

EFL Students' Perception Toward the Use of TED Talks in Speaking Skills

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Abstract. Learning to speak is essential, particularly for university students. The use of TED Talks as a teaching tool is suggested as a solution to improve English language skills, particularly speaking, by providing teachers and students with a platform to utilise videos as a valuable teaching resource in the classroom. The data for this study were gathered by a quantitative survey approach. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate how students perceive the use of TED Talks to enhance their speaking abilities. The instrument used in this research to collect the data was a questionnaire. The participants were 75 undergraduate English Education students who had watched TED Talks to boost speaking skills. The results show that students' feelings about utilising TED Talks to learn speaking skills have an impact on the way they speak, vocabulary growth, pronunciation, and accent, giving them a boost in confidence, affecting their presentation style, and motivating them to improve their speaking skills. Through this research, it is suggested that TED Talks can be integrated into the learning curriculum to enhance students' speaking skills.

Keywords: Speaking Skill, Students' Perceptions, TED Talks

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning English is crucial for navigating the advancement of science and technology, as it is a universal language. English is widely used in writing and speaking all over the world as an international language. Indonesia and other countries, across all sectors, utilise English as a vital part of everyday life (Seargeant et al., 2018). In Indonesia, learning English was once necessary from elementary school to university. There are two major types of English skills: productive (speaking and writing), and receptive skills (reading and listening).

Ahn and Lee (2016) stated that the most challenging English skill to learn is speaking. To adapt to global development, students should possess speaking ability as one of the most in-demand skills (Nugraheni, 2017). Wulandari (2014) it was also conveyed that speaking skills enable people to express their thoughts, ideas, and opinions about anything that generates words or sentences orally.

The main linguistic competence-related elements that influence students' speaking ability are pronunciation, collocations, and vocabulary. The ways that enhance speaking fluency and accuracy are reduced due to problems arising from limited time, packed classrooms, the inability to practice outside of class, and inefficient interactive media

frameworks at the school, among other issues. These are some of the problems that English-speaking classrooms in many countries face.

Besides the factors above, students' speaking skill progress is also affected by the use of technology. Technology also has a significant impact on students' speaking abilities. Nursafira (2020) Stated that Technology is thought to be an effective instrument for learning and teaching. The use of technology, such as computer-assisted language learning software, has been highlighted in recent studies as a means to facilitate language acquisition. (Dalton & Grisham, 2011; Kaboocha & Elyas, 2015). To involve students' speaking skills, technology-based content can provide access due to their capability to operate integrated computer tools. (Salem, 2019)

In English-speaking education, innovation has tended to help teachers deliver materials more effectively. Kaboocha and Elyas (2018) Highlighted an increased disinclination of teachers to explore innovations in language learning classrooms. Since educational videos are available online, using YouTube as a resource for self-learning in schools is becoming increasingly frequent. (Albahiri & Alhaj, 2020).

TED (Technology, Entertainment, Media) Talks in the field of teaching and learning language is the application of an instant model of knowledge-based technologies (Hayward, 2017). Nursafira (2020) Convey that Teachers can use TED Talks as a tool to teach English in the classroom, as they represent native English speakers for students. TED Talks are video conferences featuring speakers who are native English speakers, sharing insightful thoughts in no more than 18 minutes.

According to Farid (2019) “The biggest advantage of the videos is that TED Talks are authentic as the speaker share their own personal stories, ideas, experiences with the audience”, so TED Talks are a potential resource to be used in speaking classes. Li et al., (2015) Convey that valid and reliable teaching materials, labelled transcripts, and subtitles from various countries can be used in videos to level up students' speaking abilities. Moreover, María et al. (2018) Stated that the audience can advance their speaking technique from countless Western-style dialects, speeches, and articulation provided in video. Students can become familiar with pronunciation, use proper emphasis in English words, and present acceptable body language and gestures when speaking in front of TED Talks viewers about ideas or opinions (Mishan, 2005).

In the previous study conducted by Karimah et al. (2022) Students' pronunciation and fluency in speaking English improved after they watched the TED Talks videos. In line with the findings of a study conducted by Amalia (2023) The results also reveal that watching TED Talk videos had a significant impact on students' speaking abilities, particularly in terms of public speaking. TED Talk videos provided students with resources to enhance their confidence and speaking skills in English.

