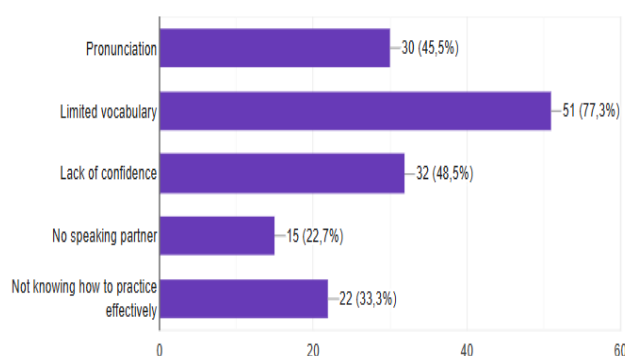

Bar Chart 2: *Challenges in Speaking English*

The bar chart identifies the main difficulties students face when speaking English. Participants were allowed to se-lect more than one option.

•	The most common challenge is limited vocabu-lary, reported by 77.3% of students (51 respons-es). This indicates that students often struggle to express themselves due to a lack of word knowledge.

•	Lack of confidence is the second most cited ob-stacle, with 48.5% (32 responses), suggesting that psychological barriers play a significant role in language performance.

•	Pronunciation issues affect 45.5% (30 responses), which may hinder clarity and fluency in commu-nication.

•	Not knowing how to practice effectively was se-lected by 33.3% (22 responses), reflecting un-certainty in choosing the right methods or tech-niques for speaking improvement.

•	No speaking partner was a concern for 22.7% (15 responses), showing that some learners face dif-ficulties finding real conversational practice opportunities.
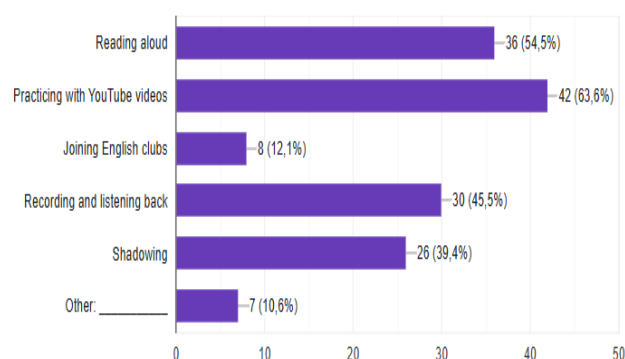
*Bar Chart 3*: *Methods for Improving English Speaking Skills*

The bar chart illustrates the variety of methods students adopt to enhance their English speaking skills. Since re-spondents were allowed to select multiple methods, the percentages reflect the proportion of total participants who chose each strategy.

•	Practicing with YouTube videos is the most pop-ular method, selected by 63.6% of the students (42 responses). This highlights the growing reli-ance on accessible, visual, and audio-rich online resources.

•	Reading aloud follows closely, with 54.5% (36 responses), showing that many students still value traditional repetition techniques to im-prove pronunciation and fluency.

•	Recording and listening back is also commonly used, with 45.5% (30 responses), indicating that learners are actively engaged in self-evaluation and feedback.

•	Shadowing, the focus technique of this study, was chosen by 39.4% of students (26 responses), suggesting moderate awareness and application among the group.

•	Joining English clubs appears less popular, with only 12.1% (8 responses), possibly due to limited availability or students' lack of confidence in so-cial settings.

•	Finally, 10.6% (7 responses) selected "Other" methods, implying there are additional tech-niques students employ that were not listed in the options.
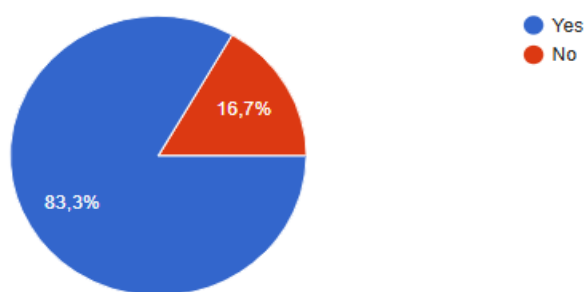
Pie Chart 3: Heard of Shadowing

