

THE INFLUENCE OF SHADOWING TECHNIQUE ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL AT THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION

Tran Thi Nam Phuong*, Ngo Thi Bich Ngoc

TNU – University of Education

ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
Received:	30/8/2023	In the modern world, English is an indispensable part of life to provide people with opportunities to communicate globally. Speaking is always a challenging skill that learners want to improve to communicate fluently in English. Therefore, this study was implemented to explore the potential of the shadowing technique that provides learners with the chance to master speaking skill. The study was conducted with the purpose of evaluating the influence of shadowing technique on students' speaking skill and exploring students' attitudes towards this technique. The participants included 60 first-year students who were non-English majors from different faculties at Thai Nguyen University of Education. The pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire were employed to collect data for the study. The data were analyzed quantitatively with SPSS and Excel to figure out the outcome of the study. The findings indicate that shadowing technique is an effective learning approach that assists to enhance the students' speaking skill, and the students have positive attitudes towards this technique. It is suggested that the shadowing technique should be applied in teaching and learning English.
Revised:	30/10/2023	
Published:	30/10/2023	
KEYWORDS		
Shadowing technique		
Speaking skill		
Students' attitudes		
Non-English major		
Effectiveness		

TÁC ĐỘNG CỦA KỸ THUẬT SHADOWING ĐẾN KỸ NĂNG NÓI CỦA SINH VIÊN TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC SƯ PHẠM THÁI NGUYÊN

Trần Thị Nam Phương*, Ngô Thị Bích Ngọc

Trường Đại học Sư phạm - ĐH Thái Nguyên

THÔNG TIN BÀI BÁO		TÓM TẮT
Ngày nhận bài:	30/8/2023	Ngày nay, tiếng Anh là một phần không thể thiếu trong cuộc sống nhằm mang đến cho con người cơ hội giao tiếp toàn cầu. Kỹ năng nói luôn là một thách thức mà người học muốn cải thiện để giao tiếp trôi chảy bằng tiếng Anh. Vì vậy, nghiên cứu này được thực hiện nhằm nghiên cứu khả năng ứng dụng của kỹ thuật shadowing. Mục đích của nghiên cứu là đánh giá mức độ ảnh hưởng của kỹ thuật shadowing đến kỹ năng nói của sinh viên và tìm hiểu thái độ của sinh viên đối với kỹ thuật này. Đối tượng tham gia bao gồm 60 sinh viên không thuộc chuyên ngành tiếng Anh năm thứ nhất thuộc các khoa khác nhau của Trường Đại học Sư phạm Thái Nguyên. Các bài kiểm tra và bảng câu hỏi được sử dụng để thu thập dữ liệu cho nghiên cứu. Dữ liệu được phân tích định lượng bằng SPSS và Excel. Kết quả nghiên cứu chỉ ra rằng kỹ thuật shadowing là một phương pháp học tập hiệu quả giúp nâng cao kỹ năng nói của sinh viên, và sinh viên có phản hồi tích cực đối với kỹ thuật này. Do đó, kỹ thuật shadowing nên được áp dụng trong dạy và học tiếng Anh.
Ngày hoàn thiện:	30/10/2023	
Ngày đăng:	30/10/2023	
TỪ KHÓA		
Kỹ thuật shadowing		
Kỹ năng nói		
Thái độ của người học		
Không thuộc chuyên ngành tiếng Anh		
Tính hiệu quả		

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34238/tnu-jst.8657>

* Corresponding author. Email: phuongtn@tnue.edu.vn

1. Introduction

These days, how to learn English effectively is a topic that is paid considerable attention by researchers, teachers, and learners all around the world. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are four main skills that learners need to master when learning a new language [1]. Pakula [2] stated that one of the most important fields that should be mastered when learning a language is speaking, and English is not the exception. Lina [3] emphasized that speaking enables learners to convey messages orally. Therefore, there are certain teaching methods applied to assist students develop this essential skill when studying English. Mandaniyati & Sophia [4] confirmed that a technique that could be employed to provide students with opportunities to reach their studying targets was shadowing. There are a variety of advantages that students can obtain when applying the shadowing technique [5]. Shadowing is a technique that should be placed more consideration due to its effectiveness in enhancing students' speaking ability.