Another study conducted by Aprilia (2022) It was also found that students' speaking skills are enhanced when they use TED Talks as a tool. This is very inversely correlated with the rare use of digital online media for learning speaking skills. According to Nursafira (2020) Research findings also support this statement. Based on the study, it can be said that TED Talks can help EFL students become more proficient speakers.

However, the results of research by Kusumastuty et al., (2019) Involving in-service EFL scholars from fourteen Indonesian provinces' institutions, whilst the participants displayed a distinct viewpoint. The findings of this study are based on four indicators of students' perceptions: effectiveness and knowledge, interest in aspects, skill, experience, and

motivation. Based on the findings, there was no statistically significant variation in the opinions on using TED Talks to improve speaking abilities.

Moreover, a study by Farid (2019) on the use of TED Talks videos and their impact on high school students' perceptions of improving public speaking revealed that students with experience watching TED Talks showed an improvement in their speaking skills. In line with that, Li et al. (2015) Research also showed that watching TED Talks videos helped students improve their speaking skills at university.

However, so far, it has been not easy to find research that investigates students' perceptions of using TED Talks to develop speaking skills, even though it has been widely acknowledged how important it is to teach English speaking to students by using TED Talks to enhance their speaking abilities. Previous studies have only examined the effectiveness of using TED Talks on students' speaking skills. To investigate students' perceptions of their speaking ability development and motivation toward using TED Talks, this research was conducted. Specifically, this research aims to find the answer to the research question: How are EFL students' perceptions of the use of TED Talks in speaking skills?

This research examines the topic of EFL students' perceptions of using TED Talks to enhance their speaking skills, a crucial aspect of language learning. The focus of this research is the use of TED Talks as an innovative teaching tool that is compatible with modern educational approaches. It has the potential to engage students and provide an enjoyable learning experience. By exploring students' perceptions, this research takes a student-centred approach, providing insights into how students perceive and respond to the integration of TED Talks in their language learning journey. This particular topic is commonly explored using qualitative methods, but it can limit the depth of the analysis, as perceptions are influenced by individual preferences, previous experiences, and others. Therefore, this study adopted quantitative methods to strengthen the data findings.

2. METHOD

The purpose of this study was to investigate how students felt about using TED Talks to improve their speaking abilities as EFL students. The data for this study were gathered by a quantitative survey approach. According to Bell (2010) Quantitative research examines how different sets of facts relate to one another. Researchers conduct a planned, systematic investigation using numerical data, and their findings typically lead to quantitative conclusions.

There were 75 participants, all EFL college students, in this current study, and none were eliminated. The participants were English Education majors at UIN Walisongo Semarang. The questionnaire was the instrument that the researcher utilised to complete this investigation. Google Forms was used to create the questionnaire, which was then shared online with participants via a WhatsApp link. For five days, the Link is shared once every day. The survey asked questions on demographics and opinions on using TED Talks. Eight demographic questions include e-mail address, name, student ID number, age, gender, language spoken, and English proficiency level. Descriptive analysis was used to examine the data collected.

3. RESULT

3.1 Findings of the Research

These are the findings from a survey administered to students in the English Education Department's fifth-semester class.

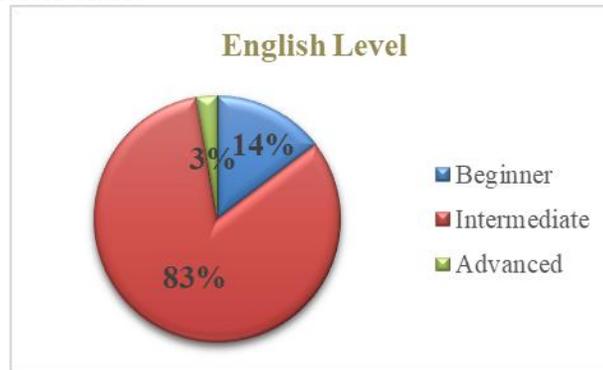


Figure 1. EFL Students' English Level

Based on the diagram above, 83% of the 75 participants had an "intermediate" level of English, while 14% were "beginner" and the remaining 3% were "advanced."