The pie chart presents students' awareness of the Shadowing technique. A clear majority, 83.3%, responded "Yes," indicating that most students are familiar with or have at least heard about the method. Only 16.7% an-swered "No," suggesting that the technique is relatively well-known among the target group. This high level of awareness provides a solid foundation for promoting the application of Shadowing in English speaking practice, especially if the students can be guided to move from mere awareness to actual usage.
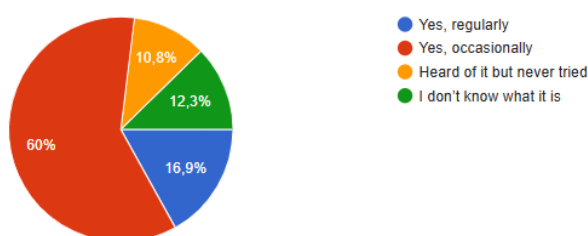
Pie Chart 4: Tried Shadowing

The pie chart illustrates the responses of students who were aware of the Shadowing technique, regarding whether they had attempted to use it. A significant major-ity 60% reported that they used the method occasionally, while 16.9% admitted to using it regularly. Interestingly, 12.3% of the participants selected "I don't know what it is," suggesting that despite previous exposure to the term, some students were unclear about its actual meaning or usage. Only 10.8% had heard of the technique but never tried it, indicating a general lack of practical engagement despite awareness. These results demonstrate the popu-larity and practical application of the Shadowing tech-nique; however, more targeted training and practical guidance are needed to help students make the most of this technique in developing their speaking skills.

In conclusion, the analysis of students' speaking performance and the survey responses reveal an average level of English Speaking Proficiency among sophomores at HUNRE. The data also shows that most students do not practice speaking English regularly, which contributes to the challenges identified in pronunciation, confidence, and vocabulary. Furthermore, awareness and application of the Shadowing technique were varied, with many stu-dents

already incorporating it into speaking practice. However, continued support and guidance are needed to help the remaining students benefit from the method as well.

4.2. Analysis of Effectiveness of Shadowing Technique enhances the speaking skills of English-majored sophomores at Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment.

Part A: Linguistic Perspective (Comprehensible Input & Pronunciation Features)

Question 1: When practicing shadowing, do you feel it helps you better understand how native speakers pro-nounce words and form sentences?
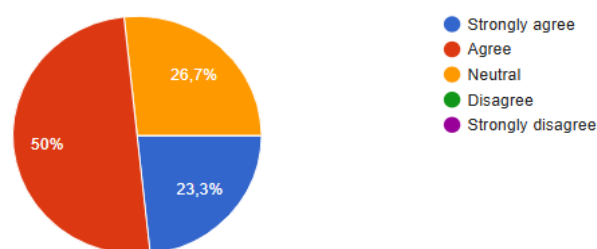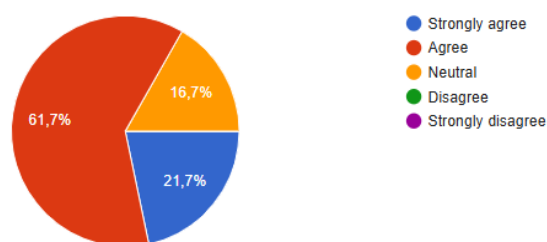

Pie Chart 5: Impact of Shadowing on Pronunciation Awareness

The data indicates that the majority of students (a combined 73.3%) believe that shadowing is an effective technique for helping them understand native pronuncia-tion and sentence formation. This suggests a strong per-ceived benefit from shadowing in terms of improving listening comprehension and pronunciation accuracy, core elements of the Linguistic Perspective in second language acquisition.

The fact that over a quarter of students (26.7%) remain neutral may reflect a lack of consistent practice, limited awareness of how to use shadowing effectively, or individual differences in learning styles.

Importantly, no students expressed disagreement, highlighting a positive overall reception of the shadow-ing technique and reinforcing its potential as a practical tool for pronunciation development.

Question 2: Shadowing helps me improve specific pro-nunciation features such as intonation, stress, and rhythm.

