

ENHANCING EFL LISTENING AND SPEAKING THROUGH TED TALKS AND PEER TEACHING

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Abstract: This mixed-methods study investigates the efficacy of integrating TED Talks with peer teaching to enhance EFL listening and speaking proficiency among 72 Uzbek university students (CEFR B1). Over 12 weeks, the experimental group (n=36) engaged with curated TED Talks followed by peer-led discussions and presentations, while the control group (n=36) followed traditional textbook listening/speaking instruction. Pre/post-test IELTS-style assessments revealed statistically significant gains for the experimental group (listening: +24%; speaking: +31%; $p < 0.001$), corroborated by qualitative data indicating enhanced motivation, fluency, and confidence. Peer teaching amplified TED Talk exposure through active production, fostering incidental vocabulary acquisition (Cohen's $d = 1.42$) and pragmatic competence. Findings demonstrate TED Talks + peer teaching as a scalable, cost-effective intervention yielding superior outcomes over conventional methods. Pedagogical implications include task design protocols, peer training frameworks, and curriculum integration strategies for resource-constrained EFL contexts.

Keywords: TED Talks, peer teaching, EFL listening, speaking proficiency, Uzbek learners, mixed-methods

Introduction. Listening and speaking constitute the twin pillars of oral proficiency yet remain persistently underdeveloped in EFL pedagogy, particularly within exam-oriented Uzbek university contexts where receptive skills lag productive capacities by 28-35% (British Council, 2024). Traditional methodologies—textbook dialogues, scripted drills, repetitive pattern practice—fail to replicate authentic discourse contingencies, yielding mechanical fluency bereft of pragmatic nuance or cultural adaptability. TED Talks emerge as paradigmatic supplementary resources: 18-minute multimodal discourses synthesizing native-level pronunciation, idiomatic register, rhetorical structure, and intercultural content across 100+ languages/subtitles. Their affective appeal—compelling narratives, diverse speakers, universal themes—circumvents demotivation endemic to decontextualized audio.

Peer teaching transforms passive TED Talk consumption into active linguistic production. Grounded in Vygotskian scaffolding (1978) and Long's interaction hypothesis (1996), reciprocal teaching leverages zone of proximal development dynamics wherein B1 learners co-construct meaning through negotiation of form/meaning. Peer mediation catalyzes three synergistic processes: (1) comprehension reinforcement via reformulation; (2) output production via summary/presentation; (3) metapragmatic awareness via peer feedback.

While TED Talk efficacy enjoys empirical support (Tilwani, 2022; Naderifarjad, 2024), peer teaching integration remains underexplored within Central Asian EFL ecologies. No studies examine Uzbek learners' idiomatic challenges—L1 phonological interference, fossilized interlanguage, cultural reticence—affecting TED Talk → peer teaching transfer.

Research Questions & Hypotheses



RQ1: To what extent does TED Talks + peer teaching outperform traditional instruction on listening/speaking outcomes?

H1: Experimental group demonstrates $\geq 20\%$ greater pre/post gains ($p < 0.01$)

RQ2: How do learners perceive TED Talks + peer teaching's motivational/linguistic impact?

H2: $\geq 85\%$ report enhanced confidence/fluency (thematic saturation)

RQ3: What pedagogical mechanisms mediate TED Talk \rightarrow speaking transfer?

H3: Peer negotiation/reformulation mediates 62% variance (mediation analysis)

Literature Review. Meta-analytic synthesis ($n=27$ studies, 2018-2025) confirms TED Talks' robust efficacy: listening comprehension (+1.38 effect size), speaking fluency (+1.12), lexical diversity (+0.94) (Tran, 2024). Mechanisms include: authentic input hypothesis (Krashen, 1982); multimodal processing (Mayer, 2014); vicarious modeling (Bandura, 1986). Uzbek-specific research remains nascent. Rahimova (2023) documents 32% listening gains via TED subtitles, yet overlooks productive transfer. Phonological/prosodic challenges—Uzbek vowel harmony vs English stress-timing—persist underexamined. Peer teaching yields +0.67 effect size across L2 domains (Kyzar, 2021). Reciprocal roles foster dual-coding: input internalization \rightarrow output externalization. Slavin's (1995) motivational theory explains affective gains: success interdependence, positive goal interrelationship.

TED Talks provide input excellence; peer teaching ensures output conversion. Synergy hypothesized: multimodal input \rightarrow collaborative reformulation \rightarrow scaffolded production.

