



Integrating TED Talks and TBLT for Enhancing Speaking Accuracy: A Study in the Algerian EFL Classroom

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Abstract

In the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education within Algerian universities, the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) stands as a promising avenue to enrich students' language proficiency. This research paper investigates the integration of TED Talks within the framework of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). The primary aim is to evaluate their impact on the speaking accuracy of EFL Algerian university students. To examine this dynamic, this study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining the use of questionnaires, a case study, and interviews to gather data from a sample of EFL Algerian students. The findings revealed the transformative potential of integrating TED Talks, and by extension, other ICT Video tools, into the language learning process. Notably, this integration yielded a substantial enhancement in students' speaking accuracy, with a particular emphasis on grammar and tense usage. This paper contributes to the growing body of literature on the symbiosis between technology-enhanced language learning and traditional teaching methodologies, underscoring its significance in the context of Algerian EFL education and beyond.

Keywords: *ICT tools, TBLT, speaking accuracy, EFL students.*

1. Introduction

In the contemporary world, the integration of technology and ICT tools has become a key factor for successful education worldwide. It has fundamentally transformed the landscape of language learning, offering a host of possibilities for educators and learners. According to [1] (p.4), "ICTs have the potential to accelerate, enrich, and deepen skills, to motivate and engage students, as well as strengthening teaching." This transformative potential is particularly pronounced in the EFL education context, where ICT tools have evolved into invaluable resources for learners across the globe [2]. In Algeria, a country with a growing emphasis on English language proficiency, while ICT tools are making their way into the educational landscape, however, their integration is still in its nascent stages [3]. This stands in contrast to the global community, where there has been remarkable growth in the use of ICT tools in education. Algeria, with its distinct language learning requirements shaped by its linguistic diversity, the growing importance of English, cultural factors, educational reforms, technology integration, motivation, and challenges, now finds itself at a crucial juncture, actively exploring the potential that these tools offer.

The prevailing approach in the Algerian educational system is Communicative Language Teaching [4], which emphasises fluency in language instruction. However, there is often a gap when it comes to accuracy. Open-ended production activities, while valuable for fluency development, may fall short in eliciting complex grammatical structures and precision, which can be challenging to acquire [5]. This highlights a potential gap in how fluency and accuracy are addressed within the EFL Algerian education system.

Recent literature has illuminated a shift in the landscape of language instruction. ICT tools such as TED Talks and teaching methodologies such as TBLT are gaining prominence in language classrooms, with educators worldwide recognizing their transformative potential (see [6], [7], [8]). It is within this evolving educational landscape that this study finds its purpose. This research is designed to fill the identified research gap by exploring the transformative potential of integrating ICT tools, particularly TED Talks, and TBLT within the EFL Algerian context. The primary aim is to assess the impact of this integrated approach on EFL Algerian university students' speaking accuracy. This paper focuses on grammar, with a special emphasis on the accurate use of past tense. By analysing the effectiveness of this synergy, this research seeks to bridge the gap between fluency and accuracy, offering a potential solution to the challenges in language instruction within the EFL Algerian context. This research, situated against the unique backdrop of Algerian EFL education, contributes to the



broader discourse on the integration of ICT tools in language education and its implications for students' language proficiency. This paper will briefly describe the methodology and results of the study and conclude by offering recommendations and discussing the broad implications for the evolving landscape of language learning in Algerian universities and beyond.

2. Method

The research methodology comprised three stages. Initially, a semi-structured questionnaire was administered to 50 first-year undergraduate students specializing in the English language at Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla, Algeria. It gathered preliminary insights into the participants' perceptions of integrating ICT tools in language learning and their accuracy difficulties. Secondly, the researcher conducted an in-depth four-week pedagogic intervention involving six students, exposing them to TED Talks and various language learning tasks. Figure 1 demonstrates the pedagogic intervention design. Finally, individual face-to-face interviews were conducted with the same six participants, exploring their experiences and perceptions in greater depth.

