



Using TED Talks as Authentic Materials to Enhance High School Students' English Listening Skills

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Abstract— Previous studies have demonstrated that educational media delivered via TED Talks effectively stimulates students' interest and improves English listening skills. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the effects of incorporating TED Talks as authentic materials on English listening skills of eleventh-grade students at a high school in Ho Chi Minh City. The study also explores students' perceptions of the use of TED Talks to improve listening skills. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, employing both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques, including pre-and post-tests, the questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews with the participation of 80 eleventh-grade students divided into experimental and control groups. The findings revealed that TED Talks improve students' English listening skills, and that most students perceived TED Talks as beneficial for enhancing listening skills. However, challenges associated with learning listening from TED Talks were also acknowledged. Based on the findings, pedagogical implications and recommendations are offered for teachers and students to optimize the integration of TED Talks in English listening practice.



Keywords— Authentic materials, EFL students, Listening skills, High school context, TED Talks

I. INTRODUCTION

Listening is crucial in language development as a comprehensible input for second language acquisition. According to Nunan and Carter (2001), listening is consistently interrelated and intervenes with other language skills. Therefore, teaching listening is an essential part of any language learning curriculum (Richards, 2008). Even though it is essential in EFL contexts, listening comprehension is still perceived as a “Cinderella skill” in foreign language education (Nunan, 1997). In the Vietnamese context, several studies reveal that listening is the most challenging for EFL students (Ngo, 2016; Tran & Duong, 2020; Vu & Shah, 2016). Compared to other skill areas, teaching and learning EFL listening is often reported to be “lagging behind” (Vu & Shah, 2016).

Despite the availability of English teaching materials, teachers must carefully consider the materials in use to facilitate learning effectively (Dat, 2008).

Importantly, learners should be provided with various alternative materials rather than just textbooks to improve listening comprehension. The advent of technology and the Internet have revolutionized learning through audio-visual media. TED, a non-profit organization established in 1984, provides in-depth presentations in more than 40 languages on more than 300 studies under six themes: Technology, Business, Design, Education, Global Issues, Science, and Technology. Gallo (2014) claimed that TED Talks have transformed how individuals learn and interact with new information. These presentations are particularly beneficial for language learners and teachers. Using TED Talks as authentic materials has proved to be a game-changer. According to Park and Cha (2013), TED Talks are authentic and inspiring due to their diverse topics. Tatyana et al. (2021) praised TED Talks for their authenticity, accessibility, diversity, utility, and user-friendliness. Furthermore, Tilwani et al. (2022) noted that combining speech, texts, and pictures makes understanding more

accessible, as learners with low-level listening skills find it easier to grasp audio-visual materials than audio-only materials.

Despite its proven benefits in English language teaching, particularly for listening, TED Talks are a relatively new concept in the Vietnamese EFL context. This study examines the effects of TED Talks as authentic materials on listening skills for EFL students at high schools. The study also addresses students' perceptions regarding the benefits and challenges of practising listening via TED Talks. The study attempted to address two research questions as follows:

1. What are the effects of TED Talks on English listening skills for high school students?
2. What are high school students' perceptions of using TED Talks as authentic materials to learn English listening skills?

II. A BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Teaching and Learning English Listening Skills

Richards (2009) defined listening skills as the capacity to receive and interpret messages accurately within the communication process. Moreover, listening is widely recognized as the initial step in acquiring a new language. Krashen's Input Hypothesis posits that comprehensible input is crucial for language acquisition, with listening being the primary channel through which learners receive this input (Krashen, 1992). This process highlights the pivotal role of listening in understanding language and fostering proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing skills within the EFL context.

In the pursuit of enhancing their English listening skills, EFL students often confront numerous challenges. Drawing insights from multiple scholarly sources, Brown (2000) identified eight distinctive features of spoken language that pose obstacles to effective listening: clustering of information, redundancy, use of reduced forms, variability in performance, colloquial expressions, speech rate, stress patterns, rhythm, intonation, and interactive elements. In another aspect, Baker and Westrup (2000) discovered that students struggle with listening to cassettes or speaking due to a lack of visual cues.