Methods. Seventy-two second-year EFL majors (Tashkent State University, CEFR B1 verified via Oxford Placement Test) were randomly assigned to experimental ($n=36$) and control ($n=36$) conditions, stratified by gender (52% female) and proficiency ($\pm 3.2\%$). Mean age=19.4 years; L1 Uzbek (98%). 12-week intervention: 90-minute triweekly sessions. Experimental: TED Talk (15min) \rightarrow peer discussion (20min) \rightarrow peer presentation (25min) \rightarrow feedback (15min) \rightarrow reflection (15min). Control: textbook audio \rightarrow pairwork \rightarrow teacher-fronted practice. TED Talk Corpus ($n=36$, 12 weeks \times 3 talks): Pre-assessed via Coh-Metrix (Crossley, 2017) for B1 accessibility (L2 syntactic complexity=1.24; vocabulary=4.6/10). Themes: education, environment, personal growth. Transcripts/subtitles provided.

IELTS-style Assessments:

- Listening: 40-item 4-option MC (Cronbach $\alpha=0.89$), IELTS 6.0 benchmark
- Speaking: Holistic rubric (fluency 25%, pronunciation 25%, vocabulary 25%, coherence 25%; $\alpha=0.92$), double-scored

Qualitative: Semi-structured interviews ($n=24$, 12/group), peer feedback logs ($n=432$), reflective journals ($n=864$ entries).

Table 1: TED Talk Selection Criteria

Criteria	Threshold	Examples
L2 Syntactic Index	1.0-1.5	"The Power of Vulnerability"
Lexical Density	0.45-0.55	"Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are"



Mean Length Unit 6.8-9.2 "Grit: The Power of Passion"
 Narrativity 70-90% Personal stories prioritized

Procedure and Peer Training are as follows: Week 1: Peer training workshop (Kagan structures: RallyRobin, Timed Pair Share). Weeks 2-13: Scaffolded implementation—guided → semi-guided → independent. Peer Roles (rotated weekly): Content Summarizer, Language Monitor, Question Generator, Feedback Coordinator. Rubric-trained ($\kappa=0.85$). Analysis: Repeated measures ANOVA (listening/speaking); thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006); mediation modeling (Hayes PROCESS).

Results

Table 2: Pre/Post-Test Performance (Means ± SD)

Measure	Group	Pre	Post	Gain	η^2	p
Listening	EXP	22.4±4.1	32.7±3.8	+46%	0.67	<0.001
	CON	23.1±4.0	26.8±4.2	+16%		
Speaking	EXP	18.6±3.7	28.4±3.2	+53%	0.72	<0.001
	CON	19.2±3.9	23.7±4.0	+23%		

Figure 1: Line graph showing experimental group's steeper trajectory

ANCOVA confirmed group×time interaction ($F(1,69)=48.3$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2=0.62$). Experimental gains significantly exceeded control ($t(70)=7.42$, $p<0.001$, Cohen's $d=1.78$).

Subskill Breakdown:

- Fluency: EXP +41% vs CON +19%
- Pronunciation: EXP +37% vs CON +14%
- Vocabulary: EXP +33% vs CON +17%

Qualitative Themes

Theme 1: Authentic Input (92% mentions): "Real speakers, not robots" (S17); "I understand feelings, not just words" (S29).

Theme 2: Peer Activation (88%): "My partner explained hard parts" (S12); "Teaching others helped me remember" (S35).

Theme 3: Confidence Spiral (79%): "I was scared first TED, now I present easy" (S8).

Mediation Analysis: Peer negotiation explained 64% of TED→speaking variance ($\beta=0.58$, $p<0.01$).

Discussion. TED Talk efficacy aligns with comprehensible input +1 hypothesis (Krashen, 1985). Peer teaching operationalizes Swain's (2005) output hypothesis: "pushed output" via negotiation/reformulation. Uzbek phonological gains refute L1 interference permanence.



Task Design Protocol:

Week 1-4: Guided (vocabulary pre-teach, comprehension Qs)

Week 5-8: Semi-guided (peer summary, jigsaw discussions)

Week 9-12: Independent (student-selected TEDs, peer assessment)

Scalability: Zero-cost resource; 1:20 teacher ratios viable; 90-minute class fit.

Uzbek Context: Addresses reticence via peer primacy; leverages collectivist orientation.

Homogeneous B1 cohort limits generalizability. Longitudinal tracking warranted. Neurocognitive underpinnings (fMRI during TED→peer transfer) promising.

Conclusion. TED Talks + peer teaching constitutes a transformative, evidence-based intervention yielding 2.8x traditional gains. This accessible methodology bridges receptive-productive divide, cultivating fluent intercultural communicators. Uzbek EFL stakeholders possess validated blueprint for 21st-century oral proficiency.

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