The Effectiveness of Smart Phones' Applications In Developing EFL Secondary School Students' EFL speaking skill.

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Abstract:

This research investigated the effect of Smartphones' applications on developing EFL speaking skills of sixty first secondary school students from the Egyptian Islamic English Language school, Sharqeya Governorate, Egypt in the academic year 2020- 2021. They were equally divided into an experimental group and a control group. This study adopted quasi-experimental design using a pre-post tests. The experimental group was taught by the use of Smartphones' applications while the control group received regular teaching . The results indicated that the students who were taught using smartphones' applications showed an enhancement in their speaking skills. On the contrary of the control group. Therefore, smartphone's applications positively affected EFL speaking skills of secondary school students.

Keywords: Smartphones' applications, speaking skill, Secondary stage

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فعالية استخدام تطبيقات الهواتف الذكية فى تنمية مهارات التحدث لطلاب مدارس الثانوية

الملخص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على قياس مدى أهميه استخدام الهواتف الذكية وتأثيراتها المتعددة على تطوير مهارات التحدث للغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبيه لطلاب الصف الأول الثانوي .ولقياس مدى التطوير ﻲ مهارات التحدث قام الباحث باختيار عدد٦٠ طالب من طلاب الصف الأول الثانوي بالمدرسة المصرية الانجليزية الإسلامية الخاصة بالزقازيق محافظه الشرقية جمهوريه مصر العربية للعام الدراسي الأكاديمي ٢٠٢٠/٢٠٢١ تم تقسيم الطلاب إلى مجموعتين مجموعه تجريبية مكونه من (٣٠) طالب ومجموعه ضابطه مكونه أيضا من ٣٠ طالب .لقد استخدم الباحث المنهج شبه التجريبي عن طريق عمل اختبار تحصيلي قبلي واختبار تحصيلي بعدى. قام الباحث بالتدريس لطلاب المجموعة التجريبية باستخدام بعض تطبيقات الهواتف الذكية بينما درست المجموعة الضابطة بطرق التدريس التقليدية. طبقا لنتائج البحث ، فان الطلاب الذين درسوا باستخدام تطبيقات الهواتف الذكية قد اظهروا تحسن ملحوظ ﻲ مهارة التحدث لديهم . وعلى النقيض من المجموعة التجريبية التي لم تخضع لأي تأثير واستخدمت الطرق التقليدية للتدريس لذلك ، فان تطبيقات الهواتف الذكية لها تأثير ايجابي على تطوير مهارة التحدث لدى طلاب المدارس الثانوية.

الكلمات ا لمفتاحيه : تطبيقات الهواتف الذكية ، مهارة التحدث المرحلة الثانويه .

1.1. Introduction

Education nowadays has shown various changes. The traditional ways of education and teaching don't suit the new generation of students, who were born at the age of technology and smartphones. As education is the effective factor in the life of peoples, it should prepare students who can keep going with the new technology, and find the suitable ways of teaching that could help them to improve themselves and their skills. They also should choose the suitable kind of technological devices that match the curriculum.

To achieve the aims of education, the teachers and learners should use and apply new types of technology in education. The role of the teacher, according to modern technology in education changed from teacher-centered to be student-centered. The teachers' role here is just to be a director of the teaching process instead of pouring the information into the students' minds as Scrivener,(2005) described the traditional teaching method as jug in a mug.

The technology of education has changed rapidly starting with computer programs, mobile phones, and a new generation of smartphones with all their types. I pad, Tablet, Note, and I phone. All these types support the idea of self-technology programs in all fields of education as they provide learners with several educational applications which can help learners in different fields. Smartphones depend on the idea of using hypermedia programs with the presence of any educational topic in several media.

The learning process through the use of mobile phones has become available to all teachers as well as students whenever and wherever learners can reach any studying material . Because of the easiness and availability of technology and different learning applications on smartphones, the effective learning process has increased as the most used mobile devices among people are smartphones (Blanka Klimova, 2019).

Using Smartphones proved to be an effective tool of education. In a short time, it affected the quality and the speed of learning. The teaching process has changed from using traditional boring ways of teaching which is full of lectures and instructions to an interactive learning process. Blanka Klimova, (2019) admitted that smartphones' applications in teaching have both good effects and bad effects as well.

Smartphones easily help the learning process as they have many applications that can help teachers and learners. Smartphones can be used to publish live lessons or lectures wherever the teachers are. Teachers also can receive comments and questions from the learners to answer them. The students can learn and do the homework, then send it back to the teachers at any time. Moreover, teachers can check the homework and give feedback to students. Teachers can give reports as well about the students' performance. Parents also can contact the teachers and follow up the development of their kids (Fareh, 2010)

Many studies such as Al Hosni, (2014) indicated that peaking is the active use of language to express meaning. EFL

learners till this present time face some speaking problems when they are studying English. Speaking skill has been neglected in the classrooms, and the teachers who speak all the time can't help the students to gain knowledge or develop their communication.

EFL speaking skill is one of the communication skills, thus students should be supported to get rid of their speaking problems or difficulties. Al Hosni,(2014) mentioned that to gain the language that enables students to deal with different studying fields, they should develop their EFL speaking skills. She also assured that speaking English language nowadays becomes an essential skill which is demanded in most of the work fields. That's why dealing with speaking problems should be considered and treated to enhance and develop speaking skills.

As people who know a language are referred to as a speaker of that language. language teaching activities in the classroom should aim at maximizing individual language use. Most of the teachers still use the traditional way of teaching which is "chalk and talk" (Scrivener ,2005). He also admitted that teachers explain, give information all the time, and control the teaching process. This kind of classroom neglects speaking skill "the teacher probably does most of the talking "(Scrivener, 2005).