In general, the aim of teaching a language is the progress in the ability of communicating successfully in the target language, this process involves both comprehension and production [6]. Speaking is an activity that helps speakers to transfer their thoughts and ideas in communication situations. According to Rabiah [7], a way that individuals could use to interact and convey ideas was speaking. In the learning speaking process, students face challenges in continuously making mistakes in oral production. Another aspect that is also a difficulty for learners is accurate pronunciation. According to Aprianoto & Haerazi [8], pronunciation is an essential domain in speaking and it affects the meaning of the messages that the speaker wants to convey. Muhlisin & Widyanto [9] stated that pronunciation referred to the fields that eased the speaking process including rhythm, intonation, and accent. To deal with these difficulties, shadowing technique was introduced to assist learners reduce the pronunciation errors occurring during oral communication times. Shadowing was defined as an activity of listening to the target language and repeating it immediately as same to the speaker as possible without looking at the text [10]. Shadowing helped to have fast and fluent speech which was often the problems of non-native learners [11]. Shadowing is an updated studying approach because of its beneficial features and available materials to apply.

In Thai Nguyen University of Education, speaking skill is a challenge that a majority of students face when starting their academic life. Although there are certain learning methods that can be employed to improve speaking skill, students find it difficult to apply these learning approaches and find suitable materials to use. In order to assist students to be more confident when speaking English, this study was implemented with an expectation of exploring the opportunity to have an effective method of practicing English for students.

This study aims at investigating the level that shadowing technique influences on students' speaking skills and exploring students' attitudes towards this learning method. This aim was achieved by answering two following research questions:

1. What is the influence of shadowing technique on the speaking skill of students at Thai Nguyen University of Education?
2. What are students' attitudes towards the shadowing technique at Thai Nguyen University of Education?

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

There were 60 first-year students (28 males and 32 females) invited to participate in this study. The students were divided into the experimental group and the control group randomly (30 students in each). They are non-English major students from different faculties at Thai Nguyen University of Education; the participants participated in no extra course except for the English 1 course that was the compulsory subject in the first academic year. The coursebook used in this obligatory course was Life (A2-B1).

2.2. Study setting

In order to examine the influence of shadowing technique on students' speaking skill, the experimental study was conducted with the participation of control group (CG) and experimental group (EG). An experienced lecturer was invited to teach these two groups with the same teaching contents and teaching methods. Pre-test and post-test were administered to evaluate the speaking level of participants before and after 15 weeks of applying shadowing technique. The study procedure was indicated specifically in table 1.

Table 1. Study procedure

Pre-test	English class attendance		Post-test
		Shadowing technique	
EG	EG	EG	EG
CG	CG		CG

The experimental group was instructed to apply the shadowing technique at the beginning of the study by the research group. The shadowing technique was adopted from Hayakawa's shadowing approach [12] with 6 steps as follows:

Step 1: listening	grasp the content (coursebook: Life A2-B1)
Step 2: mumbling	shadow the text in a low voice
Step 3: prosody shadowing	practice shadowing without looking at the textbook
Step 4: recording	record shadowing using mobile phones
Step 5: listening and comparing	listen shadowing records and check with the script
Step 6: reflexing	take note and self- correct mistakes

2.3. Study instruments

In order to answer the first question of the study, pre-test and post-test were administered in the first week and the last week of the term. The pre-test and post-test were taken from the B1 speaking test (the highest band score was 25). The examiner of pre-test and post-test was a foreign teacher who was experienced in marking B1 test format. A questionnaire was employed to answer the second question of the study. The questionnaire, which was in the form of Likert scale, included 5 questions with three levels of opinions: strongly agree, agree and disagree. The questionnaire was delivered to participants in the experimental group after the 15-week study through Google form to collect data. The data were analyzed quantitatively by EXCEL and SPSS.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Pre-test and post-test results

Table 2. Summary of pre-test results

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CG	30	7.00	13.00	9.4333	1.54659
EG	30	7.00	12.00	9.2000	1.34933
Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				F	Sig.
Equal variances assumed		1.707		.197	

Table 2 illustrates the summary of pre-test results of the control group and the experimental group before the implementation of the study. Overall, the speaking level of two examined groups revealed no considerable difference. To be specific, the highest band score of the control group was 13.0 and the lowest was 7.0 with the average score was 9.43; while the highest band score of the experimental group was 12.0 and the lowest band was 7.0 with the average band score was 9.20. In terms of independent T-test, the p value was $0.197 > 0.05$. Therefore, it could be concluded that there was no gap in the speaking level of participants in two groups and the participants in both groups were suitable for the study.