Pie Chart 6: Impact of Shadowing on Prosodic Features

According to the Pie Chart, the data clearly indi-cates that over 83% of students (agree + strongly agree) perceive the shadowing technique as beneficial in im-proving specific pronunciation features, including into-nation, stress, and rhythm. These elements are essential for natural and intelligible spoken English, which directly supports goals from the Linguistic Perspective in lan-guage learning.

The presence of 16.7% neutral responses may imply that some students have not yet fully experienced these benefits, possibly due to inconsistent use of the technique or lack of focused feedback.

Importantly, no respondents disagreed, reaffirm-ing the generally positive attitude toward shadowing as a practical tool for pronunciation improvement.

Question 3: I find that repeating after native speakers through shadowing makes me more familiar with natu-ral speech patterns.
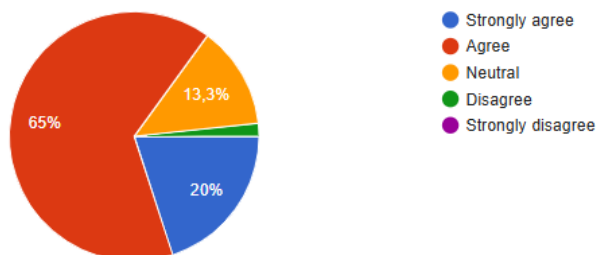
Pie Chart 7: Students' Familiarity with Natural Speech Pat-terns through Shadowing Practice

The data reveals that a significant majority of students, 85% (agree + strongly agree) believe shadow-ing helps them become more familiar with natural speech patterns. This reflects the technique's strength in expos-ing learners to authentic prosody, including connected speech, rhythm, and intonation. The small neutral per-centage (13.3%) may suggest a group of students who have not yet engaged deeply with the technique or need more time and practice to observe tangible results. Only 1.7% disagreed, and none strongly disagreed, suggesting a strongly positive perception of shadowing in support-ing the internalization of native-like speech which is closely related to the Sociocultural

Perspective of lan-guage learning (imitation and interaction with authentic input).

The results from the three survey questions under the Linguistic Perspective clearly indicate that the shad-owing technique is perceived as effective in enhancing students' listening comprehension and pronunciation skills. A vast majority of respondents agree or strongly agree that shadowing:

• Helps them better understand how native speakers pronounce words and form sentences (73.3% agreement),

• Improves their intonation, stress, and rhythm (83.4% agreement),

• Increases their familiarity with natural speech patterns (85% agreement).

Shadowing helped students improve their pronunci-ation, intonation, and rhythm—essential components of spoken language. By repeatedly listening to and imitating native speakers, students became more aware of sound patterns and speech flow. This process allowed them to produce clearer and more natural spoken English, en-hancing the overall accuracy and confidence in their speaking ability.. Overall, the data support the view that shadowing is a linguistically beneficial method for de-veloping speaking skills among second-year English majors at HUNRE.

Part B: Cognitive Perspective (Fluency & Automatici-ty)

Question 4: After using shadowing regularly, I notice that I can speak more fluently with fewer pauses or hesitations.
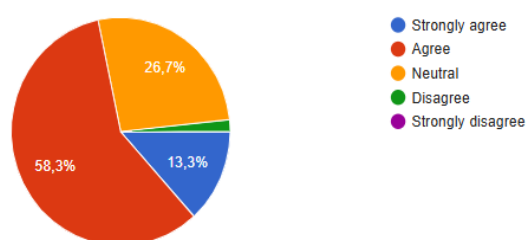

Pie Chart 8: Fluency Development through Shadowing Practice

The survey results reveal that the majority of participants perceive positive effects of regular shadow-ing practice on their fluency. Specifically, 58.3% of re-spondents agreed and 13.3% strongly agreed that they could speak more fluently with fewer pauses or hesita-tions after using the shadowing technique regularly. This indicates that approximately 72% of students experi-enced a noticeable improvement in their speech flow, suggesting that shadowing effectively enhances fluency in English speaking. Meanwhile, 26.7% of the partici-pants remained neutral, which could imply either limited exposure to the technique or that they need more time and consistent practice to observe substantial progress. Only 1.7% of the students disagreed, and none strongly disagreed,

indicating that there is minimal resistance or negative perception toward this method. Overall, these findings strongly support the potential of shadowing as a practical and accessible strategy to improve spoken flu-ency among English-majored students.