With regard to teaching listening in the classroom, EFL teachers face challenges in teaching English listening skills due to variances in learners' listening skills and learning styles, requiring diverse approaches (Ngo, 2016; Tran & Duong, 2020; Vu & Shah, 2016). Another challenge is the scarcity of access to authentic English recording materials (Ngo & Ha, 2022; Nguyen, 2016). Many teachers find it challenging to source appropriate

listening materials that authentically mirror real-life language use. This difficulty is compounded by the scarcity of interactive and engaging activities designed to enhance listening skills, making it harder for teachers to captivate and motivate their students effectively (Ngo & Ha, 2022; Nguyen, 2016). Additionally, listening skills assessment often remains skewed towards grammar, lacking a balanced approach, despite recent reforms in high school examinations (Tran & Duong, 2020).

2.2 TED Talks as Authentic Materials for Learning English Listening Skills

Initially designed for a global audience, TED Talks offer real-life examples of spoken English, including diverse accents, styles, and vocabularies, making them ideal for language-learning contexts. TED Talks provide young learners with early exposure to authentic speech, familiarity with false starts, pauses, and fillers, and offer a model for incorporating TED Talks into EFL listening practice. Maria et al. (2018) highlighted that TED, an accessible online platform and application, allows students to view videos featuring English speakers from diverse global backgrounds. These speakers engage audiences in an engaging and accessible manner, discussing various topics that cater to various interests. Given that every TED Talk includes a distinctive feature known as an "interactive transcript", the combination of reading and watching audiovisual materials is a highly beneficial experience for learners (Duong & Nguyen, 2022).

Previous studies have shown that TED Talks can significantly improve English learners' listening skills. A study by Rashtchi and Mazraehno (2019) found that TED Talks were more beneficial than textbooks for listening development in Iranian EFL learners. Gavenila et al. (2021) also found that integrating TED Talks into English classes can lead to better listening comprehension. Concerning the Vietnamese ELT context, Nguyen (2016) conducted action research at a university, finding that TED lectures improved listening comprehension and vocabulary and accustomed students to various English accents.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research site and participants

The current study was conducted at Tran Van Giau High School in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. It is a public school founded in 2012 with three grades from 10 to 12 and administered by the Ho Chi Minh City Department of Education and Training. The school curriculum, including English, is governed by the national general education curriculum. The eleventh grade English curriculum follows the General Education Program guidelines of

Ministry of Education and Training, covering 105 academic periods during the academic year. The English textbook for eleventh grade EFL students is English 11 Friends Global.

Convenience sampling was used in this study as these learners are readily and easily available to the researcher (Creswell, 2012). The study involved 80 eleventh grade EFL students from Tran Van Giau High School in the academic year 2023-2024, divided into experimental and control groups. 62 students (77.5%) have learned English for 8–12 years and 18 (22.5%) for 4–7 years. Their English proficiency level is expected to be at Level 2 based on the Vietnam 6-level Language Proficiency Framework.

3.2 Research instruments

A diverse array of instruments was offered to gather data related to the research problems. Quantitative instruments included listening pre- and post-tests, questionnaires, while qualitative instrument was semi-structured interviews.

The study utilized pre-and post-tests for both control and experimental groups to assess the effect of TED Talks on the enhancement of EFL students' listening skills. The pre-test was a self-constructed test administered by the instructor (researcher) to assess different skill groups related to listening skills. The post-test was similar in format, types of tasks, and number of tasks, but different in content. The test consisted of three parts with 20 items. The format, including multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions, was chosen due to their familiarity with participants' understanding of academic listening material.