Developing speaking skills is of vital importance in EFL/ESL teaching and learning programs. " There is no point knowing a lot about the language if you can't use it "(Scrivener, 2005). If a student succeeded in managing a conversation in English, it means that he managed to learn it. Here, the

importance of speaking skills becomes obvious and obligatory. Speaking is probably a priority for most learners of English. Teaching speaking is important because it helps students acquire EFL speaking skills during their conversation with native speakers. Furthermore, "if the right speaking activities are taught in the classroom, speaking can raise general learners' motivation and make the English language classroom a fun and dynamic place to be" Celce-Murcia (2001, 139). She outlined some points that the teacher should consider in the activities: a focus on meaning and value, not correctness; a focus on collaboration and social development; the provision of a rich context, and teaching the four skills through a variety of activities. A superior teacher encourages her/his students to speak English as much as possible inside and outside the classroom.Speaking fluency appears to develop with increased exposure to second language input (Jenifer Larson,2016). To be fluent in speaking it means speaking quickly, having fewer pauses, false starts, and having pauses in appropriate places" (Al-Sibai, 2004). So this can be achieved only by listening to the right speaking model and practice it many times.

Understanding the language doesn't mean that you can produce it, as the process of comprehension is different from the process of production. The ability to understand the meaning of the sentence is different from the ability to use the linguistic system. " input, interaction and output are three essential compositing elements in L2 acquisition. But for years there has been a debate about their role. (Zhang,2009). He added that

there are three main elements should be companied to help the students to perform speaking skill in the right way. Making suitable circumstances and providing the students with the aids to help them to learn will achieve good results in the educational process. Creating the chances for each one of them, and making a good educational environment will help them to speak and produce language freely. Chances to practice are the main secret to succeed in speaking skill. When students practice, they can express their thoughts and feelings by using their language without feeling threatened.

As cited in Maher,(2016) , Ellis,(2003) suggested that the fluency of speaking can be achieved by involving learners in performing two types of communicative tasks: focused communicative tasks, and unfocused communicative tasks. Both of them seek to engage learners in using pragmatically rather than displaying it. Smartphones have found a place in foreign language instruction as well. As they support the idea of using hypermedia speaking texts can be purchased or prepared so that students can click on unfamiliar words or phrases in a foreign language and then access all the information needed to understand the word or phrase. Information can be found in any media, for example, text-based translations, definitions, grammatical explanations, and cultural references. Also, audio recordings of the pronunciation as well as images, animations, and videos.

Smartphones also convey the concept of 'just-in-time' information access. It is the learner who is in the best position to judge what information he or she needs next. Smartphones give the learner the control to access information that is most

relevant to the particular learning need of the moment. They also provide a high degree of interactivity. Interactive learning is widely assumed to be effective because active learning produces more effective learning outcomes.

Maher ,(2016) reported that problems and difficulties of speaking that encounter english language students are many for example, shyness, fear of mistakes, and lack of confidence.Aftat, (2008) added that this fear is linked to the issue of correction and negative evaluation. On the other hand, self-confidence plays an important role in improving student's proficiency in speaking. Generally, self-confident students can learn better because they are brave and believe in their abilities. Learners who are self-confident have a good self-image and a low level of anxiety. On the contrary, students' lack of self-confidence prevents them from making progress in speaking. Harmer (2007) noted that students are often reluctant to speak because they are shy to express themselves in front of others, particularly when they are being asked to give personal opinions. Moreover, they worry about losing face if they do not speak well in front of their friends.

Fareh (2010) pointed out some challenges in EFL programs in the Arab world such as teacher-centered instruction and inadequate training concerning English teaching methodology. In this world which is full of many technological instruments, changing the traditional way of teaching became a must, replacing it with another technological one is more suitable for the new generation of students.

Smartphones' applications as an interactive technological method would help to develop speaking skill in many ways as they expose learners to English language. They also can provide chances for the learners to interact during the applications to speak more and record their trials many times to reach the target level without being ashamed or afraid of teachers' reactions or even their classmates' reactions. Smartphones applications provide students with chances to practice individually, in pairs, or even in groups and that can reinforce students self-confidence and motivate them to practice more and more, receive positive feedback, and find support from teacher and students which help to build a good image about students in front of themselves and the other. As smartphones' applications introduce the EFL language in an attractively and funnily. They help to reduce students' anxiety, reinforce their self-confidence, and develop their oral performance.

1.2.Context of the problem:

Through the work of the researcher in several schools, out of his experience in teaching ,it was noticed that EFL students have problems dealing with EFL speaking skill.Paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech, such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement, all these aspects are important to be dealt with and developed in the classrooms by teachers with aid of smartphones applications to change the atmosphere and to add some fun to the classroom.It was also noticed that most teachers focus on what matters to them and what makes the students

achieve higher scores in the exams. The EFL teachers over years ignored speaking skill in the classes, no or limited discussion was held, limited songs, limited conversations. They turned the students to be receptive rather than productive. The teachers only teach for the test. Thus the problem under investigation can be stated in the following main question:

How can smartphones' applications be used to develop EFL secondary stage students speaking skills at the language schools?

This general question could be sub-divided into the following sub-questions:

 What are speaking skills required for first secondary students?

2- To what extent do these students possess these skills?

3- What is the effect of smartphones applications on developing speaking skills?

1.3 **The procedures of the study:**

The current study adopts the following procedures:

1-Reviewing relevant literature and previous studies related to oral performance,its difficulties, EFL Smartphones' applications, and panel discussion to frame the study literature.

2-Designing the instrument of the study, which include (speaking checklist /pre -speaking test /post-speaking test).

3-Selecting a sample of EFL secondary students as the participants of the study and assigning them randomly into experimental and control groups.

4-Submitting the instrument to a group of jury members.

5-Pre- administrating the study instrument on both groups.

6-Applying the treatment on the experimental group.

7-Post-administering the study instrument on both groups to assess their post-level of speaking skill.

8-Treat the results statically.

9-Discuss the results and introducing conclusions and recommendations .

1.4 The Study Material and Instruments:

The study made use of four instruments to collect data:

1) Speaking skills checklist.

2)Speaking Test .

3)Upstream Upper intermediate B+ student's book

1.5. Design of the Study

The current study adopted the quasi – experimental design. Sixty secondary students were participants assigned to two groups: experimental and control, thirty students each. The experimental group students were taught by using smartphones applications to developing some EFL speaking skills. On the other hand, the control group students studied through regular methods. A speaking pre-posttest and pre-posttest was administered to the two groups before and after the experiment.