Question 5: Shadowing helps me respond more quickly in English without needing to think too much.
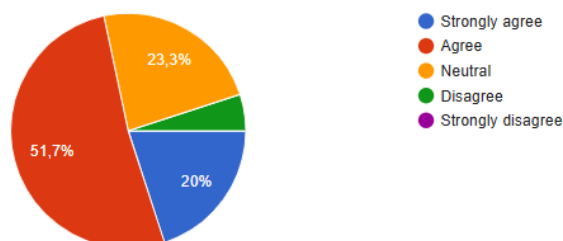
Pie Chart 9: *Quick Language Response via Shadow-ing*

The results from this survey item demonstrate a generally positive perception of the shadowing technique in en-hancing spontaneous English responses. A combined 71.7% of participants either strongly agreed (20%) or agreed (51.7%) that shadowing helps them respond more quickly in English without overthinking. This suggests that a sig-nificant majority found shadowing beneficial in improv-ing their automaticity and confidence when speaking. Meanwhile, 23.3% remained neutral, indicating that while they may not have noticed immediate effects, they do not view the method negatively. Only 5% expressed disagreement, and no respondents strongly disagreed, reinforcing the overall acceptance of shadowing as a helpful technique. These findings support the idea that shadowing can reduce cognitive load during real-time communication, enabling learners to speak more natural-ly and efficiently.

Question 6: I feel more confident when speaking Eng-lish in class or daily communication after practicing shadowing.
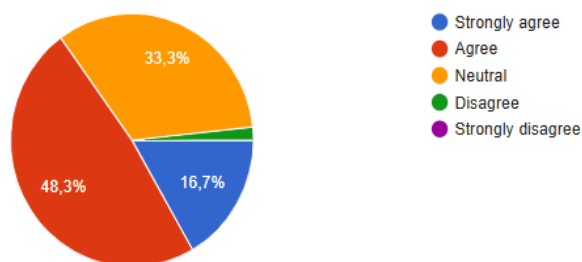
Pie Chart 10: *Impact of Shadowing on Confidence in English Speaking*

The pie chart illustrates students' self-reported confidence in speaking English in class or during daily communication after practicing the shadowing technique. Out of 60

respondents, a substantial majority expressed positive views: 48.3% agreed and 16.7% strongly agreed, totaling 65% who felt that shadowing improved their speaking confidence. Meanwhile, 33.3% responded neu-tral, possibly indicating that while they did not feel a significant change, they did not reject the effectiveness of the technique either. Only 1 respondent (approximately 1.7%) disagreed, and none strongly disagreed, which re-inforces the generally favorable attitude toward shadow-ing.

This result reflects the psychological impact of repeated oral practice, especially through a technique like shadowing, which encourages learners to actively engage with native-like speech patterns and intonation. The technique not only builds familiarity with common expressions and structures but also helps reduce the fear of making mistakes, which is a major barrier to speaking confidence. The relatively high percentage of neutral responses may suggest that confidence is more complex and influenced by other factors such as classroom envi-ronment or individual personality. Nonetheless, the data supports the notion that shadowing can play a meaningful role in enhancing learners' comfort and willingness to communicate in English.

The survey responses indicate that the shadow-ing technique has a generally positive cognitive impact on learners' fluency and automaticity in speaking English. A large proportion of students agreed that regular shad-owing practice helped them speak more fluently with fewer pauses or hesitations (71.6%), respond more quickly without overthinking (71.7%), and feel more confident in both classroom and daily communication (65%). These findings suggest that shadowing effectively enhances real-time language processing and boosts learners' ability to retrieve and produce language more automatically. While a moderate number of students re-mained neutral—possibly due to varying levels of en-gagement or differing personal learning styles—the minimal rate of disagreement reinforces the technique's perceived cognitive benefits.