A five-point Likert scale questionnaire was used to explore the EFL students' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of learning English listening skills through TED Talks. The questionnaire adapted from Wu (2020), Puspita and Amelia (2020), and Gavenila et al. (2021), consists of three parts: Part 1 (4 items) provides personal information, Part 2 (10 items) discusses the benefits of learning English listening skills through TED Talks, including vocabulary enhancement, cultural awareness, and motivation, and Part 3 (6 items) addresses challenges such as language complexity, speech, and accents.

Finally, semi-structured interviews consisting of eight open-ended questions were conducted with eight participants to collect qualitative data to gain a deeper understanding and support quantitative data collected from the questionnaire. Semi-structured interview protocols were aligned with the questionnaire domains.

The Cronbach's Alpha Indexes of test items and questionnaire items were acceptable as displayed as

follows: the pre-test of the control and experimental group = .905 and = .877, respectively; the post-test of the control and experimental group = .847 and = .939, respectively; the questionnaire items measuring participants' perceptions of practising listening via TED Talks regarding the benefits (10 items) = .833, and challenges (6 items) = .878.

3.3 Procedures for data collection and analysis

The process of collecting data was organized into three stages. Before the study, two groups participated in a pre-test. The Sig (2-tailed) value was greater than .05 (.930 > .05), indicating that the differences in the pre-test were not statistically significant. This result confirmed that the two groups were homogeneous before the treatment. During the treatment, the experimental group received eight TED Talks lessons and scaffolding activities over eight weeks, while the control group received traditional sessions. Both groups underwent a post-test after the treatment to examine the effect of TED Talks on the enhancement of listening skills for EFL students. After treatment, participants received questionnaires and were informed of their purpose and confidentiality. It took the participants around 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Eight experimental group members volunteered to join the semi-structured interviews a week later.

For data analysis, the pre-and post-tests were calculated and compared using The Descriptive Statistics and Paired-Samples t-test to examine the students' listening skills of the two groups before and after the treatment. For the questionnaire, the SPSS Descriptive Analysis was used to determine high school EFL students' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using TED Talks to practice listening skills. The meaning of the means scores (M) for EFL students' perceptions of the use of TED Talks to learn listening was interpreted based on the five-point Likert scale criteria as follows: strongly disagree (1.00 -1.80); disagree (1.81 - 2.60); neutral (2.61- 3.40); agree (3.41 - 4.20); strongly agree (4.21 - 5.00). Qualitative data analysis involved content analysis of semi-structured interviews, with responses coded as S1, S2, ... to S8.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

4.1.1 The Effect of TED Talks on EFL Students' Listening Skills

The Descriptive Statistics and Paired-Samples t-test were utilized to compare the mean scores of the listening skills within the control group and the experimental group

in the pre-test and post-test. The results are depicted in the tables below:

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the mean scores within the control group and the experimental group before and after the treatment

| Tests | Group | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|-----------|--------------|----|---------|---------|------|----------------|
| Pre-test | Control | 40 | 3 | 12 | 6.55 | 2.087 |
| | Experimental | 40 | 0 | 13 | 6.50 | 2.891 |
| Post-test | Control | 40 | 2 | 14 | 7.35 | 2.896 |
| | Experimental | 40 | 4 | 15 | 8.63 | 2.733 |

Table 2. Paired Sample t-Test Results within each Group

| Pre-test and Post-test | Paired Differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|---|-------|--------|----|-----------------|
| | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | | | |
| | | | | Lower | Upper | | | |
| Control | -.800 | 3.048 | .482 | -1.775 | .175 | -1.660 | 39 | .105 |
| Experimental | -2.125 | 3.804 | .601 | -3.342 | -.908 | -3.533 | 39 | .001 |

Considering the mean scores of the participants' listening skills within each group before and after the treatment, as presented in Table 1 and Table 2, the total mean score of listening skills of both groups increased from the pre-test to the post-test. Regarding the control group, the mean score increased from the pre-test (M = 6.55) to the post-test (M = 7.35). However, the Sig (2-tailed) value was greater than .05 (.105 > .05), which claimed that there was no statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the control group. The experimental group experienced an increase in the mean score from the pre-test (M = 6.50) to the post-test (M = 8.63). Moreover, the Sig (2-tailed) value less than .05 (.001 < .05) indicated that the differences between the experimental group's pre-test and post-test were significant. Furthermore, the mean difference of the experimental group (MD = 2.125) was much greater than that of the control group (MD = 800) after the treatment.