Group	Pre administration of instruments	Teaching method	Post – administration of the instruments
Experimental	1-Pre speaking test	Using smartphones' applications	1-post–speaking test
Control	1-Pre speaking test	Using regular way of teaching .	1-Post–speaking test

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1.6 Hypothesis of the study:

1-There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the control group and experimental group in the post administration of the EFL speaking test in favor of the experimental group

2-There is a statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group in pre and post administration of the EFL speaking test in favor of the post-test.

3-Smartphones' applications have effectiveness in developing speaking skills.

1.7.Aims of the study

The present study aimed at :

Identifying what is the effect of Smartphones' applications on developing speaking skills.

1.8.The significance of the study:

The result of the study would hopefully be useful to:

1:EFL students; as the results might help them to enhance EFL students' speaking skills and motivate them.

2:EFL teachers; as the result might help them to:

A:By providing them with more effective and practical ways of language interaction.

B: Understand their students' psychological aspects (speaking difficulties) and help them to be better speakers.

3:curruculum designers; as the result might help them to:

A: provide them with a new teaching aid that could be considered in designing EFL textbooks.

1.9.Delimitations of the study:

-**Object limitations**:

1:The current study is delimited to Improving EFL speaking skill.

2: Using EFL smart phones applications ex (Elsa Speak, BBC learning English) as an example of EFL   smartphones' applications

-**Human limitation: (the participants):**

The study sample was 60 students both male and female first year secondary school students t Egyptian English School . Their first language is Arabic. The subjects of this study were all Egyptians with one language background, and of the same level of education.

-**Place limitations:**

The space limitation in a regular classroom available in the English Egyptian Language school, Sharqya Governrate, Egypt, where the study was carried out. Place limitation

-**Time limitation**: The study was applied in the second term of the school year 2020/2021.

1.10.Definition of terms:

Speaking skill is a requisite tool needed for communication to share ideas, convey thoughts and express feelings with other people (Charanjit, 2020).

Speaking skill is the language a learner produces (Al Hosni, 2014).

Speaking skill is practically defined as the actual use of language with all its aspects in a correct form for first-year secondary school students.

Smartphones' applications are applications that the majority of students have access to, educators need to get up to speed on how these devices can be used positively and productively in classrooms (Clayton& Murphy, 2016).

Smartphones' applications are very easy to access mobile devices in a less -secure environment as these devices are small, portable, and flexible (Perera,2013).

Smartphones' applications are defined practically android apps or IOS apps that are software-designed programs. They have an aim which is to develop the oral performance of first-year secondary students and reduce their oral performance anxiety.

previouse literature

1. Smartphone's applications, it's emerge & widespread:

Smartphones are the modern technological devices that emerged in the last two decades and spread as fast as the fire between people all over the world(Chakir, 2018). Moreover, statistics done by GSMA (Global System for Mobile Association) show that "smartphone adoption is growing dramatically to reach 7.1 billion smartphone connections, 80% smartphone adoption by the end of 2025." (GSMA, 2020, p11). As a result, Smartphones became one of the most widespread digital technological devices in the 21st century among adults as well as teens (Traxler & Vosloo, 2014). As a logical development, smartphones' applications markets have dramatically grown to offer millions of smartphone apps to users that are easy to download and use, for example, Apple Store and Google play, have offered millions of apps of all

kinds to their users since 2008. Users can download 2.2 million apps from Google Play and 2.2 million apps from Apple App Store (Ahn, 2018). Smartphones educational applications emerged in the 21st century as a result of the technological revolution and manufacturing of many kinds of advanced mobile phones with an easy way of internet access opened the eyes of the world on unknown treasures which were the features and abilities of these smartphones and how can they help enhance educational field especially. Smartphones as a prior type of mobile phone were used in M-learning. It has emerged and developed by IBM and came to the public for the first time in 1993 by Bell South (Dulloo & Puri, 2018). Smartphones and their Educational applications support the concept of"Mobility of technology, Mobility of learner &Mobility of learning" (Gangaiamaran &Pasupathi,2017). This means that learners can use them at any time and anywhere.

1.2. Features and advantages of smartphones:

From the beginning of 2012, internet access has been directed towards smartphone use rather than a computer (Jurkovič, 2019) because of its features which offer flexibility and ease to the users, the thing that makes its users apply it for different functional purposes academic, social, and entertainment purposes (Godwin, 2017).Smartphones' applications as an easy way of accessing information and communication directly lead to student's competence in acting in the millennial era as competence in mastering data, technology, and humans (Nasir,2018) which enable them to enlarge their thinking and widen their minds by watching and reading in different fields or even listening to different topics by

different types of media which exist in smartphones and see different countries, cultures, ways of life. Smartphones open all the closed doors in front of learners to know and see things for the first time and have experiences which couldn't have them in a real life.

Jurkovič, (2019) gathered the characteristics of smartphones as (a) new forms of experience in entertainment and understanding text, (b) new ways of representing the world, c) new forms of interaction in terms of space, place, and time or a new form of community relations (d) a new way of conception of human relationships, (e) new patterns in organization, production, and integration in media. The cheap cost and availability as the various free electronic PDF books, which are related to the English language, novels, pieces of drama, and poetry. In this way, learners can use these electronic books to develop their English language learning (Taleb & Sohrabi,2012). Getting these books in any other way is difficult and costly. It's the easy way of use also made them preferred by all the students, as well as the easy way to connect to the internet (Muhammed, 2014). As well as many Apps can be downloaded for free, whereas others need to be paid for. Some apps offer a "lite" version of the app for free so users can try them and decide whether to buy the full version or not. Smartphones' applications also depend on the motivation and entertainment of the students to work (Fernando.A 2017). All of (Lan& Lin; Zheng & Yu, 2016, Sung et al., 2017) added that smart phones' social interactivity, connectivity, and the