From a cognitive standpoint, learners found shadowing beneficial in enhancing fluency and promot-ing automatic speech production. Through repeated prac-tice, they were able to reduce hesitation, speak more smoothly, and retrieve vocabulary more efficiently. The consistent rhythm and structured nature of shadowing supported the development of procedural memory, con-tributing to more confident and spontaneous speaking performance. Overall, the data support the role of shad-owing as a practical and impactful method for improving spoken fluency and promoting automatic language use among English-majored students.

Part C: Sociocultural Perspective (Imitation & Inter-nalization)

**Question 7: Shadowing gives me a sense of practicing with a real speaker and helps me imitate their speaking**
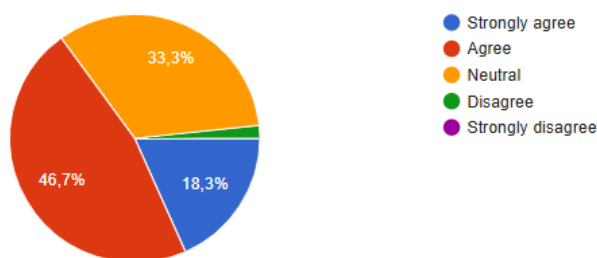
style.

Pie Chart 11: *Shadowing as a Means of Realistic Practice and Style Imitation*

Based on the chart titled *"Shadowing gives me a sense of practicing with a real speaker and helps me imi-tate their speaking style,"* the responses from 60 partici-pants reveal a generally favorable perception of the tech-nique's role in developing speaking style and authentici-ty.

A combined 65% of respondents either *agreed (46.7%)* or *strongly agreed (18.3%)* that shadowing gave them the impression of practicing with a real speaker and allowed them to imitate natural speaking styles. This suggests that the majority of students perceive shadowing as an immersive and realistic speaking practice method, which is essential for improving pronunciation, intona-tion, and rhythm in a second language. Meanwhile, 33.3% of students selected *neutral*, which might reflect a lack of strong engagement with the method or less sensitivity to speech imitation benefits. Only 1.7% of participants dis-agreed, and none strongly disagreed, indicating almost no negative perceptions regarding this cognitive benefit.

From a pedagogical perspective, these findings support the idea that shadowing is not only useful for fluency and automaticity but also valuable for modeling real-world language input. We believe that this kind of mimicry is crucial in language learning, as it builds learners' intuitive grasp of natural phrasing and intona-tion patterns, something that textbook learning alone of-ten lacks. Thus, the data strongly suggests that shadowing effectively bridges the gap between passive listening and active speaking through a simulated yet practical interac-tion experience.

**Question 8: Shadowing motivates me to practice Eng-lish speaking more regularly outside the classroom.**
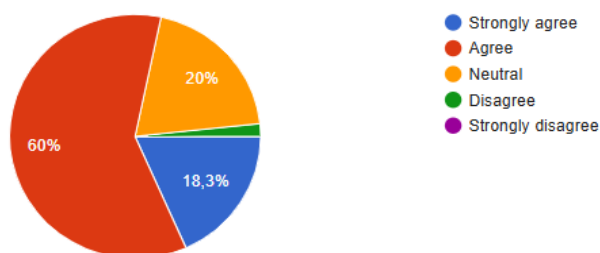
Pie Chart 12: *Impact of Shadowing on Speaking Practice Motivation*

From the responses collected, it is evident that shadowing plays a significant motivational role in learn-ers' engagement with English beyond formal learning environments.

A strong majority of respondents, 60% agreed, and 18.3% strongly agreed with the statement, showing that nearly 78.3% of participants felt encouraged by shadowing to continue practicing English speaking independently. This suggests that shadowing not only supports skill acquisi-tion but also positively influences learners' attitudes and self-driven learning habits. 20% of students were neutral, possibly indicating that their motivation is influenced by other factors, such as personal goals or external support systems. Only 1.7% disagreed, and there were no strong objections (strongly disagree = 0%), reinforcing the technique's positive reception.