The comparative performance of two groups regarding listening skills is illustrated as in Figure 1 below.

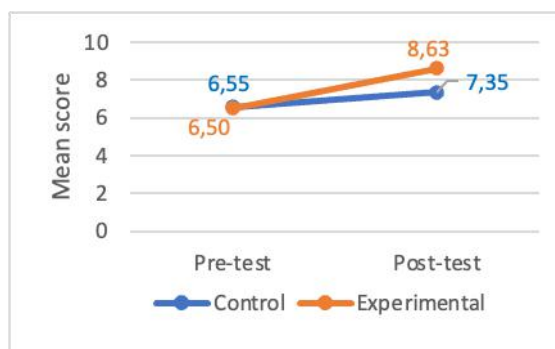


Fig.1 Listening performance of the control group and experimental group in the pre-test and post-test

Initially, both groups demonstrated nearly equivalent proficiency levels in the pre-test. However, the post-test scores were notably higher than those recorded in the pre-test, indicating significant progress in listening skills for both groups.

In conclusion, the findings indicated that both groups had an improvement on their post-test, but the experimental group outflanked the control group on the listening post-test. It proved that using TED Talks contributed to enhancing students' listening skills.

4.1.2. EFL Students' Perceptions of the Benefits and Challenges of Listening through TED Talks

Benefits of Using TED Talks to Learn English Listening Skills

The benefits of acquiring listening skills through TED Talks were categorized by considering several variables, such as listening skills, vocabulary enhancement, cultural awareness, and motivation in learning listening skills. As displayed in Table 3, the total

mean scores of students' perceptions of the benefits of learning listening skills through TED Talks were generally high ($M=3.76$; $SD=.496$). The results suggested that most students supported the view that incorporating TED Talks into listening was beneficial.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Benefits of Learning Listening Skills through TED Talks

| Items | Content | M | SD | Interpretation |
|--------------|--|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1 | TED Talks develop my listening comprehension. | 4.02 | .698 | Agree |
| 2 | TED Talks develop my note-taking skill. | 2.88 | .992 | Neutral |
| 3 | TED Talks develop my predictive skill. | 3.25 | .981 | Neutral |
| 4 | TED Talks develop my critical listening skill. | 3.48 | .816 | Agree |
| 5 | TED Talks enhance my vocabulary. | 4.00 | .716 | Agree |
| 6 | TED Talks help me get familiar with the use of English language in daily life. | 4.05 | .552 | Agree |
| 7 | TED Talks raise my cultural awareness. | 3.83 | .781 | Agree |
| 8 | Using TED Talks makes listening lessons more interesting than textbooks do. | 4.15 | .533 | Agree |
| 9 | I eagerly participate in class activities when teachers use TED Talks. | 4.20 | .464 | Agree |
| 10 | I actively practice listening after class by watching additional TED Talks videos. | 3.73 | 1.062 | Agree |
| Total | | 3.76 | 0.496 | Agree |