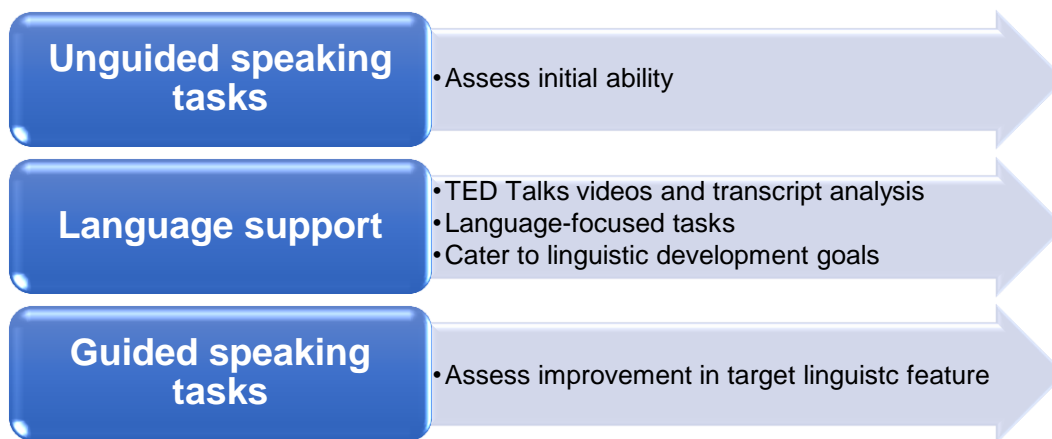


Figure 1. Pedagogic intervention design

The Accuracy Score (AS) measure was used to evaluate the correct use of past tense in the participants' performance in obligatory contexts (OC). The AS measure aligns with the instructions and combines elements from the local accuracy measures Supplied in Obligatory Contexts and Target-Like Use (see [9]). To employ the AS measure, the students speaking performances were transcribed and analysed, with a specific focus on evaluating the correct use of past tense within the OC. After that, the correct usages of past tense within these contexts were carefully counted and recorded. This process ensured a targeted assessment of students' ability to employ past tense correctly in the prescribed OC as instructed during the intervention. To calculate the AS, the number of past tense verbs correctly used in OC was divided by the total number of OC.

Moreover, thematic analysis, following the six-step procedure by [10], was employed to analyse the interview data. To ensure the reliability of the findings, method triangulation was applied by combining quantitative and qualitative data, providing a comprehensive view of the impact of TED Talks and TBLT on speaking accuracy among EFL Algerian university students. This mixed-methods approach allowed for a thorough exploration of the research aim and addressed the identified gaps in language instruction within the Algerian EFL context.

3. Results

This section will offer key excerpts of the data collected. Figures 2 and 3 offer insight into the participants' usage patterns of various ICT resources for study purposes and their experience regarding these ICT resources.