From a personal perspective, this data under-scores shadowing's power as a tool for fostering learner autonomy. In my view, the technique's repetitive and im-mersive nature can build learners' confidence and create a habit-forming practice that extends beyond the class-room. It transforms speaking from a classroom task into a daily routine, which is crucial for real language acquisi-tion. Overall, the results affirm that shadowing not only enhances performance but also drives motivation for consistent, out-of-class language use.

Question 9: Through shadowing, I feel that I am gradu-ally internalizing useful language structures and ex-pressions.
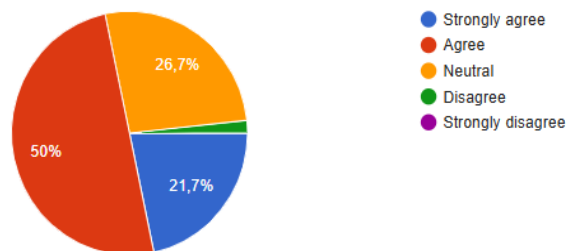
Pie Chart 13: *Effect of Shadowing on Acquisition of Useful Language Forms*

According to the data presented in the chart, it is clear that learners perceive shadowing as an effective method for acquiring linguistic forms.

A combined 71.7% of respondents either agreed (50%) or strongly agreed (21.7%) with the statement, showing a strong overall belief in shadowing's effectiveness for internalizing language patterns. Meanwhile, 26.7% of participants remained neutral, which may suggest that while they recognize some benefit, the process may take longer or require consistent practice for more noticeable effects. Only 1.6% of learners disagreed, and no one strongly disagreed, indicating almost universal acknowl-edgment of shadowing's cognitive

benefits.

From our perspectives, this result supports the idea that shadowing is not just a mechanical repetition task but a meaningful input-output practice that supports procedural memory and language automation. By mim-icking native speakers, learners unconsciously absorb syntax, collocations, and natural phrasing, leading to more fluent and native-like usage over time. This inter-nalization process is critical in transitioning from text-book knowledge to real-world application, and these re-sults strongly validate shadowing as a cognitively en-riching learning strategy. Shadowing provided an oppor-tunity for students to imitate authentic speech used in real-life communication. Through this imitation, students internalized natural expressions, conversational cues, and cultural nuances. This helped them become more effec-tive and confident communicators, better prepared for real-world interactions in English.

The findings highlight that shadowing is per-ceived as a socially and culturally enriching technique that promotes language acquisition through imitation and internalization. A significant proportion of learners felt that shadowing gave them the opportunity to practice with a "real speaker," helping them closely mimic natural speaking styles. This suggests that the method effectively bridges the gap between passive learning and active en-gagement in authentic communication.

Moreover, the majority of participants reported being motivated to use English beyond the classroom environ-ment, which reflects the technique's power to extend learning into real-world social contexts. This type of en-gagement is essential from a sociocultural standpoint, as language learning is deeply embedded in social interac-tion.

Finally, learners expressed a strong sense of gradually internalizing language structures and expres-sions, reinforcing Vygotsky's notion of learning through social mediation. By imitating native speakers within meaningful contexts, students are not merely copying forms but are internalizing patterns for more fluent and culturally appropriate communication.

Overall, the shadowing technique proved to be a practical and efficient method for improving speaking skills. It addressed common speaking challenges such as poor pronunciation, lack of fluency, and limited exposure to authentic language use. The technique promoted active speaking practice, enhanced learners' confidence, and fostered a deeper connection between listening and speaking. Therefore, shadowing should be encouraged as a core component of speaking-focused language learning strategies, especially for students aiming to build strong oral communication skills in English.

4.3. Analysis of In-Depth Interview Questions

To gain deeper insights into learners' experienc-es with the Shadowing technique, in-depth interviews were conducted with six students representing three dif-ferent English-speaking proficiency levels: two high-level, two moderate-level, and two average-level learners. Thematic analysis revealed key findings across the three theoretical perspectives: Linguistic, Cognitive, and Sociocultural, all supporting the effectiveness of Shadowing in improving speaking skills.