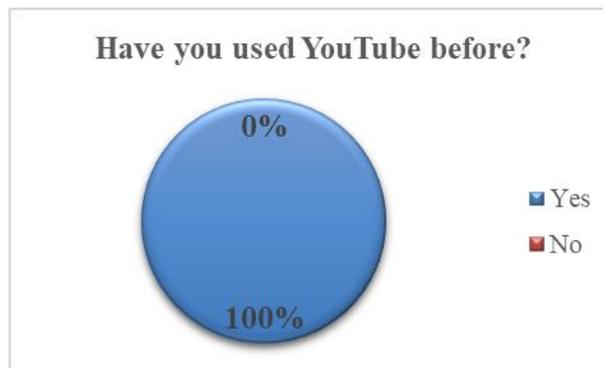


Figure 2. EFL Students' Familiarity with the YouTube App

It can be seen that 100% of students have used YouTube, indicating that they are familiar with the YouTube application.

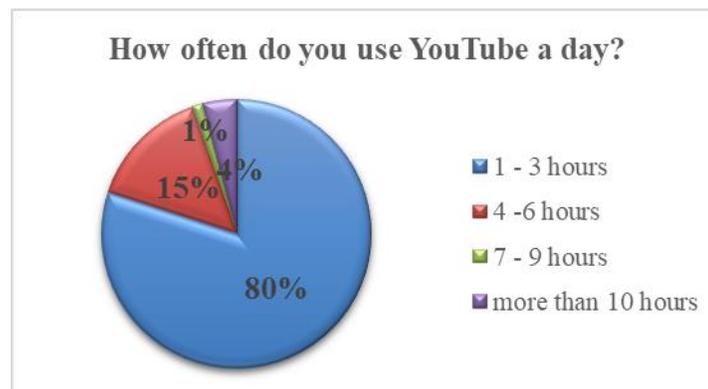


Figure 3. EFL Students' Time spent on YouTube in a day

According to the diagram, 80% of student spent their time on YouTube 1-3 hours a day. Then 15% spend 4-6 hours watching YouTube. However, 1% of students watch 7-9

hours, and 4% spend more than 10 hours watching YouTube.

Table 1. EFL Students' Familiarity with TED Talks YouTube channel

Question	Yes	No
Are you familiar with the TED Talks YouTube channel?	100%	0%
Have you ever watched TED Talks videos?	100%	0%

Based on the data above, all 75 participants were familiar with the TED Talks YouTube channel, and all of them had watched videos from the channel.

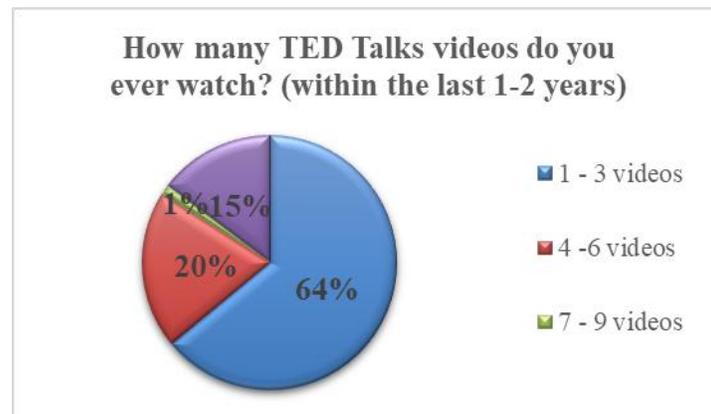


Figure 4. Amount of TED Talks videos watched

Most students have watched 1-3 videos in the last 1-2 years. The percentage of 64% is the largest compared to the other numbers: 20% watched 4-6 videos, and 1% watched 7-9 videos. However, some students have watched more than 10 TED Talks videos, with a percentage of 15%.