Table 3. *Summary of post-test results*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CG	30	13.00	20.00	15.6333	2.00832
EG	30	14.00	22.00	19.0333	3.06800
Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				F	Sig.
Equal variances assumed		10.257		.002	

Table 3 demonstrates the summary of post-test results of the control group and the experimental group after 15 weeks of participation in the study. In general, the speaking level of two groups showed a significant difference after the investigated period. To be more concrete, the experimental group achieved higher average band score which was 19.03; while this average band score of the control group was 15.63. The highest band score of the experimental group recorded was 22.0 and the lowest was 14.0; meanwhile the highest band score of the control group was 20.0 and the lowest was 13.0. Regarding the independent T-test of the post-test results of two groups, the p value was $0.002 < 0.05$ which confirmed the conclusion that the experimental group achieved a better speaking level than the control group.

After 15 weeks of the study, the experimental group with all the participants using the shadowing technique as instructed appeared to achieve a higher average band score in speaking than at the beginning with a growth of 9.82 (from 9.20 to 19.03). The experimental group also achieved higher average band score (19.03) than that of the control group (15.63); despite the fact that the speaking level of two groups at the beginning of the term had no significant gap. This finding was in line with the statement of Omar and Umehara [13] that shadowing technique was the best option for students to practice pronunciation and help them to speak fluently.

3.2. Questionnaire results

Table 4. *Summary of questionnaire results*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
Shadowing technique helped me to improve pronunciation.	93.33%	6.67%	0%
Shadowing technique helped me to be fluent when speaking English.	96.67%	3.33%	0%
Shadowing technique provided me with a productive learning method.	90%	10%	0%
Shadowing technique helped me to be more confident when speaking English.	83.33%	16.67%	0%
Shadowing technique helped me to have an accent like a native speaker.	80%	16.67%	3.33%

Table 4 indicates the questionnaire results of the experimental group. Generally, the attitudes of students towards the shadowing technique were highly positive. At a closer look, 93.33% of students strongly agreed that shadowing technique helped them to improve pronunciation, 6.67% of them agreed with this point of view, and 0% disagreed. When being asked if shadowing technique helped to be fluent when speaking English, 96.67% of students strongly agreed with this statement, 3.33% of them agreed, and 0% disagreed. In terms of providing a productive learning method, 90% of students strongly agreed with this statement, 10% of them agreed, and 0% disagreed. 83.33% of students agreed with the point of view that shadowing technique helped to be more confident when speaking, 16.67% agreed with this, and 0% disagreed. Regarding the statement that shadowing technique helped to have an accent like a native speaker, 80% of them strongly agreed, 16.67% agreed, and a mere 3.33% disagreed.

It was obvious that participants had positive attitudes towards the shadowing technique. More than 90% of participants strongly agreed that shadowing technique provided them with a productive learning environment, the fluency when speaking English, and the accurate pronunciation. More than 80% of participants strongly agreed that shadowing technique helped them to be confident when speaking English and have an accent like a native speaker. This finding emphasized the statement of Hamada [14] that shadowing technique is a way of improving speaking skills.

4. Conclusion

Speaking skill is a challenging task that learners want to master to communicate fluently in English. This study aimed at investigating the influence of shadowing technique on students' speaking skill and examined their attitudes towards this technique. The findings revealed the answers for two questions posed at the beginning of the study. Firstly, with a significantly higher band score of the experimental group after 15-week study, it could be concluded that shadowing technique considerably enhanced the speaking skills of students at Thai Nguyen University of Education. Secondly, students had positive attitudes towards the shadowing technique with a majority of them strongly agreed or agreed that this technique provided them with an effective way of improving their speaking skill and mastering their pronunciation.

Although the study obtained certain success, some limitations could be identified. One point that should be mentioned was that the study scale was small. Another point was the material used in the study was from students' coursebook that limited the interest of the participants. For future study, it is recommended that the size of the sample should be larger and the materials used should be taken from various sources to increase the level of interest.

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