About Linguistic Perspective: Improvements in Pronunciation and Intonation: Across all proficiency lev-els, students reported significant improvement in pro-nunciation accuracy and natural intonation. High-level learners emphasized their increased awareness of stress patterns and rhythm, which helped them sound more na-tive-like. Moderate and average-level students noted they had previously mispronounced many words but could now self-correct through repeated exposure to native speech: "I used to say many words wrong, but now I no-tice the correct way when I shadow native speakers." – Student 4 (Moderate)

This indicates that Shadowing functioned as a model-based input tool, enabling learners to internalize correct phonological forms through imitation.

Cognitive Perspective: Fluency and Automaticity Devel-opment: Students from all groups expressed that Shad-owing helped reduce hesitation, increase speaking speed, and shift their mental processing from translation to spontaneous production. High-level students found it easier to "maintain the flow of speaking," while moderate learners said it helped them "think faster in English." Av-erage-level learners especially appreciated how it mini-mized their need to translate from Vietnamese: "I stopped translating in my head. That made me speak faster." – Student 6 (Average). These findings support the automa-ticity theory, where repeated practice under time pressure (i.e., trying to keep up with native speed) fosters faster lexical retrieval and smoother speech.

Sociocultural Perspective: Motivation, Confidence, and Engagement: Most students viewed Shadowing as a mo-tivating and engaging activity, particularly when materi-als were interesting or authentic. Many described the practice as enjoyable, likening it to "talking with a native speaker." Importantly, learners across levels reported im-proved confidence in speaking, both in classroom dis-cussions and in casual conversations.

"I feel more confident in roleplays and presentations. It gave me more speaking practice." – Student 4 (Moderate)

"I speak more in class now. I don't feel so shy anymore." – Student 6 (Average)

These responses demonstrate the internalization of speaking habits through socially situated imitation, which aligns with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Devel-opment. Students learn best when scaffolded by more proficient models (i.e., native audio).

The interviews confirmed that Shadowing is perceived as

an effective and enjoyable technique for speaking improvement by learners of different levels. It enhances fluency, pronunciation, confidence, and moti-vation, meeting both cognitive and sociocultural learning needs. These qualitative results strongly reinforce the post-survey findings and suggest that Shadowing is a valuable pedagogical tool, especially when integrated with level-appropriate, authentic materials

5. Discussion

The present study aimed to investigate whether the Shadowing technique enhances the speaking skills of English-majored sophomores at HUNRE. Drawing upon the Linguistic, Cognitive, and Sociocultural perspectives, both quantitative and qualitative data sources converge to reveal a strongly positive impact.

Survey responses and interview data consistently show that the Shadowing technique significantly en-hanced students' pronunciation accuracy, intonation, and stress patterns. Most students reported greater awareness of how native speakers emphasize certain syllables or intonate in sentences. This is consistent with previous findings in phonological acquisition, supporting the idea that mimicking native speech builds phonetic compe-tence.

The majority of participants acknowledged that Shadowing improved their speaking fluency. They felt more capable of speaking without long pauses and re-ported decreased reliance on translating from Vietnamese into English. These insights highlight the role of prac-tice-based learning in strengthening automatic language processing, aligning with the Skill Acquisition Theory, which emphasizes the importance of repeated, meaning-ful practice in developing automaticity in learning a sec-ond language.

One of the most striking findings across both meth-ods is the boost in self-confidence and learner motivation. Students expressed that regularly shadowing native speech gave them a sense of real communication and helped them feel more prepared and confident in speak-ing tasks, such as classroom discussions and presenta-tions. This supports sociocultural theories of language learning that stress the importance of social interaction and scaffolding through exposure to expert models (na-tive speakers).

The findings of this study generally align with previous research highlighting the benefits of the Shad-owing technique in developing L2 speaking proficiency. Similar to Hamada (2011), who reported significant im-provement in learners' speaking fluency and pronuncia-tion through shadowing exercises, this research found that students at different proficiency levels perceived Shadowing as an effective tool to enhance their speaking performance, particularly in terms of fluency, confidence, and automaticity.

Moreover, the participants in this study, espe-cially those with average or moderate English proficiency, expressed that Shadowing helped them overcome their hesitation and fear of speaking - an observation that res-onates with Murphey's (2001) conclusion that Shadowing builds learner self-awareness and reduces speaking anxi-ety. This overlap suggests that Shadowing is not only beneficial for high-proficiency learners but also accessi-ble and practical for those still in the process of develop-ing their oral skills.

