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### THE IMPACT OF READING AND LISTENING TASKS ON SPEAKING SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN EFL LEARNERS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Annotation

This study explores the relative impact of listening and reading on speaking skill development. Using a mixed-methods design, participants were divided into two groups—one focused on listening tasks, the other on reading—using identical materials and assessments. Speaking performance was evaluated through grammar, vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and overall fluency. Results show that both listening and reading significantly enhance speaking skills, with listening slightly improving pronunciation and active vocabulary, while reading contributes more to comprehension accuracy. The study concludes that integrating both modalities fosters balanced speaking development and suggests further research on the long-term effects of combined approaches.

**Key words:** Speaking, listening, reading, activating specific vocabulary, improving pronunciation, Uzbek students.

### EFL O'QUVCHILARIDA O'QISH VA TINGLASH TOPSHIRIQLARINING GAPIRISH KO'NIKMASI RIVOJLANISHIGA TA'SIRI: TAQQOSLOVCHI TADQIQOT

Annotatsiya

Ushbu tadqiqot tinglash va o'qishning gapirish ko'nikmasini rivojlantirishdagi nisbiy ta'sirini o'rganadi. Aralash uslubdagi tadqiqotda ishtirokchilar ikki guruhga bo'lindi: biri tinglash, ikkinchisi o'qish topshiriqlari bilan shug'ullandi. Har ikki guruhga bir xil materiallar va baholash mezonlari taqdim etildi. Gapirish ko'nikmasi grammatik to'g'rilik, so'z boyligi, nutqni boshqarish, talaffuz va umumiy ravonlik mezonlari asosida baholandi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, tinglash ham, o'qish ham gapirishni sezilarli darajada rivojlantiradi. Tinglash talaffuz va faol so'z boyligini yaxshilashda biroz ustunlikka ega bo'lsa, o'qish matnni tushunish aniqligini oshirishda samaraliroqdir. Tadqiqot natijasi sifatida har ikkala usulni birlashtirish muvozanatli gapirish ko'nikmasini shakllantirishga yordam berishi ta'kidlanadi. Shuningdek, kelgusidagi tadqiqotlarda ikki yo'nalishli yondashuvning uzoq muddatli ta'sirini o'rganish tavsiya etiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Gapirish, tinglash, o'qish, faol so'z boyligini shakllantirish, talaffuzni yaxshilash, o'zbek talabalar.

### ВЛИЯНИЕ ЗАДАНИЙ ПО ЧТЕНИЮ И АУДИРОВАНИЮ НА РАЗВИТИЕ НАВЫКОВ УСТНОЙ РЕЧИ У ИЗУЧАЮЩИХ АНГЛИЙСКИЙ КАК ИНОСТРАННЫЙ: СРАВНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ

Аннотация

Данное исследование рассматривает относительное влияние аудирования и чтения на развитие навыков устной речи. В ходе смешанного метода участники были разделены на две группы: одна выполняла задания по аудированию, другая — по чтению. Обе группы работали с одинаковыми материалами и критериями оценки. Навык говорения оценивался по грамматической точности, лексическому запасу, управлению высказыванием, произношению и общей беглости. Результаты показывают, что как аудирование, так и чтение значительно способствуют развитию устной речи. Аудирование немного эффективнее в улучшении произношения и активного словарного запаса, тогда как чтение повышает точность понимания текста. В заключение подчеркивается, что интеграция обоих видов деятельности способствует сбалансированному развитию навыков говорения. В дальнейшем рекомендуется изучить долгосрочные эффекты комбинированного подхода.

**Ключевые слова:** говорение, аудирование, чтение, активизация словарного запаса, улучшение произношения, узбекские студенты.

**Introduction.** Speaking skills are central to second language acquisition, reflecting overall communicative competence (Rao, 2019). However, the most effective ways to develop them remain debated. Among key input modes, reading and listening play vital roles, yet their comparative impact on speaking proficiency—particularly in EFL contexts—has been underexplored. This study examines which modality, reading or listening, more effectively enhances speaking development among EFL learners in Uzbekistan, using a quasi-experimental design. It addresses

both pedagogical challenges, such as limited class time and resources, and theoretical distinctions between the modalities: reading relies on visual decoding and syntactic processing, whereas listening involves real-time auditory and phonological skills. It is hypothesized that listening tasks yield greater improvement in speaking proficiency, as they more closely reflect natural oral communication (Newton & Nation, 2020; Richards, 2008). By clarifying how each input contributes to speaking development, this study provides evidence-based recommendations for lesson design and

curriculum planning, supporting a more balanced and effective integration of reading and listening in EFL instruction.