Table 2. Use of the TED Talks video as a resource for learning speaking skills

Question	Yes	No
Have you ever used TED Talks as a resource for learning English speaking skills?	92%	8%

Ninety-two per cent of students used TED Talks as a learning resource to improve their speaking skills. They consisted of "intermediate" and "advanced" levels. Eight per cent of students who did not use TED Talks videos to develop their speaking skills were at the "beginner" level.

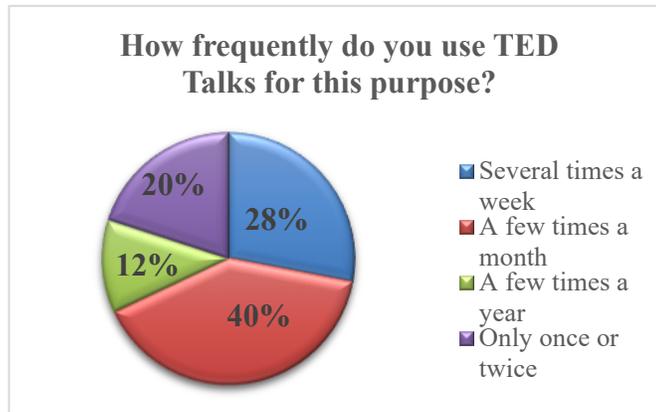


Figure 5. EFL Students' Frequency of using TED Talks videos to learn speaking skills

The highest percentage of the frequency chosen by students was 40% for the answer "A few times a month". Followed by "Several times a week" with 28%. 12% of students also chose "A few times a year", and the remaining 20% chose "only once or twice."

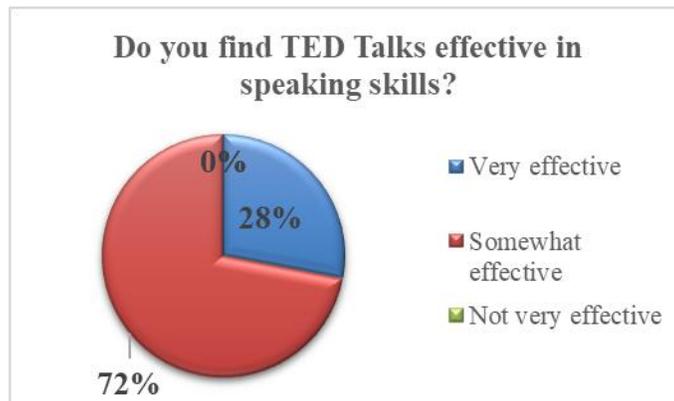


Figure 6. EFL Students' perception of the effect of TED Talks videos on speaking skills

About 28% of students agreed that TED Talks videos are effective for learning speaking skills. While 72% chose "somewhat effective."

Table 3. Students' perception of TED Talks videos on their speaking skills

Question	Yes	No
Do you think TED Talks videos influence how you speak well and correctly?	100%	0%
Have TED Talks influenced your vocabulary growth?	99%	1%
Do TED Talks videos impact your pronunciation and accent in speaking skills?	95%	5%
Do TED Talks videos boost your confidence when speaking?	91%	9%
Do TED Talks videos affect the way you speak during presentations?	88%	12%
After watching TED Talks, do you feel motivated to keep improving your speaking skills?	100%	0%
Do you feel that the speaker in the video encouraged you to keep improving your speaking skills?	97%	3%

In the first question, 100% of the students agreed that the TED Talks video influenced the way they speak. In contrast, in the second question, only 99% of students agreed that the TED Talks video positively affected their vocabulary growth, while the remaining 1% disagreed. The response decreases further in the third question, where 95% of the students

agreed that the TED Talks video had an impact on their pronunciation and accent in speaking, and 5% disagreed. Even in the fourth question, only 91% agreed that TED Talks gave them a boost in confidence when speaking. The other 9% answered no. For the fifth question, 88% of the students agreed that TED Talks influenced the way they communicate during presentations, while the remaining 12% disagreed. In the sixth question, 100% of students decided that after watching TED Talks, they felt motivated to continue improving their speaking skills. In the seventh question, 97% of students agreed that the TED Talks speakers encouraged them to develop their speaking skills, while the remaining 3% disagreed.