Regarding students' perceptions of the benefits of acquiring listening skills via TED Talks, the majority of students proved that TED Talks enhanced their listening comprehension ($M=4.02$, $SD=.698$). Students generally agreed that TED Talks enhance their critical listening ($M=3.48$, $SD=.816$) and prediction skills ($M=3.25$, $SD=.891$). However, some students maintain a neutral stance on the benefits for note-taking ($M=2.88$; $SD=.992$). During the interview, students highlighted that their listening skills had enhanced as a result of their exposure to TED lectures. Here are some obvious opinions of the participants: "By listening to TED Talks, I learn how to take notes of key ideas, examples, and important information from the speech, which will help you learn how to summarize and organize information systematically." (S2); "TED Talks have helped me learn more new words by taking notes and finding the meaning of new words after listening to a lesson. At the same time, it also helps me improve my listening skills by anticipating the answer in advance so I can get the most accurate answer." (S7)

In terms of vocabulary enhancement, the data analysis showed that most participants strongly agreed that TED Talks enhanced their vocabulary ($M=4.00$, $SD=.716$) as well as helped them get familiar with the use of English language in daily life ($M=4.05$, $SD=.552$). They also discovered that strengthening their listening skills by

viewing TED Talks benefited them in several ways, including broadening their vocabulary to include academic, colloquial, and slang terms. For example, some students gave their comments as follows: "TED Talks helped me access real language and improve my vocabulary. Furthermore, each listening lesson has a clear, easy-to-understand topic." (S4); "TED Talks are really effective in providing a real-world context for language learning, because the content will give the audience with a specific view and also somewhat make it easier for them to visualize." (S5); "TED Talks have provided me with a lot of vocabulary on many areas within each topic, so it has increased my vocabulary and improved my skills the times I listened to the topics." (S8)

Furthermore, participants acknowledged that TED lectures not only improved their listening skills but also increased their cultural awareness ($M=3.83$, $SD=.781$). This figure was consistent with the following student perspectives: "TED Talks open up cultures around the world through many people living in different regions, so the way they communicate, the way they view problems, and the way they communicate depends on each culture, region, country." (S1); "Additionally, TED Talks frequently address global issues, social movements, and cultural phenomena, further contributing to viewers' understanding of the interconnectedness of the world and

fostering empathy and appreciation for diverse cultures.” (S3)

Considering learning motivation, the results indicated that most students strongly believed that incorporating TED Talks into listening lessons was more interesting than using textbooks ($M=4.15$, $SD=.533$). As a result, this enhanced their motivation to actively participate in class activities ($M=4.02$, $SD=.698$). The majority of students claimed to engage in active listening practice by watching extra TED Talks videos after class ($M=3.73$, $SD=1.062$). This figure aligned with the following thoughts given by the participants in question: “There are many favorite topics that I find on TED Talks. These contents help me both learn a foreign language and also provide me with a lot of interesting knowledge about the fields I'm interested in.” (S3); “TED Talks motivate

my language learning by giving topics a real-world context that really engages the audience; In addition, TED Talks speakers know how to convey content and they also make use of their language.” (S6)

Challenges in Using TED Talks to Learn Listening Skills

The challenges in acquiring listening skills through TED Talks were explored by considering several variables relating to TED Talks' language complexity, speech rate and varied accents. The data presented in Table 4 signified that the total mean scores of students' perceptions of the challenges in learning listening skills through TED Talks were high ($M=3.47$; $SD=.719$). The study found that EFL students face challenges in learning listening skills through TED Talks, including language complexity, rapid pace, and diverse accents.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Challenges in Learning Listening Skills through TED Talks

| Items | Content | M | SD | Interpretation |
|--------------|---|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| 11 | The language used in TED Talks is challenging for me to comprehend. | 2.88 | .939 | Neutral |
| 12 | I struggle with identifying key points and main ideas while listening to TED Talks. | 2.93 | 1.023 | Neutral |
| 13 | The technical vocabulary used in TED Talks poses a challenge for my understanding. | 4.08 | .730 | Agree |
| 14 | The grammatical structures in TED Talks are complex. | 3.60 | 1.057 | Agree |
| 15 | The speed at which TED Talk speakers talk makes it challenging for me to follow and understand the content. | 3.30 | .966 | Neutral |
| 16 | I find it difficult to focus on the content of TED Talks due to the diverse accents of the speakers. | 4.02 | .698 | Agree |
| Total | | 3.47 | 0.719 | Agree |