**Literature Review.** Scholars widely recognize that both reading and listening play crucial yet distinct roles in developing speaking proficiency. Each modality contributes uniquely to language acquisition, supported by extensive theoretical and empirical research.

**The Role of Listening in Language Acquisition.** Listening provides essential exposure to the rhythm, intonation, and context of spoken language, enabling learners to internalize pronunciation and prosodic features that support both oral and written comprehension (Hsu, 2024). It immerses learners in authentic linguistic input, fostering natural processing of syntax and vocabulary. The six-stage model of listening—hearing, attention, understanding, memory, evaluation, and response—illustrates its cognitive depth and close connection to speaking development (Sabina, 2018).

**The Impact of Reading on Spoken Language.** Reading enhances speaking by reinforcing linguistic and cognitive structures shared with oral production. Through engagement with texts, learners expand their vocabulary, grammar, and discourse competence, which improve fluency and precision in speech (Huettig & Pickering, 2019). Reading also equips learners to handle complex syntactic and semantic forms encountered in conversation (Ermanov, 2023).

**Bridging Modalities to Speaking.** Despite their benefits, learners often struggle to transfer reading and listening skills into spontaneous speech, particularly in real-world interactions (Ermanov & Soatova, 2023). This challenge

Table 1

Demographic Descriptions of the Participants in This Study

Group	N	Age (SD)	English Experience	IELTS Score	IELTS 95%CI
Overall	20	17.85 (0.36)	2.62 (2.17)	6.58 (0.58)	6.83, 6.32
Listening	10	17.8 (0.89)	3.05 (2.77)	6.60 (0.49)	6.38, 6.82
Reading	10	17.9 (0.31)	2.20 (2.00)	6.55 (0.65)	6.33, 6.77

Note. English experience is reported in the number of years; Standard deviations are displayed in parentheses.

**Procedure:** Researchers designed a 10-item task (four multiple-choice and six cloze questions) to measure how reading and listening affect speaking skills. The material, classified at CEFR C2 level, was used in both text and audio formats (see Appendix). Participants were divided into two groups: the Listening Group listened to the passage, and the Reading Group read the same text before answering comprehension questions. Each student completed the task individually, then orally summarized the content. Their responses were recorded, transcribed, and evaluated by an expert based on key speaking criteria.

**Data Analysis:** The data were analyzed quantitatively to compare the effects of reading and listening tasks on speaking performance.

**Scoring:** Participants' recorded speeches were evaluated by a local expert using CEFR criteria—fluency, coherence, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Total scores were obtained by summing these components.

**Group Averages:** Mean speaking scores were calculated separately for the Listening and Reading Groups.

**Comparative Analysis:** Differences between the groups' mean scores were examined to determine which task had a stronger effect on speaking improvement.

**Descriptive Statistics:** Mean, standard deviation, and range were calculated to summarize performance variability.

This systematic procedure enabled clear comparison of the relative impact of reading and listening on speaking skill development.

**Ethical Considerations:** Several ethical aspects were addressed to ensure fairness and objectivity in assessment:

Table 2

The Participants Scores in the Final Reading/Listening Test

underscores the importance of integrating both modalities to create a balanced instructional approach. In sum, reading strengthens linguistic knowledge while listening develops auditory comprehension and communicative responsiveness. A combined pedagogical framework leveraging both skills can most effectively enhance speaking proficiency and prepare learners for authentic communication.

**This Study:** This study examined whether students' speaking proficiency differs based on whether their classes focused on listening or reading. The central research question was whether learners in listening-focused classes demonstrate higher speaking skills than those in reading-focused classes. Given the closer relationship between listening and speaking, it was hypothesized that students in the listening group would achieve higher speaking scores by the end of the study.

**Participants:** This quasi-experimental study involved 20 university students (19 female, 1 male) from a language institution in Uzbekistan, randomly divided into a Listening Group and a Reading Group of 10 participants each. The average age was 17.85 years (SD = 0.36). Participants had studied English for an average of 2.62 years (SD = 2.17) and demonstrated high B2 proficiency on the CEFR scale, with an overall IELTS average of 6.58 (SD = 0.58). The Listening Group's mean IELTS score was 6.60 (SD = 0.49), and the Reading Group's was 6.55 (SD = 0.65); no significant difference was found between them ( $p = .39$ ). This relatively homogeneous yet representative sample provided a reliable basis for examining the effects of reading and listening on speaking skill development.