individuality characterize smartphones, which means that smartphones can serve as a great instructional tool in case of content is carefully designed and teachers are willing to involve in a modern experience that suitable for the 21st-century learners' needs and which provides a higher quality learning. Smartphones have many other features as interactivity, ubiquity, as well as portability (Kacetl & Klimova, 2019), which enable people and students to achieve various missions in a short time. It is important to clarify the "smart features" of smartphones nowadays which gave them superiority. Smartphone has constant internet connectivity which allows users to stay online and to have unlimited services available at their fingertips. The easy access to internet-enabled users to download any attachment or application in a few seconds. Even the keyboard, whether it is (physically or virtually) is available on smartphones and makes typing as easy as on a PC (Fuxin, 2020). All smartphones now have sensitive touch screens as well as their basic functions as the normal mobile phone has. All these features allow smartphones to have the same capabilities as computers, but with an added merit which is mobility. Moreover, all of (Lan & Lin; Zheng & Yu, 2016) mentioned that the features of smartphones 'applications can facilitate learning English in and outside the classroom. All these features turned smartphones to be like the magic stick of their users and helped them in their learning. "Several studies discovered that Smartphones as a kind of MALL enhances learners' motivations for English learning" (Ahn, 2018).

1.3.Disadvantages of using Smartphones' applications:

Smartphone apps have vital importance in our daily lives. They are now evolving into an ideal platform for foreign language learning (Pindeh et al, 2016). However, the availability and accessibility of mobile apps do not guarantee their success in an educational context (Godwin, 2017). The students are the most important and active element in the learning process, all other things, whatever they are, are just facilitators and assistant factors no more. Students' acceptance of technology is not as equal as each other. Their acceptance of using technology plays a critical role in determining the success of using smartphones' applications (Ahn, 2018). Although the use of apps can maximize the opportunities for students to engage in learning, the experience of learning on smartphone devices can be highly fragmented (Kenning, 2007). One aspect of this fragmentation is that learners can access their mobile devices for short amounts of time. This may affect learners' choice of which app to use. Addiction also is another considerable disadvantage that makes researchers refuse the use of smartphones in classrooms (Haug et al, 2015). While using educational apps teachers and learners have to fight for users' attention, battling strong competition from other apps within the device, such as games or pop-up notifications from social media. Moreover, Learners can use more than one application to develop one part of the language, This use of several apps to complete each other to achieve one purpose is referred to as app smashing (Fernando, 2017).

1.4. Importance of the smartphone's applications in EFL language learning:

Ahmadi (2018) argued that using technology in education can be used to help and improve language learning. Smartphones' applications are featured with various advantages which can simplify the learning process as well as adding entertainment to the classroom, moreover, environments for modern learning modes should engage students in their learning activities and enhance their productivity and effectiveness. Smartphones' applications can enable teachers to adapt classroom activities, and develop the language learning process. Muhammed, (2014) added that the effectiveness of using smartphones in English language learning is increasing every day. Downloading certain English applications can help learners to improve their language skills and enhance special parts of English language as grammar or vocabulary as well as enhancing learners' EFL experience. (Muhammed, 2014).In addition, they can be used to teach all language components(Sahan, et al,2016) and proved their positiveness. EFL Smartphones' applications can be used even outside the classrooms, for example, using Facebook messenger or WhatsApp messenger to deliver educational content to the students to check outside the classroom (Chakir, 2018). Smartphones can also be helpful in large classes where not every student can talk or ask a question. Through these applications students can either type, voice/video record their questions before and after the class time (Chakir, 2018). Moreover, smartphones can help learners to study at their own pace and revise the content as many times as they need to.

Because of the past mentioned advantages of smartphones which make smartphones great instructional tools when content is carefully designed, educational researchers, curriculum developers, teachers, and learners tried to use these advantages and adapt them to serve their educational needs concerning EFL in general and EFL oral performance in particular (Ahn,2018). Using smartphone applications can encourage learners' cooperation that can be increased through using it (Ahmadi, 2018). Smartphones can improve the educational process, and helps teachers meet their learners' educational needs (Ahmadi, 2018). Moreover, a well-planned classroom setting helps learners learn efficiently, enhances the teaching environment as it is more effective than a lecture-based class (Raihan & Lock, 2010). As well as the application can make teaching interesting and productive in terms of advancement and student-centered one that in turn creates positive changes(Pourhosein, 2014). He also emphasized that using technology activates class and turns it to be full of meaningful tasks. Ahmadi,(2018) added that the independent use of smartphones' applications provides learners with self-direction. As well as the use of the internet increases learners' motivation to see more resources and increase the knowledge (Arifah, 2014). They also can change learners' learning attitudes and enhances their self-confidence. Smartphones'applications help learners and teachers in studying the course materials due to their fast access to the internet (Rodinadze& Zarbazoia, 2012).

2.Speaking skill:

English language is considered the first active language all over the world. It is known for its international standing in the world as one of the fatal necessities in all fields (Athirah et al, 2020). It is influential in many fields. Muhammad et al, (2019) asserted that human interaction depends on a language as the medium of communication. About English, it is internationally acknowledged for interactions for personal and professional use. English language holds a powerful existence that has made it to be the standard spoken language all over the world. That's why English oral performance is considered to be essential to be the essential skill of language learning.