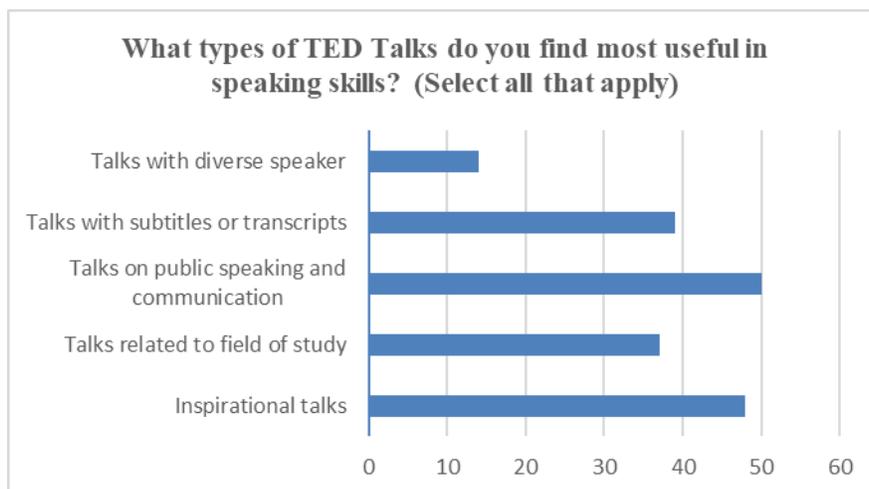


Figure 7. Types of TED Talks videos watched

Most students chose "talks on public speaking and communication" for as many as 50 people. Then 48 students chose "inspirational talks", 39 students chose talks with subtitles or transcripts, 37 students chose talks related to the field of study, and 14 students chose talks with diverse speakers.

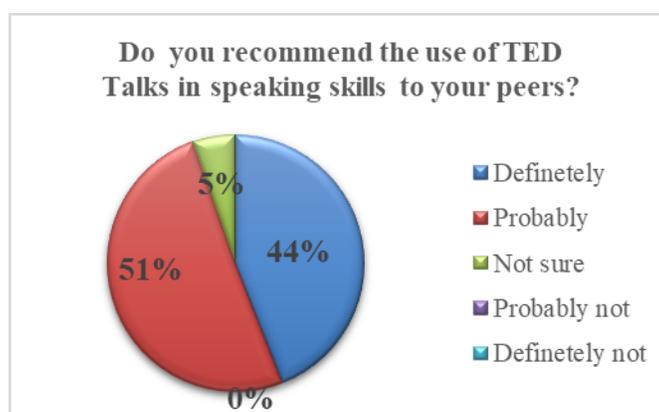


Figure 8. Response to TED Talks

Most students, 51%, chose "probably" when asked to recommend the TED Talks channel to their friends. However, 44% of students chose "definitely". There were also 5% of students who chose "not sure". And the other two options no one chose.

Table 4. Challenges in using TED Talks to learn speaking skills

Question	Yes	No
Have you encountered any challenges or limitations when using TED Talks to improve speaking skills?	61%	39%

As many as 61% of students faced challenges when using TED Talks to improve their speaking skills. The remaining 39% did not face any obstacles. The challenges they face are primarily related to pronunciation, accent, and the speaker's speaking speed. These challenges are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Description of the challenges EFL students face when using TED Talks

Participants	Responses
WA	<i>Sometimes it is difficult to understand the pronunciation, or the speaker is speaking too fast or unclear.</i>
RA	<i>Maybe difficulty in understanding similar vocabulary and pronunciation</i>
MN	<i>Unfamiliar accents, fast speed of speech, and new vocabulary</i>
AA	<i>The challenge is difficult in listening because sometimes the transcript of what they're saying is not accurate.</i>
SH	<i>Sometimes I feel challenged by the vocabulary they use</i>
JF	<i>Difficult to imitate the language style</i>
MH	<i>Difficulty understanding accents and idioms</i>
HR	<i>Use an accent and speed of speaking.</i>
ZZ	<i>Sometimes I still have difficulty understanding the speaker's accent. So, it's kinda tricky to find out what they say.</i>
KI	<i>"Language and Vocabulary: It can be challenging to understand the language and vocabulary used in TED Talks, especially if it is not your native language. Understanding Speakers: Some speakers may speak at a high speed or have accents that are difficult to understand."</i>
IS	<i>The pronunciation of the speaker, who uses a native speaker accent, sometimes makes it difficult for me to understand the meaning of their statement.</i>