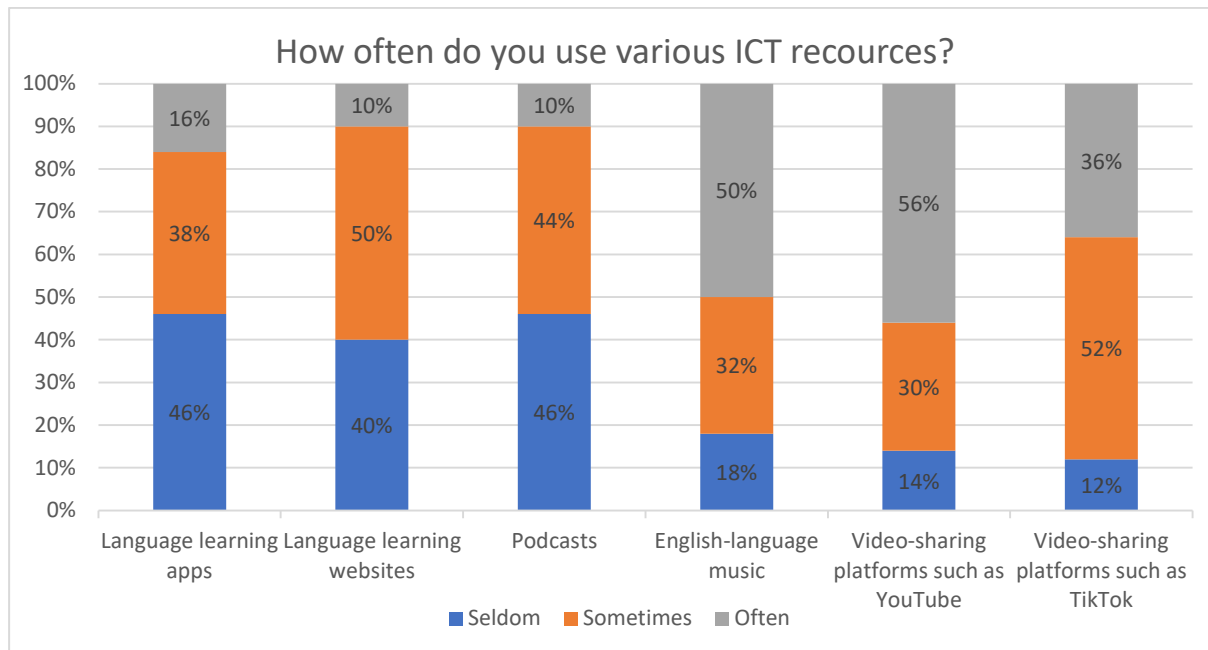


Figure 2. Participants' use of ICT resources

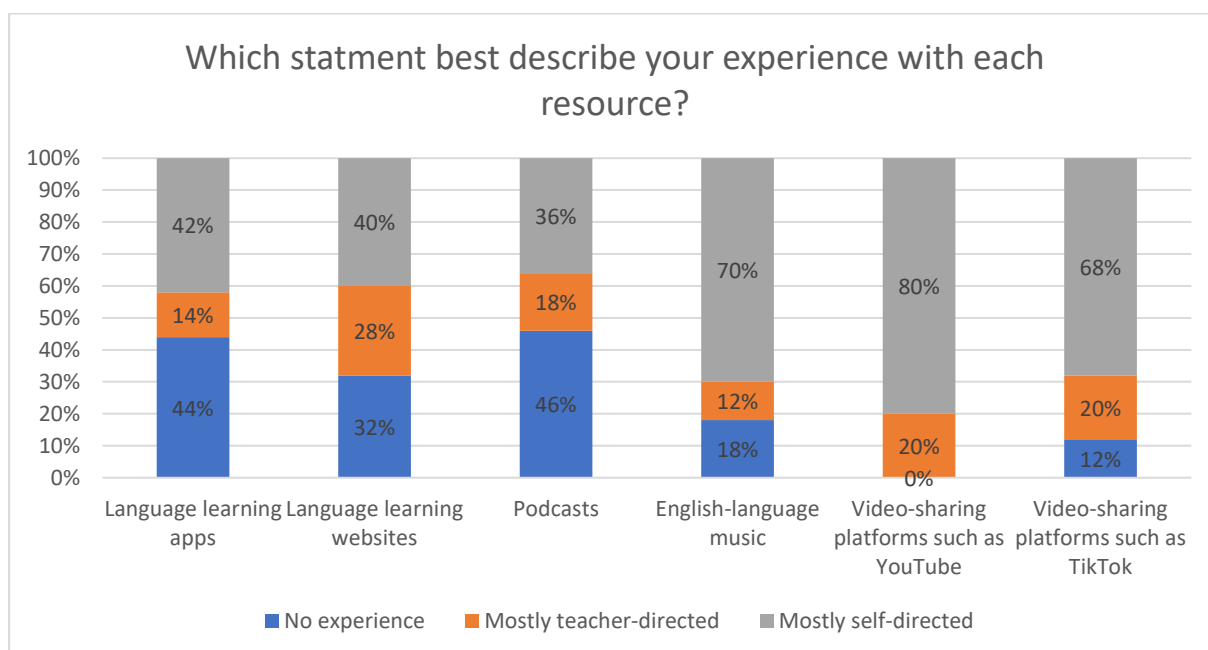


Figure 3. Participants' experience with ICT resources

Figure 4 demonstrates the AS of using the past tense by the six participants to accurately measure their proficiency in using this linguistic feature. The functions examined include recalling past events, describing past event details or sequences, and signifying past event impact or significance. During the unguided speaking tasks, the AS ranged between 0.29 and 0.73. However, in the guided speaking tasks, participants demonstrated perfect accuracy, achieving an AS of 1.00.