2.1.Causes of speaking skill Difficulties:

Mastering The speaking skill is not an easy process (Burns, 2019). Many difficulties face the learners in mastering the oral performance basically in classrooms. This may result from many factors that are related to students, teachers, or curriculum. Swaran (2020) Admitted that the low speaking skill is due to the lack of real language learning situations inside or outside the EFL classroom. Apart from that, mother tongue influence inside and outside of the classroom, student's pessimist attitude towards the EFL language, teacher-centered classes, teacher's use of the mother tongue to teach in an EFL classroom, and passiveness of students in the classroom as well as the low competences in English speaking skills which is hard to develop. While all of (Tuan & Mai, 2015; Abugohar, et al, 2019) agree that language teachers face considerable difficulties in helping students speak in classes; such as insufficient awareness, embarrassment, first language use, and most

learners' unwillingness to participate. Students' insufficient awareness of the subject matter disturbs students' speaking as they have no knowledge about the topic of investigation that consequently affects their motivation to talk and participate so, having no prior knowledge, limited terms and ideas regarding the topic affects the speaking process and prevent learners from expressing themselves as a new baby born in his first years. Embarrassment is another difficulty which students suffer from (Abugohar, et al, 2019). Students sometimes are nervous and have fears to speak. They are afraid of criticism when making mistakes. Students are often subject to inhibitions and apprehension in language classrooms. As well as a first language use to express ideas because of its easiness (Tuan & Mai, 2015). Güney, (2010)& Ocak, et al, (2013) added some causes which work as obstacles in front of EFL speaking skill. They are analyzed in seven points which are:

1. 1-Classroom climate: or the type of environment that is created for students by school, teachers, and peers. The size and physical conditions of the classroom. The relationship and interaction among students and the teacher (Güney, 2010).
2. 2 -Content knowledge:it includes students' knowledge about speaking topics, cultural and social concepts. The lack of knowledge and cultural unfamiliarity are stated as problems related to content knowledge (Marwan; Shumin, (2007).

3. 3 -Language proficiency: or the level of students and their competence to speak. Being unable to understand spoken language also is stated as a problem by (Atabek, 2006). Accent, stress, and pronunciation should be considered as speaking skill problems (Fulcher, 2003), as well as the difficulty in forming grammatically correct sentences.

4. 4 -Affective & personal problems: from the psychological side, students' emotions and feelings, personalities, students' self-assessment, self-perception, and the unwillingness to speak are serious problems, (Liu and Jackson, 2008).Moreover, students are afraid of making mistakes in front of others. They do not want to be the center of attention (Liu and Jackson, 2008). As the learners' personal features affect their speaking production, being not talkative, feeling shy or lack of self-confidence may be reasons for their refusal to speak in the classroom. Being afraid of immediate errors and correcting while they are speaking is another reason. Learners do not want to take risks while speaking English (Liu, and Jackson, 2008).

5. 5-Teacher: The teachers' personal features, and how they treat students in and outside the class have great importance, (Donoso & López 2020). The importance of giving clear instructions as the learners may not understand what they are going to do without receiving clear instructions. Teacher talking time or (TTT) has been reported as another teacher-related problem as it prevents students from the talk during class. Teacher intervention also can be a great problem. So that (TTT) should be

reduced, and instead, increasing the number of students talking time (STT). As well as Students' perception of their teacher is also important. In some situations, students think that their teachers are not competent as they are not native speakers (Atabek, 2006).

6. 6-Materials & methods: that are used in speaking lessons also may cause difficulty in speaking skills. It concerns the level of speaking activities. For example, the learners may think that speaking activities are not appropriate for their level, they may be too difficult or too easy, or boring for them (Atabek, 2006).

7. 7-Contextual factors: that are related to environmental and outside factors that affect learners' speaking performance. Some learners think that there is no need to speak English outside the class or English is an academic subject and not related to their lives. For this reason, they may not be motivated enough to speak moreover, the lack of chances to practice outside the classrooms is another problem (Güney, 2010).

2.3. Possible Solutions to overcome speaking skill problems and developing it in classrooms:

Alharbi, (2015) stated that the majority of high school graduates lack the ability to speak English fluently and accurately. Although students are able to express themselves in English by writing, they faced the inability to express themselves orally in English (Sarwar et al, 2014). As well as student's inability to master the speaking skill in the English

language has effects specifically on students' academic performance (Sabri & Qin, 2014).So, there was a need to develop EFL speaking skills. EFL speaking skill has three domains (vocabulary, fluency, and grammar) (Alhabbash, 2012) so, it is logical that If students are good at speaking skills this means that they are good in these three domains and any progress in these domains will lead to progress in speaking. So to develop the speaking skill of the students, modern techniques should be found to teach these domains effectively. It is our role as teachers to create opportunities for the students to develop their speaking skills in the classroom. Teachers should work on vanishing the causes of these obstacles. For example, the problem of fear of making mistakes, emotional bonds between students and teachers should be set up to get rid of students' fear and embarrassment. This way, the students are expected to feel comfortable with their teacher, moreover, they believe that the teacher will help them if they make any mistake (Sabri & Qin, 2014). Creating a supportive and harmonious atmosphere by the teacher can reduce students' nervousness and anxiety. Speaking in English classes is another suggested solution for shyness. Students should convince that doing errors lead to learning and without errors they won't learn (Al Nakhalah,2016). Baldwin, (2011) as well explained that speaking in front of people is one of the most common phobias that students encounter and feeling of shyness makes students forget what to say which causes a mental block to them so, he suggested that creating a friendly classroom environment will be effective. By doing this, shy students are hoping to feel fine for making mistakes in their learning. This way, students will not worry about their imperfect

pronunciation or grammar. As a result, they dare to speak in their speaking class. Encouraging students also give students a feeling of security and welcome in their learning. Teachers also can do activities like promoting students' awareness of the importance of English, enhancing students' interest in English, and developing their self-confidence (Liu & Huang, 2010). Hammad& Abu Ghali, (2015) view that FL teachers can help students improve their speaking skills, and reduce anxiety accompanied with speaking activities through employing certain pedagogical methods (i.e., presentations, role-plays, discussions, dialogues). Such methods can provide EFL learners with opportunities to practice oral language creatively.

3.Review of literature

In a study by Patil, (2020). He aimed to explore the relationship between technology and the teaching of the English language. The participants were Indian higher school learners. The instruments were two open-ended questionnaires. The results showed that using technology by itself cannot achieve linguistic proficiency in English and teachers' role is important as well. So, he has to use all his resourcefulness to create a student-friendly learning environment.

In a study by Firmansyah, et al, (2020). They aimed to investigate multimodal smartphones and millennial student learning styles. The participants were 30 students with various majors at the Stkip Pgri Pasuruan branch, East Java, Indonesia.

The instruments were questionnaires and interviews. The results indicated that multimodal smartphones as learning styles lead to lifelong learning experiences, and entertainment as it aimed at providing new experiences in learning.