3.2 Discussion

Based on Figure 1, students at the intermediate level (83%) showed great interest in utilising TED Talks to improve their speaking skills. At this level, students most likely have a basic understanding of English, making them more receptive to the various language styles presented in TED Talks. This finding suggests that intermediate learners find TED Talks a valuable resource for improving their language proficiency. While beginners had a smaller percentage (14%), they also showed a level of interest in using TED Talks, despite their limited skills. It is essential to recognise that beginners may encounter difficulties in fully grasping the content. However, their participation may indicate a curiosity and willingness to expose themselves to authentic language use, even at an early stage of language learning. At the same time, the percentage of advanced students was 3%. Advanced speakers may already feel a high level of confidence in their speaking ability, which may make TED Talks less beneficial to their advanced language skills. Alternatively, they may have diverse preferences for language practice, and TED Talks may not fully align with their learning needs.

Based on Figure 2, the data showing that 100% of students have used YouTube is an interesting finding that underscores the fact that YouTube is an established and widely adopted digital tool in education. This statement is supported by Gilbert (2018), YouTube's expanding user base—which topped 1.8 billion monthly as of 2018—also demonstrates the platform's appeal with users. Moreover, in January 2023, there were 2.51 billion YouTube users globally, according to research by We Are Social and Hootsuite. Teachers can explore a wide range of educational content beyond TED Talks on YouTube, capitalising on students'

comfort with the platform. This can include language learning channels, pronunciation guides, and additional materials to enrich the overall learning experience.

Based on the time spent on YouTube, as shown in Figure 3, the data indicate moderate YouTube usage among students, with 80% spending 1-3 hours a day on the platform. This suggests that most students integrate YouTube into their daily routine, dedicating a considerable amount of time to the platform. The fact that the majority of students spend 1-3 hours on YouTube daily aligns with the potential of integrating educational content, such as TED Talks, into their existing online activities. Educators can utilise this moderate usage to seamlessly incorporate language learning materials without overwhelming students.

In Table 1, the data present a remarkable finding: all 75 participants were not only familiar with the TED Talks YouTube channel but also actively watched videos from it. This universal awareness and engagement signalled a high level of recognition and interest in TED Talks among the study participants. This suggests that the platform has substantial relevance for language teaching. The popularity of TED Talks can be utilised to create a shared and engaging learning experience for all students.

Based on Table 4, the majority of students (64%) reported having watched 1-3 TED Talks videos in the last 1-2 years. This suggests that students are engaging with TED Talks as part of their learning experience, although this is not a very frequent activity for most students. The percentage of students who watched 4-6 videos (20%) and 7-9 videos (1%) showed lower levels of engagement. This may be due to time constraints, diverse learning preferences, or other factors that influence the frequency of TED Talks consumption. Notably, 15% of students reported having watched more than 10 TED Talks videos. This indicates a higher level of commitment to TED Talks, which may indicate a strong interest in the content or a deliberate attempt to utilise TED Talks for language learning.

Data from Table 2 shows that TED Talks is a learning resource for developing speaking skills, with 92% of students using this platform. Specifically, students were categorised as "intermediate" and "advanced" level. These findings suggest that students with a stronger understanding of English proficiency are more likely to utilise TED Talks to improve language skills. The 8% of students who did not use TED Talks for speech development were classified as being at the "beginner" level. This lower usage among beginners may be due to various factors, including the potential linguistic complexity of TED Talks and a preference for more basic language learning materials.

The data from Figure 5 shows that the highest percentage (40%) of students selected "Several times a month" as their frequency of watching TED Talks. This suggests that most students incorporate TED Talks into their learning routine regularly, although not every day. Furthermore, 28% of students stated "Several times a week" as their frequency. This suggests more frequent engagement with TED Talks, indicating a high level of interest in or authentic language content. While most students (12%) chose "A few times a year," indicating less frequent engagement, another 20% chose "Only once or twice." These responses suggest that some students attend TED Talks less frequently, possibly due to time constraints, varied learning preferences, or other factors.