The data analysis revealed that the majority of participants agreed that the technical terms ($M=4.08$; $SD=.730$) and specific complex grammatical structures ($M=3.60$; $SD=1.057$) employed in TED Talks posed a challenge for their comprehension when learning listening skills. During the interview, some students provided their thoughts as follows: “I have difficulty in listening TED Talks because some topics in TED Talks may use specialized terms, complex vocabulary or quite technical language.” (S2); “TED Talks often cover complex topics and use advanced vocabulary, which can be challenging, especially those at lower proficiency levels.” (S3) However, a few respondents maintained a neutral viewpoint on the level of difficulty of the language utilized in TED Talks for their understanding ($M=2.88$; $SD=.939$). Similarly, some students reported their problems with identifying key points and main ideas when listening to TED Talks ($M=2.93$; $SD=1.023$). These findings implied

that the use of language generally did not pose a barrier for EFL listeners.

Several learners found it challenging to follow and understand the content of TED Talks speakers due to their rapid pace ($M=3.30$; $SD=.966$). Accordingly, the diverse accents of TED Talks presenters were perceived as a hindrance for EFL learners, making it difficult for them to focus on the content. During the interview, a number of students expressed the following views regarding this issue: “Speaking quite fast and sentences are often very long to fully understand the meaning, each person's accent will be different so when listening you also need to grasp their pronunciation.” (S1); “TED Talks speakers may come from various regions, and this diversity in accents can sometimes pose a challenge for learners.” (S3)

Semi-structured interviews further revealed that despite challenges in learning listening skills from TED Talks, interviewees believe these issues can be found in other materials and still consider TED Talks helpful for

enhancing knowledge. "Compared to other authentic materials, I still find TED Talks to be a worthy application to improve my knowledge and my listening." (S5) Interviewees also expressed the need for TED Talks support to enhance their listening skills, suggesting strategies like segmented listening, subtitles, dictionary app use, and script writing.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1. The Effects of TED Talks on Listening Skills for EFL Students

The results revealed that using TED Talks has proven to have positive effects on improving the listening skills of EFL learners. It is supported by the result of the study of Rashtchi and Mazraehno (2019) in which there was a statistically significant difference in student's listening post-test scores between the experimental group and the control group. Similarly, the positive responses from 8 participants demonstrated the effectiveness of TED Talks as a medium for improving their listening skills. The present finding supports prior studies that demonstrated that students who were taught using TED Talks achieved higher levels of listening skills compared to those who did not receive this type of instruction (Damayanti & Sumarniningsih, 2022; Tilwani et al., 2022). In addition, the current study's results align with Wu (2020)'s, which showed that most students improved their listening comprehension after learning the TED Talks by recalling their background knowledge and analyzing content in the TED Talks. Particularly, in the Vietnamese ELT context, the results are supported by the quantitative and qualitative study conducted by Nguyen (2016) to explore the impact of TED Talks on English-majored students' listening comprehension.

4.2.2. Benefits of Learning Listening Skills through TED Talks

Regarding students' perceptions of the benefits of acquiring listening skills via TED Talks, most students strongly agreed that TED Talks improved their listening skills. Considering students' perceptions of the advantages of learning listening skills via TED Talks in terms of vocabulary enhancement, the data analysis showed that most participants strongly agreed that TED Talks enhanced their vocabulary and helped them get familiar with English in daily life. Tatyana et al. (2021) demonstrated that TED Talks provided a richer context for guessing word meanings through the animations. This corresponds to the study of Nguyen and Boers (2019) which showed how vocabulary intake from a TED Talk might be influenced by content retelling.