**Gender Differences:** Female participants showed greater confidence, while males were more hesitant. The evaluator was instructed to score strictly according to CEFR criteria to avoid bias.

**Task Challenges:** Listening Group participants had difficulty recalling audio details, while Reading Group members sometimes referred back to the text. These natural differences were considered during fair, criteria-based evaluation.

**Vocabulary and Pronunciation:** The Listening Group performed slightly better in vocabulary use and pronunciation, but all participants were graded solely on spoken output, not task reliance.

By controlling these factors, the study maintained objectivity and minimized bias related to gender or task type.

**Results. Reading/Listening Test.** First, we conducted an independent-samples t-test to see if any significant differences could be observed between the two groups in the reading/listening test given to students at the end of the study. As shown in Table 2, although participants in the Listening Group achieved slightly higher accuracy in answering comprehension questions ( $M = 5.70$ ;  $SD = 2.10$ ) compared to their counterparts in the Reading Group ( $M = 5.80$ ;  $SD = 1.47$ ), this difference ( $p = .90$ ;  $d = 0.055$ ) was not considered statistically significant (i.e.,  $p > .05$ ). This finding suggests that listening tasks may enhance immediate comprehension and recall capabilities, potentially fostering cognitive connections relevant to speaking. However, the low number of participants, a limitation of this study that will be discussed later in the paper, may have resulted in the statistically non-significant  $p$  value.

Group	N	M	SD	95% CI
Listening	10	5.70	2.10	4.40, 7.00
Reading	10	5.80	1.47	4.89, 6.71

Note. Max.: 10; Min.: 0.

Speaking Proficiency

Next, we ran a comparison of the two groups' speaking test results. The data were analyzed using a nine-point scoring system for each rubric. As see in Table 3, the overall speaking scores of both the Listening and Reading Groups were almost identical ( $p = .37$ ), with the Reading Group achieving an average score of 23.10 ( $SD = 1.52$ ) and the Listening Group having an average score of 23.80 ( $SD =$

2.39). In the Listening Group, slightly higher scores (56.50) ( $SD = 4.60$ ) were observed across the speaking test criteria compared to the Reading Group (55.20) ( $SD = 3.04$ ) ( $p = .38$ ) were observed in any of the speaking test criterion. When converted to the CEFR assessment scale (max. = 75), the two groups average speaking scores were close to each other.

Table 3

The Participants' Scores in the Speaking Test in This Study

Group	Grammar	Discourse Management	Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Total	CEFR
Reading	5.90 (.56)	5.10 (0.31)	5.90 (0.31)	6.20 (0.78)	23.10 (3.50)	55.80 (6.68)
Listening	6.00 (0.66)	5.40 (.69)	5.10 (0.73)	6.30 (0.82)	23.80 (4.06)	55.80 (8.00)
t-Test result	.36	.69	.72	.83	.95	1.00

Note. Standard deviations are displayed in parentheses; Maximum score for each criterion = 9; Maximum total score = 36; Maximum CEFR score = 75.

Overview of Statistical Results. No significant difference was found between the two groups' overall speaking scores, indicating that reading and listening tasks contributed equally to speaking development.

Reading Group: Access to text helped them organize and express ideas more clearly. Listening Group: Showed slightly better comprehension, vocabulary use, and pronunciation.

Findings and Implications. The results confirm that both modalities are valuable for developing speaking skills. Listening tasks are more effective for enhancing vocabulary retention and pronunciation, while reading tasks support structured idea formation. Therefore, educators should integrate both, giving slight priority to listening activities to strengthen learners' spoken accuracy and fluency.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** This study examined whether listening-focused instruction leads to higher speaking proficiency than reading-focused instruction. Results revealed

no significant difference, indicating that both modalities similarly contribute to speaking development. While listening supports pronunciation and active vocabulary use through real-time processing, reading strengthens lexical and structural awareness. The Listening Group's slightly higher scores may reflect the cognitive demands of auditory processing.

A balanced integration of both modalities is recommended. Activities combining listening and oral summarization can effectively enhance vocabulary retention, pronunciation, and overall fluency. Thus, a dual-modality approach promotes more comprehensive speaking development. However, limitations such as a small sample size, absence of a pretest, and reliance on a single passage restrict the generalizability of findings. Future research should include larger samples, pre-/post-tests, and longer interventions to clarify long-term effects.

Overall, listening fosters pronunciation accuracy and vocabulary activation, while reading enhances coherence and discourse organization. Integrating both input types into EFL curricula can ensure balanced and effective development of speaking proficiency.

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