The data from Figure 6 shows a range of perceptions regarding the effectiveness of TED Talks for learning speaking skills. While 28% of students agreed that TED Talks are compelling, a larger percentage, 72%, chose the option "somewhat effective". Students who were categorised as having an "advanced" level of English mainly chose the "effective" option. This indicates a strong belief among the advanced learners that TED Talks significantly contributed to improving their speaking skills. Their perception aligns with the

notion that exposure to authentic and complex language structures in TED Talks has a positive impact on language proficiency.

There were diverse responses among the students with an "intermediate" level of English. Whereas some also chose "effective", some chose "somewhat effective". This may indicate different experiences or expectations among intermediate learners. Those who found the TED Talks effective may have appreciated the challenge and depth of language presented, while those who found them "somewhat effective" may have recognised the benefits but acknowledged certain limitations or challenges.

For students categorised as "beginner" level, the majority chose "somewhat effective." This response suggests that beginners recognise the potential benefits of TED Talks for speaking skills but may find the content somewhat challenging or not fully tailored to their current proficiency level.

In the first question of the third table, 100% of the students agreed that the TED Talks videos influenced the way they speak, which is a significant and positive finding. This reflects the universal recognition among students that TED Talks play a role in forming and influencing their spoken language. In the second question, the overwhelming agreement (99%) shows that the majority of students recognise the positive impact of TED Talks on their vocabulary growth. This aligns with the nature of TED Talks, which often feature diverse and sophisticated vocabulary used by expert speakers. The 1% of students who chose to disagree may have unique reasons for their responses. Disagree responses may be due to individual learning preferences, language background, or personal preferences regarding content. Understanding the reasons behind these choices can help educators adjust their instructional strategies to accommodate diverse needs.

In the third question, the majority agreement (95%) indicates that most students believe TED Talks contribute positively to their pronunciation and accent development. This positive perception aligns with the audio-visual nature of TED Talks, which offer exposure to a diverse range of accents and language nuances. Disagreement was 5%, signalling a slight shift from the higher level of agreement in the previous question. Understanding the reasons behind this disagreement may provide insight into specific challenges or perceptions relating to pronunciation and accent development. In the fourth question, the majority agreement (91%) indicates that most students think TED Talks contribute positively to their confidence in speaking. The positive influence on confidence may stem from exposure to diverse and articulate speakers, thus fostering a sense of familiarity and competence. The decrease in agreement suggests an increasing variability in students' perceptions regarding the impact of TED Talks on their speaking confidence. This variability may be influenced by individual experiences, learning preferences, or other factors.

Regarding the fifth question, the majority agreement (88%) suggests that a substantial portion of students perceive TED Talks as having a positive impact on their public speaking. This positive influence may be attributed to exposure to effective presentation styles, storytelling techniques, and rhetorical strategies commonly featured in TED Talks. The 12% disagreement marks a higher level of dissent compared to previous questions. Understanding the reasons behind this disagreement is crucial for tailoring instructional strategies to address specific concerns or preferences related to presentation skills. Students may have diverse expectations or preferences for presentation styles. Those who find TED Talks congruent with their preferred style may perceive a positive influence, while others may prefer alternative presentation models.

In the sixth question, the unanimous agreement signifies a strong and universal

positive impact of TED Talks on students' motivation to enhance their speaking skills. This suggests that TED Talks serve as a powerful motivational tool for language learners across different proficiency levels. TED Talks are renowned for their inspirational content, diverse speakers, and engaging presentations. The universal agreement reflects the effectiveness of these elements in fostering a sense of motivation among students to actively pursue improvement in their speaking abilities. In the seventh question, the high agreement rate (97%) suggests that a significant majority of students feel encouraged by TED Talks speakers to develop their speaking skills. This aligns with the motivational and inspirational nature of many TED Talks presentations. The 3% who did not agree represent a minority with a different perspective. They may have preferences for various types of speakers or delivery styles that are not commonly found in TED Talks.