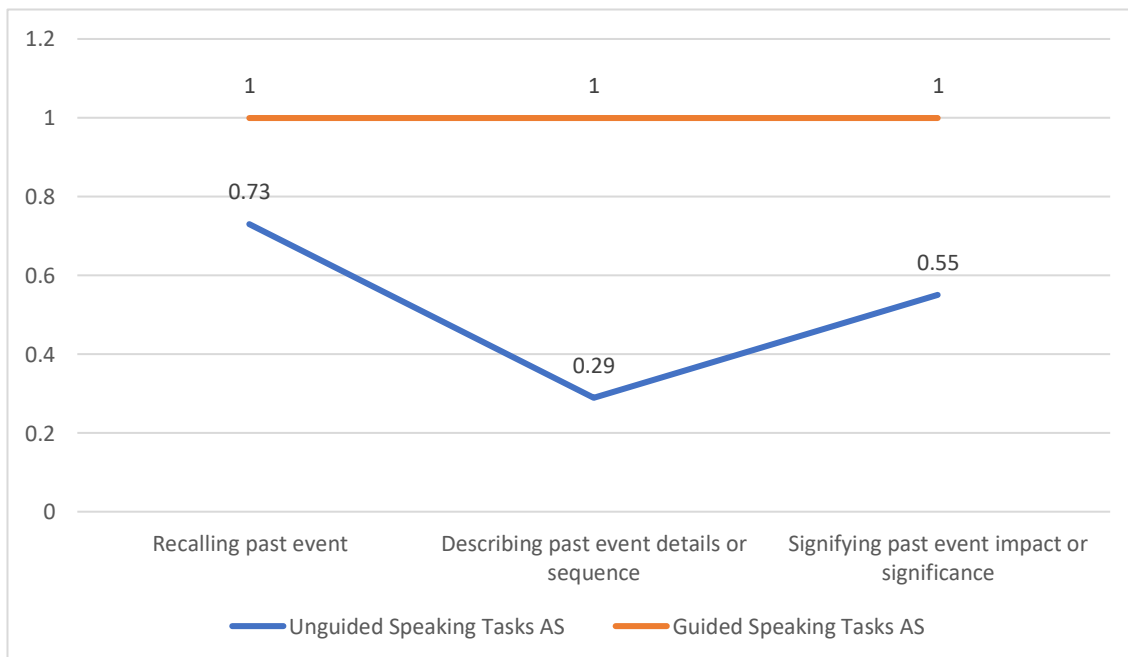


Figure 4. Participants' AS of using past tense during unguided and guided speaking tasks

4. Analysis and discussion

Overall, the findings indicate that the integration of TED Talks, within the framework of TBLT, had a significant impact on the linguistic proficiency of EFL Algerian university students, mainly on the use of past tense. These findings are multi-faceted and shed light on several key aspects of language learning and technology integration.

4.1 The role of multimedia and entertainment in language learning

The prominent usage of video-sharing platforms, English-language music, and TikTok by participants, as seen in Figure 2, underscores the growing role of multimedia and entertainment in language exposure. This aligns with the contemporary shift towards interactive and engaging language learning methods that leverage familiar and enjoyable content. Notably, these findings influenced the design of the pedagogical intervention in this study. By incorporating multimedia resources, such as TED Talks videos, the intervention aligns with the contemporary understanding of effective language instruction.

4.2 Varying degrees of familiarity and autonomy in ICT usage

The data reveals varying degrees of familiarity and autonomy in using diverse ICT resources for language learning (see Figure 3). Some participants were less familiar with these resources, suggesting opportunities for introducing them to ICT tools. Moreover, participants' self-directed use of ICT resources demonstrates their proactive approach to language learning. Additionally, the significant role of teacher guidance in utilizing specific resources indicates the potential for educators to shape students' digital learning experience effectively. These findings underscore the effectiveness of the pedagogical intervention in cultivating a technologically informed language learning environment. The intervention fostered a comprehensive and adaptive learning process by addressing varying familiarity levels and encouraging both independent and guided ICT resource use.

4.3 Enhancing language learning through guided instruction

By strategically incorporating videos into language instruction, such as TED Talks, guiding autonomous learning efforts, and showcasing the educational potential of entertainment content, the intervention fostered language learning holistically and effectively. During the unguided speaking tasks (as shown in Figure 4), participants demonstrated moderate accuracy in using past tense, highlighting areas where improvement is needed. However, the guided speaking tasks, conducted after the intervention, revealed remarkable progress in participants' ability to use past tense accurately. These notable improvements observed in the guided speaking tasks illustrate the value of exposure to authentic language and targeted practice, where various language-focused tasks contributed to the participants' improved proficiency in using past tense. This resulted in more coherent, accurate, and



expressive communication. Overall, the results underscore the importance of guided instruction and practice in enhancing participants' language proficiency. The judicious combination of TED Talks and TBLT was pivotal in empowering students to develop a strong command of utilizing past tense with proficiency and precision.

4.4 Perceived usefulness of ICT integration

The participants' attitudes towards ICT integration in the classroom were overwhelmingly positive. During the interviews, they consistently expressed favourable views, highlighting the practical benefits and motivational aspects of technology. Their comments revealed a deep appreciation for the role of technology in enhancing their language learning journey. As a representative comment, participant 5 reported, "I think it encouraged us and helped us, and we are in the technology area and generation." This statement illustrates that the participants perceive technology as a motivating factor, aligning with the digital nature of the current generation that grants them access to a wealth of resources. The responses collectively demonstrate that the participants view technology and ICT tools as not only convenient but also as powerful tools that significantly impact their language learning experience positively. The results indicate that ICT tools offer more than just convenience; they also provide essential support, motivation, and empowerment.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

In conclusion, the transformative potential of multimedia resources, particularly TED Talks, highlights the need to infuse language learning with engaging and authentic content. Educators should prioritize the integration of multimedia materials into their teaching methods, making language learning more dynamic, authentic, and relevant. Moreover, the study underscores the importance of guided language instruction and teacher support in the digital language landscape, emphasizing that instructors should guide students' engagement with technology for language learning. The perceived usefulness of ICT integration among participants underscores the need for educational institutions to invest in digital resources and training, fostering a technologically informed language learning environment that aligns with the preferences of the current generation. Furthermore, future research should explore and promote a blended learning approach that combines digital resources with traditional classroom instruction, fostering balanced and effective language learning. Embracing these implications and recommendations, EFL education in Algeria can continue to evolve, providing a more engaging and effective language learning experience for students, not only within Algeria but also extending its benefits beyond the nation's borders in the digital age.

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