However, there are also key differences. Previous studies like Foote & Trofimovich (2017) focused mainly on the linguistic benefits of Shadowing (e.g., intonation, rhythm, and pronunciation). In contrast, the present re-search emphasized a more holistic perspective, incorpo-rating linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural dimensions. The students' reflection in interviews indicated that Shadowing also promoted internalization of speaking patterns and fostered a stronger sense of self-monitoring and language awareness, aspects less discussed in earlier literature.

One possible reason for these differences lies in the learning environment. Unlike many prior studies conducted in ESL contexts, this study was conducted in an EFL context at HUNRE, where students have limited real-life exposure to English communication. Therefore, structured techniques like Shadowing can offer a substi-tute for natural input and help fill the gap between class-room knowledge and practical use.

In summary, while this study supports much of the existing literature on the benefits of Shadowing, it also provides new insights into its broader applicability across different learner levels and learning environments. It affirms that when implemented with proper guidance, Shadowing can be a powerful technique not only for lin-guistic enhancement but also for developing learners' confidence and speaking autonomy.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Analysis of In-Depth Interview Questions

This study explored the effectiveness of the shadowing technique in enhancing students' Eng-lish-speaking skills, focusing on fluency, pronunciation, and overall confidence. Drawing upon three theoretical perspectives: Linguistic, Cognitive, and Sociocultural, the research combined post-survey results with in-depth interviews from six students across varying proficiency levels.

The findings suggest that shadowing is a benefi-cial technique, particularly in promoting automaticity in speech production, improving pronunciation accuracy, and building learners' confidence. Most participants agreed that regular shadowing practice helped them speak more fluently and reduced hesitation. High and moderate-level students reported

more significant pro-gress compared to lower-level students, which may be attributed to their stronger linguistic foundation and bet-ter processing capacity.

From a linguistic perspective, students were able to internalize natural speech patterns, while cognitively, shadowing supported the transition from controlled to automatic processing. Socioculturally, imitation allowed learners to model authentic speech and interact with lan-guage in a more meaningful way.

Despite some challenges, such as difficulty keeping pace with native speaker audio or understanding complex vocabulary, the majority of students viewed shadowing as an engaging and effective method to im-prove their speaking skills.

6.2. Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommen-dations are proposed:

Incorporate Shadowing into English-Speaking Curricula: Educators are encouraged to integrate the shadowing technique into formal English-speaking courses, particularly in lessons that aim to develop flu-ency and pronunciation. Since many students in this study responded positively to shadowing, using it as a supplementary activity in speaking classes can increase learner engagement and foster more natural speech pro-duction.

Adapt Materials to Learners' Proficiency Levels: To maximize the effectiveness of shadowing, it is crucial to select listening materials that align with students' Eng-lish proficiency. For beginner or lower-intermediate learners, slower-paced recordings or simplified dialogues should be used to prevent discouragement and to allow them to build foundational listening and speaking skills more confidently.

Provide Structured Guidance and Feedback: While shadowing is a self-practice technique, students benefit significantly from teacher guidance. Clear in-structions on how to shadow effectively, such as focusing on rhythm, stress, and intonation, combined with periodic feedback, can help learners monitor their own progress and make targeted improvements.

Encourage Consistent and Reflective Practice: Shadowing is most effective when done consistently over time. Teachers and learners should set achievable prac-tice goals and maintain regular schedules. Additionally, students should be encouraged to reflect on their perfor-mance, possibly by recording themselves and evaluating their progress to enhance awareness and motivation.

Promote Further Research on Shadowing Tech-niques: Although this study yielded promising results, future research with a larger and more diverse participant group would be valuable. Investigating how shadowing affects other aspects of language learning, such as vo-cabulary acquisition,

comprehension, or learner autono-my, can further enrich the understanding of its role in language education.

Abbreviations

HUNRE	Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment
ESL	English as a Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
L2	Second Language

Funding

Conflicts of Interest

"The authors declare no conflicts of interest."

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