Based on Figure 7, the fact that 50 students (out of the total surveyed) chose "talks on public speaking and communication" as their preferred topic indicates a significant interest in content directly related to developing speaking skills. This aligns with the educational context of the study, suggesting that students are actively seeking resources that directly contribute to their language proficiency. The high preference for "inspirational talks" by 48 students suggests a broad interest in content that goes beyond language skills development. This preference aligns with the motivational aspect of TED Talks, indicating that students appreciate talks that inspire and motivate them beyond the immediate context of language learning. The preference for talks with subtitles or transcripts (chosen by 39 students) reflects an awareness of the importance of accessibility in language learning. Students may find value in having written support to enhance comprehension, reinforce vocabulary, or aid in the understanding of complex linguistic structures. The 37 students choosing "talks related to the field of study" suggest an interest in content that directly relates to their academic pursuits. This preference highlights the potential for integrating TED Talks into subject-specific language learning, making the language acquisition process more contextual and relevant to students' educational goals. Although chosen by a smaller group (14 students), the preference for talks with diverse speakers underscores an appreciation for cultural and linguistic diversity. This preference aligns with the global nature of TED Talks, providing students with exposure to different accents, language variations, and cultural perspectives.

Based on Figure 8, the majority of students (51%) chose "probably", indicates a positive inclination toward recommending the TED Talks channel. This suggests that a significant portion of students sees value in the content but may have some reservations or varying levels of confidence in recommending it. The substantial percentage (44%) of students who chose "definitely" signifies a strong affirmation and confidence in recommending the TED Talks channel. This group perceives the channel as highly valuable and beneficial for language learning, public speaking, and communication skills. The 5% of students who chose "not sure" indicate a level of uncertainty or indecision. This group may have reservations about the relevance of TED Talks to their peers or may not be fully confident in endorsing the channel.

Based on Table 4, the findings indicate that 61% of students encountered challenges when using TED Talks to enhance their speaking skills, suggesting that while TED Talks can be a valuable resource, certain obstacles may hinder the learning experience for a significant portion of students. For the 39% of students who did not face challenges, educators can explore the factors contributing to their smooth experience. Understanding what works well for this group can provide insights into practical strategies that can be shared with the broader student population. For the 39% of students who did not face challenges, educators can

explore the factors contributing to their smooth experience. Understanding what works well for this group can provide insights into practical strategies that can be shared with the broader student population.

Based on Table 5, pronunciation challenges may arise from the phonetic complexity of certain words or phrases used by speakers in TED Talks. This complexity may involve unfamiliar sounds, stress patterns, or variations in intonation that students struggle to replicate. For the accent challenges, TED Talks feature speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds, leading to variations in accents. Students may find it challenging to adapt to different accents, which can affect their comprehension and ability to accurately emulate pronunciation. The speed at which some TED Talk speakers present their content can be challenging for language learners. Rapid speech pace may impede students' ability to follow and process spoken language in real-time.

To overcome these problems, teachers can use the following ways: (1) focused pronunciation practice: teacher can incorporate focused pronunciation practice into language lessons, addressing specific sounds or patterns that students find challenging in TED Talks; (2) exposure to diverse accents: integrating content that exposes students to a variety of accents can help familiarize them with diverse linguistic styles. This exposure can be gradual, allowing students to adapt at their own pace; (3) adjusting to speech pace: educators can guide students in techniques for coping with rapid speech, such as practising active listening, using transcripts for initial comprehension, and gradually increasing exposure to faster-paced content.

4. CONCLUSION

Taking into account the outcomes of the previous discussion, the researcher concluded that students' perceptions of using TED Talks to learn speaking skills were positive. This is shown by their responses to the indicator questions in Table 3. The majority of students gave positive responses regarding the use of TED Talks as a learning resource, which has an impact on the way they speak, vocabulary growth, pronunciation, and accent, giving a boost of confidence, affecting the way they talk when presenting, and motivating them to improve their speaking skills.

However, this study has limitations, which are the lack of participants who can represent the voices of all English language education students at Walisongo State Islamic University, Semarang. Hopefully, future research will be able to incorporate all participants' voices, thereby providing more valid research results.

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