In a study by Ataeifar, et al, (2020). They aimed to explore mobile-assisted instruction vs. traditional instruction for Iranian EFL students' speaking anxiety. The participants were a random sampling of 60 sophomore female students who were majoring in English teaching and translation at Zand University in Shiraz, Iran. The instruments were Two parallel forms of speaking papers of the PET that were prepared by Cambridge English Language Assessment. The results pointed out that smartphones have positive results on EFL speaking skills.

In a study by Kusmaryani, et al, (2019). They aimed to investigate the influence of mobile applications as learning assistance on improving students' speaking skills and critical thinking in English language learning. The participants were 38 students in a speaking class in the English department of Borneo University, Malaysia. The used instruments were a test, an observation, and an interview. The results pointed out that mobile applications were used as learning assistance positively optimized students' speaking skill and critical thinking.

In a study by Pardo& Cisterna, (2019). They aimed to explore that smartphone recording apps are an effective tool to enhance English language fluency. The participants were a group of thirty-one 7th grade students aged between 12 and 13 years and enrolled in a subsided school in Chile The instrument was a group interview and pre-and post-speaking tasks. The results showed a positive response to the use of smartphone

recording video applications on their English communication fluency.

In a study by Hossain, (2018). He aimed to use smartphones and apps for language learning, and offer a feasible language teaching approach to the EFL instructors as well. The participants were EFL learners at the tertiary level of Bangladesh. The used instruments were a close-ended questionnaire and a task of vocabulary, reading, pronouncing, guessing synonyms, and sentence making was given to students. It showed a positive result.

On the other hand, in a study by Amez, et al, (2019). They aimed to investigate smartphone use and academic performance. The participants were university students in two universities in Belgian. The instrument was collecting longitudinal data for three years on students' smartphone use and educational performance through a pen and a paper questionnaire. The results showed that there is a negative relationship between smartphone use and academic performance.

In another study by Amez& Baert, (2019). They aimed to explore smartphone use and academic performance. The participants were university students. The instrument was a paper and pen questionnaire. The results reflected a negative association between students' frequency of smartphone use and their academic success.

In a study by Baert, et al. (2019).They attempted to measure the impact of general smartphone use on educational

performance. The participants were university students The instrument was an open-ended questionnaire The result showed a negative association between smartphone use and students' exam results.

In a study by Ifeanyi & Chukwuere, (2018). They aimed to explore the impact of using smartphones on academic performance. The participants were undergraduate students at the North-West University, South Africa. The used instruments were questionnaires to collect data for that quantitative research method from undergraduate students at the NWU (Mahikeng Campus). The results showed that using smartphones distracts students from their studies in certain aspects.

In a study by Alfawareh & Jusoh, (2017). They aimed to explore The use and effects of smartphones on higher academic education. The participants were the academic staff. The instrument was a survey questionnaire. The results showed that academic staff had been negatively affected by smartphone use.

Comment on the previous studies

Whether the studies reviewed here found a positive or a negative relationship between using smartphone applications and speaking skills, all of them have an important effect on determining the influence of technology on the different aspects and skills of language in general and the academic success and achievement. The previous studies also widened the researcher's knowledge and enriched the educational background of the researcher concerning using smartphones in developing EFL in general and speaking skills in particular.On the other hand, the

previous studies related to speaking skills enriched the educational background of the researcher concerning its importance to speaking skills, as well as the previous studies related to using smartphones in education.

In sum, the previous studies investigated the relationship between smartphone applications on developing EFL in general and speaking skills particularly with various levels of learners. The different results produced by such studies may be attributed to differences in economic, social or even psychological conditions and backgrounds of the participants. Consequently, summarizing these studies for the sake of analyzing their results was necessary. Among the studies reported, five studies by (Hwang, et al, 2014; Darmi & Albion, 2017; Liwen& Qi; Pardo & Cisterna, 2019; Ataeifar, et al,2020)investigated the relation between smartphones' application and speaking or fluency. Four studies by (Sweeney& Moore, 2012; Mansor& Rahim, 2017; Chakir, 2018; Mauricio & Genuino, 2020) investigated the relation between smartphone's applications and developing vocabulary and writing. Three studies by (Kim, 2013; Hwang et al, 2014; Laghari, et al., 2017) aimed to investigate the relation between smartphones and developing Listening. Two studies by (Brouillette, et al, 2013; Griskell, et al, 2020) aimed to investigate the effect of smartphones' applications on language assessment.

Although the majority of the studies reported were concerned with implementing smartphone applications in EFL classrooms and developing EFL skills, they resulted in different

conclusions. All the previous studies, like (Awedh, et al; Jesse; Ota, 2015; Mansor & Rahim; Ng, et al; Laghari, et al; Darmi& Albion,2017; Hossain; Chakir; Ahmadi& Reza; Klimova; Farrah& Abu-Dawood,2018; Kusmaryani, et al; Pardo Soto & Cisterna,2019; Patil; Firmansyah, et al; Ataeifar, et al, 2020) indicated that Smartphones have a positive effect on EFL learning in different language aspects as reading, writing, listening, speaking, developing vocabulary, and language assessment. With the exception of studies by (Gooblar; Alfawareh& Jusoh, 2014; Haug, et al; Synnott, 2015; Elhai, et al, 2016; Alfawareh & Jusoh, 2017; Synnott; Ifeanyi & Chukwuere, 2018; Amez, et al, 2019) which indicated that Smartphones have negative effects on students' academic outcomes, distracts students from their studies and capture their imagination as well as smartphone addiction. Moreover, studies by (Wilson, 2012; Britt, 2013; Bllaca, 2016) indicated that Smartphones have some bad clinical effects on bad learners' health as it affects badly on body parts like eyes, arms, and minds. While Lee, et al, (2012) pointed out that strategies should be prepared to overcome techno-stress and ant smart tendencies from the side of students as well as teachers at the same time.