Considering other skills, it was anticipated that through the use of TED Talks in their listening sessions, it

was expected that experimental group participants would enhance predictive skill, critical listening, and note-taking skill. The results are supported by Al Badi (2020) who confirmed learners' interest in TED Talks, indicating a higher level of engagement throughout the listening lesson especially with their predictive activities. These findings are consistent with the previous research performed by Baker and Westrup (2000), who indicated that using TED Talks could develop EFL learners' note-taking skill.

According to the findings, participants acknowledged that TED lectures improved their listening skills and increased their cultural awareness. The gained results in this study are supported by Maria et al. (2018), who examined the influences of TED Talks on raising cultural awareness. The research findings align with the claims made by Tatyana et al. (2021) that TED Talks triggered students' participation, as well as enhanced their motivation in listening activities due to their diverse and captivating topics.

It could be seen that integrating TED Talk videos into the Vietnamese EFL context may produce beneficial results for EFL learners. Therefore, TED Talks are highly suggested for incorporation into foreign language education due to authentic, informative, and inspirational speeches for instructional purposes.

4.2.3. Challenges in Learning Listening Skills through TED Talks

The findings implied that EFL students encountered challenges while practicing listening skills via TED Talks. The results indicated that the total mean scores of student's perceptions of the challenges in learning listening skills through TED Talks were high. The research findings are also in accordance with Astika and Kurniawan (2010) and Gavenila et al. (2021), who confirmed various challenges encountered by the students, including unfamiliar accents, fast speed of speech, and new vocabulary. Regarding language complexity, the data analysis revealed that most participants found TED Talks' technical terms and grammatical structures challenging for their comprehension. TED Talks require a minimum of 5,000 word families to support their listening skills, as reported by Coxhead and Walls (2012). Considering the speech rate, several students attested that they needed help to follow and comprehend the material because of the TED Talk speakers' speedy delivery. The current finding agrees with Takaesu (2013) who explained that TED Talks frequently involve fast-paced and rapid speech, making it even more challenging for non-native speakers to follow the speaker's flow of thought. Accordingly, the diverse accents of TED Talks presenters pose a challenge for English learners, as research by Astika and Kurniawan

(2010) confirmed that the diversity of accents and pronunciations among TED Talk speakers presents a challenge for English learners who use TED Talks to enhance their listening skills.

To sum up, TED Talks' complex vocabulary, varied accents, and rapid pace can potentially overwhelm beginner or intermediate students, hindering their learning progress. Hence, teachers should offer sufficient assistance by choosing and assessing authentic videos as well as simplifying and designing listening tasks (Al-Jarf, 2021; Nguyen, 2016).

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study investigated the use of TED Talks as authentic materials to enhance students' English listening skills at Tran Van Giau High School, along with their perceptions of the advantages and difficulties encountered while practicing listening with TED Talks. Findings suggest that TED Talks significantly enhance students' listening skills. As for the perceived benefits of watching TED Talks, the majority of students regarded TED Talks as advantageous for improving listening skills, vocabulary acquisition, cultural understanding, and learning motivation. Nevertheless, the study also recognized the challenges faced by students, such as the complexity of the language, the rapid pace of speech, and the diverse accents of the speakers.

The study provides pedagogical implications and recommendations for teachers and students to optimize integrating TED Talks into EFL listening practice. It suggests that teachers should consider language proficiency and interests when selecting TED Talks for Vietnamese EFL learners. As mentioned earlier, supportive materials like transcripts, subtitles, scaffolding activities, and active listening strategies can help students cope with the challenges. Students should also set specific learning goals, use supportive resources, and practice pronunciation, intonation, and speaking skills to make use of TED Talks in listening practice.

Though the study employed a mixed method for triangulating the validity and reliability of the data, limitations related to time constraints, the small sample, and research site cannot be avoided. Therefore, future research should include more participants of different competence levels, and replication at other schools to generalize findings to similar EFL contexts. More extensive studies could enhance the validity of the current study and offer a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon from various perspectives.

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