4.METHODOLOGY

In this research, the effectiveness of smartphones' applications on developing EFL speaking skills. Some applications were used as Elsa Speak and BBC learning English. The present study is conducted in English Egyptian Islamic school, Sharqya governorate in the academic year 2020-

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2021.The esearcher adopted quasi-experimental designe on an experimentl and controle group .

4.1.participants

The participants in this study are 60 students attending English Egyptian Islamic school, Sharqya Governorate, Egypt. The students were both male and female with an average age of 15/ 16 years. These 60 students were selected from a population of students of 120 Egyptian English Islamic language schools in the school year (2020/2021), the students were divided into 30 students in the experimental group and 30 in the control group.

4.2 The material

The researcher used the student's book (Upstream upper intermediate B+). Five units were tought by the researcher from unit 2 to unit 6. The researcher applied only the speaking lessons . Each lesson was 50 minutes. The researcher implemented the smartphones' application(BBC Learning English application and Elsa Speak application)
on the experimental group according to the schedule she designed.

4.3 The teacher's guide:

Teachers should follow four general steps to smartphones' applications:
a) Presenting the content using BBC learning English application.The teacher choose a suitable video from this

application which matches with the lessons's content for example.

b) Teacher can integrate the application (Elsa Speak) in the content.Teacher asks students to use the application of Elsa speak to train orally on pronouncing the new vocabularies, then they record their practice, receive feedback from the application, practicing again and enhancing their oral performance to get better feedback from the application.

c) Teacher asks students to practice speaking with each others in pairs using the new vocabularies.

d)When they finish, each student is required to assess his peers' performance (peer assessment). Students should mention the strength points as well as the weakness points as this will help students to work on their weakness points.

5.**Data Analysis**

SPSS(The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program was used to analyze the obtained data for the research. The results obtained from the independent sample t-test and paired sample t-test showed significant variation, and the EFL students from the experimental group expressed their satisfaction with using the smartphones' applications in teaching the course. The results showed that there is a statistically significant difference at a significance level of 0.01 between the scores of the control group and the scores of the experimental group in the post-speaking test for the sake of the experimental group. As well as. The results showed that there are statistically significant differences at a significance level of 0.01 between the scores of the experimental group in the pre and post-

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administration of speaking test for the sake of the post-administration.

6.Testing of hypotheses:

To test the effectiveness of EFL smartphones' applications on developing EFL oral performance skills, the first and second hypotheses were tested as follows:

6.1. First hypothesis:

-        **There is a statistically significant difference at .01 level between the mean scores attained by students of the control group and experimental group in the post administration of the EFL speaking test in favor of students of the experimental group.**

To test the first hypothesis the independent samples T-Test was computed, and the table shows the result:

Table (1)T-test Results of differences between control and experimental groups in post speaking test.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-Value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Post speaking test	Control Group	30	41.7667	3.28721	4.149	0.01
	Experimental Group	30	45.8000	4.18865		

From the table, there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores attained by students of the control group and the experimental group in the post-

administration of the EFL speaking test in favor of the experimental group students.

To test the effectiveness of EFL smartphones' applications on developing EFL speaking skill among the experimental group, η2 was computed as follows:

η2 = T2/ (T2+df)

T = T value of the difference between the control group and experimental group.

- Effect size is low if η2 is less than (0.06).

- Effect size is medium if η2 is more than or equal (0.06) and less than (0.14).

- Effect size is medium if η2 is more than or equal (0.14).

Table(2). Results of (η2) To test the effectiveness of EFL smartphones' applications on developing EFL speaking skill

Variable	Group	N	Df	T-Value	T2-Value	(η2) value
post oral performance	Control Group	30	58	4.149	17.2142	0.229
	Experimental Group	30				

From the result of (η2) in the previous table which is equal (0.229) and more than (0.14), this means that smartphones' applications are effective

on developing EFL speaking skills among the experimental group.

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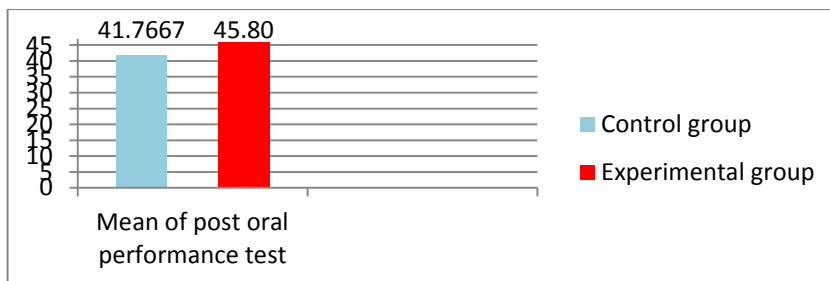Secondary School Students' EFL speaking skill.

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Fig. (1) Means of control and experimental groups in post oral performance test

6.2. Second hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant difference at .01 level between the mean scores attained by experimental group students in pre and post administration of the EFL speaking test in favor of the post-test.

To test the second hypothesis the paired samples T-Test was computed, and the next table shows the result:

Table (3)T-test Results of differences between the experimental group in pre and post administration of the EFL speaking test

Group		Mean	Std. Deviation	T-Value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Experimental group	Pre-test	40.5667	3.65479	12.716	0.01
	Post - test	45.8000	4.18865		

From the table, there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the students of the experimental group in the pre and post-administration of the EFL speaking

test in favour of the post-test. This result means that there is effectiveness of using smartphones' applications on developing EFL speaking skills among the experimental group.
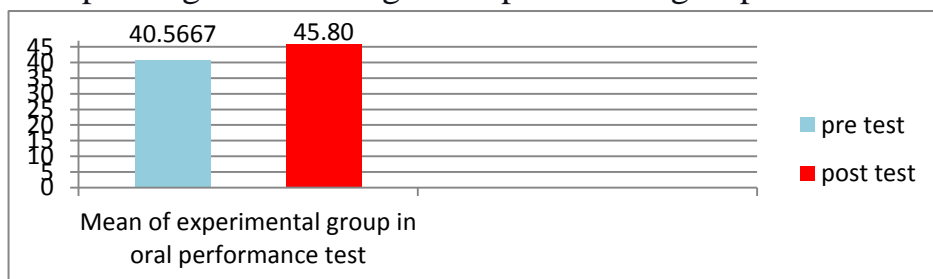

Fig. (2) Means of the experimental group in pre and post speaking test

From the previous table and figure, there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post-administration of the EFL speaking test in favor of the post-test. This result means that there is an effect of using smartphones' applications on developing EFL speaking skills among the experimental group.

7.The Study Results

The results of the study proved that:

1) Smartphones' applications have a positive effect on developing first secondary school students' EFL speaking skills as there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the pre and the post-measurement of the experimental group in favor of posts peaking test.

2) Smartphones' applications have a positive effect on developing first secondary school students' EFLL speaking skills as there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level

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between the control group and the experimental group in favor of the latter in the post-measurement of the speaking test.

3) There is a positive effect of smartphones' applications on developing EFL speaking skills.

8.Discussion of the Results

The results of the present study showed that the experimental group, which studied using smartphones' applications outperformed the control one in the post-measurement of the speaking test since there were statistically significant differences at 0.01 between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in favor of the former. The results of the present study showed that the results of the experimental group, which studied using smartphones' applications, the results of the post-measurement of the speaking test outperformed the results of the speaking post-test, since there were statistically significant differences at 0.01 between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post oral performance test in favor of the post-test.

Smartphones' applications can develop EFL speaking skills. This result is in line with the results of (Muhammed, 2014)and (Lan & Lin; Zheng & Yu; Sahan, et al,2016) who considered that when a learner uses EFL applications, this might aid their English language experience and lead to positive effects. Those results indicate that the integration of smartphones' applications into schools curriculum enhances participants' learning, supports and improves participants'

speaking skills. As well as it improves participants' knowledge, motivation and achievement, facilitate their study and use of language. The results also match with (Ahn, 2018) who admitted that when educational researchers, curriculum developers, teachers, and learners tried to use the advantages of smartphones and adapt them, it serves to achieve their educational needs concerning EFL in general and EFL oral performance in particular.

Educational technology is spreading all over the world to reach the educational process and learning style by using the Internet and ways of technology (Hsu et al., 2020). Therefore, the researcher tried to create a better learning environment for EFL secondary schools' students using smartphones' technologies and their applications to break the formal, traditional way of teaching in classrooms as well as break the apprehension that students feel inside EFL language classes, enhance the educational environment and remove the fear of practicing EFL speaking skill to reach better educational results.

9. Interpretation of the Results

The participants' progress in the post-measurement of the speaking test and could be attributed to the fact that the students who used the smartphones' applications were interested in speaking and participating.

The improvement achieved by the participants of the current study the effectiveness of smartphones' applications on developing speaking skills could be attributed to many reasons, such as:

1) The instructional material which was presented via the smartphones' applications has met students' interests and needs.

2) The smartphones' applications motivated the participants and allowed them to listen, practice, and speak. It suited their needs and permitted them to express themselves.

3) The smartphone applications provided information in a variety of modes, such as videos (illustrations) and listening materials, dictionaries through the applications, and recording the students' pronunciation as well (interactive mode).

The experimental participants could develop their proficiency in speaking skills in English while participating in language learning using the smartphones' applications. This was evident while using them in teaching the course through providing the participants with a variety of activities and dividing the roles among them, which allowed them to interact with each other. Providing participants with a variety of activities changed the method of teaching, dividing the roles among students to improve their speaking skills allowed them to interact with each other and to react to the material presented to them. Through this interaction, the researcher created a friendly environment, and teachers talking time is minimized to be just a moderator on the other hand maximizing student talking time
it was noticed that the participants had a positive attitude towards using smartphones' applications. For them, using smartphone applications changed the way they feel about speaking. They increased their motivation and involvement and improved their speaking skill.

10.Conclusion :

The results of the current study revealed that the study participants who studied via smartphones' applications showed a significant improvement on the post-administrations of the speaking test. The significant difference found in the post-administration of the test was due to using the smartphones' applications which developed participants' EFL speaking skills. This supported the first and second hypotheses. The previous result showed that there is a significant difference at 0.01 between the mean scores of the study participants in their performance in the pre-and post-administrations of the speaking test, favoring the post one. According to the previous results, the participants were positive towards using A smartphones' applications. This ascertained that smartphones' applications were utilized in developing students' speaking skills.

11.Pedagogical Implications of the Study

The findings of the present study raised several pedagogical implications:

1 EFL Learners

The results of this study proved that smartphones' applications had a positive effect on developing EFL speaking skill

- Smartphones' applications can provide EFL learners with the chance to utilize them individually, in pairs, or groups, in and out of class as a self-study.
- It also helps students to identify their language needs, and look for suitable applications which deal with their intended needs.

- This study also may be useful for students to deal with their fear of language and teach them that making mistakes is normal for humans, even native speakers.

2 EFL teachers and Course Designers

- The collected information could be important to EFL teachers whose aims are to develop EFL oral performance skills and reduce the level of EFL anxiety.
- The present study offers English course designers some ways to help them find solutions to the EFLspeaking problems they may face.
- The present study might help EFL teachers to understand how to choose and adopt smartphones' applications to develop oral performance skills specially and any other language skills.

3 Methodological Implications for future research

The current study could be considered a support for EFL researchers who are interested in the field of implementing smartphones in the Educational Process.

§ This study provides the researchers with instruments that may help them to assess EFL

speaking skills.

12.Recommendations for further research

Considering the results of the current study, the following can be recommended:

1) Enriching the curriculum with various topics for discussion which tackle the oral EFL speaking skills.

2)   Providing the secondary school with an effective internet WiFi with high speed which enables students and teachers to use some educational smartphones' applications when needed, the thing which can support the learning process.

3)   Provide the curriculum with the teaching materials that support the implementation of smartphones' application and thus foster students' achievement.

4)   Providing teachers with instructional materials which improve their awareness of technology and its importance and necessity in teaching English as well as training them to use technology in teaching.

Concentrating the fact that smartphone's applications are a very important instrument, They can be used in developing different skills of the language.

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