The Effects of Using Microsoft Teams on Improving EFL Learners' Speaking Abilities at Unaizah High School Students

Raghad T. Almutairi[1] & Fahad H. Aljumah[2]

[1] MA Applied Lingistics Student, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

[2] Professor of English, Applied Linguistis, Department of English language and Translation, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

Correspondence: Raghad Thyab Almutairi, MA Applied Lingistics Student, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia. E-mail: 381210286@qu.edu.sa, Raghad447711@hotmail.com

Abstract

Advanced technology has affected all aspects of life, including education. Technology in education has proven effective in several topics, including learning ESL/EFL. By reviewing previous research, the study aimed to explore the effects and challenges of using Microsoft Teams as an online learning tool on EFL learners at Unaizah, Saudi Arabia, from the students' point of view. To improve their speaking skills more efficiently than in traditional classrooms, a questionnaire as a descriptive approach was used to collect data. The sample consisted of 351 female students. The results indicated that learners find using Microsoft Teams has advantages in improving English speaking skills. Thus it had a positive impact. Furthermore, the study found that learners face challenges in using Microsoft Teams. Moreover, there are no statistically significant differences at the level of the significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). The study recommends that educational institutions apply Microsoft Teams for its advantages.

Keywords: e-learning, Microsoft teams, speaking skills, speaking development

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Problem

Speaking is one of the skills that language students seek to master (Bennis & Bazaz, 2014). It is a complex performative process involving mental processes that help reconstruct meaning (Kunierek, 2015). Being able to speak is considered one of the most challenging aspects of language learning. Rababbah (2003, pp. 182-183) stated that "Arab learners find it difficult to communicate freely in the target language. This may be due to language teaching methods." They have difficulty expressing themselves in spoken language. In this context, they face embarrassing situations filled with anxiety and confusion. They stop talking because they cannot find the right words and expressions and they face psychological obstacles. Consequently, the educational system should seriously explore creating new methods, such as online learning, to help students enhance their speaking skills.

Due to the great revolution of technological expansion in the 21st century, e-learning has impacted education in terms of the methods, contexts, means, and procedures that can be followed to effectively develop the educational strategies (Bhagat, Nan-Cheng, & Yen-Chun, 2016). E-learning can offer solutions to overcome problems of traditional methods of teaching, and enhance the effectiveness of education results. In addition, e-learning is among recent generations' most demanded fields. Moreover, it has been predicted that it will soon play an important role in education (Nguyen & Duong, 2021).

Education is undoubtedly an indispensable part of life, and the development of the Internet has dramatically advanced the methods of teaching and learning. Microsoft Teams is one of the most influential and popular applications. It is an online learning tool used in the educational setting where you can focus on online classes, meetings, internal chats, video conferences, to name but a few. Since it is a learning and collaboration area that enables students and teachers to gather in one location, it includes many educational tools, including communication options between teachers and students to answer any requests and questions, options to add assignments, tests, and tools to organise student work. Pal and Vanijja (2020) pointed out the importance of using

Microsoft Teams in university and pre-university education as it is a reference learning platform characterised by ease of use for teachers and learners. It offers an integrated learning environment. It supports synchronous and asynchronous learning environments.

When moving to remote learning, virtual platforms that support learning platforms are needed (Heggart & Yoo, 2018). Microsoft Teams supports synchronous and asynchronous communication which are essential for distance or remote learning (Poston, Apostel, & Richardson (2020). Therefore, it is argued that Microsoft Teams can be used in education and it supports remote education (Hai-Jew, 2020).

Using Microsoft Teams in learning is getting a lot of attention as it is continuing to ride the remote work and learning wave propelled by the Covid-19 pandemic. Given the increasing number of educational institutions moving to remote education, there is a need for research on the effectiveness of virtual learning platforms for online learning. Despite the many studies on blended learning platforms such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Google Classrooms, much attention has not been given to students' perceptions of the usefulness of Microsoft Teams.

Therefore, many studies have focused on the effectiveness and usefulness of using virtual platforms in education. This study focuses on the challenges, advantages and disadvantages of Microsoft Teams as perceived by female high school students.

Against this background, the current research attempts to show the effects of Microsoft Teams on improving speaking skills and identifying the challenges to it facing female high school students based on their perspectives by asking such questions:

(1) What are the effects of using Microsoft Teams on improving female high school students' English speaking skills at the Unaizah governorate?

(2) What are the challenges of using Microsoft Teams to improve female students' English speaking skills based on their perspectives?

(3) Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the study sample about the impact of using Microsoft Teams in improving English speaking skills for high school students at Unaizah Governorate according to the variable of the students' academic level?

1.2 Importance of the Research Problem

Alrasheedi (2020) pointed out that although the Saudi curriculum is based on developing all four English language skills, speaking does not get adequate attention. Therefore, the main problem Saudi EFL students face is the inability to speak fluently (Akhter, 2020; Alqahtani, 2016; Alrasheedi, 2020; Albalawi &Younes, 2016). From the researcher's experience of teaching English, it is observed that when students are asked to answer a question, they feel embarrassed and get confused; in the end, the answer is "I do not know". They cannot manage the situation; they stop or use their native language. Consequently, they do develop a negative attitude towards learning English. This difficulty may be due to ineffective teaching methods that negatively impact their performance.

We live in a changing world. The internet and modern technologies are prevalent in our world. Accordingly, Microsoft Teams may help EFL learners improve their English speaking skills more efficiently than in the traditional classroom. It is essential to find out the challenges learners face while using Microsoft Teams. These challenges result from several causes. It has been argued that Microsoft Teams is ineffective, does not benefit students, and does not achieve teaching goals in online learning environments (Wichanpricha, 2021). Archambault and White (2022) added that uses may face certain problems: microphone or webcam refuses to work correctly; creating a new team in Microsoft Teams may pose a problem; removed user shows as 'Unknown User' in Teams; users may be unable to establish a connection to Microsoft Teams; Teams is stuck in a login loop in Microsoft Edge; users cannot access a Microsoft Teams OneNote notebook; Teams will not allow you to log in to the service. At the same time, many studies have illustrated the advantages of using Microsoft Teams in education settings (Henderson et al., 2020; Gowda & Ayahs, 2020; Artal-Sevil & Valero-Gracia, 2021; Koncova & Kremenova, 2021; Mukhtar, Javed, Arooj, & Sethi, 2020). However, they often do not provide advantages related to curricula, textbooks, or teacher strategies in a face-to-face classroom setting.

In addition to the small number of studies that dealt with the role of Microsoft Teams in improving the speaking skills of high school students, more studies are needed to assess using it teaching English. A few studies have focused on language learning (Tu & Luong, 2021; Schneider, 2020; Rojabi, 2020). Therefore, this study reviews the current literature regarding the importance of Microsoft Teams in improving learners' English speaking skills among high school students. Moreover, it will identify learners' challenges while using Microsoft Teams during

their online English classes. Consequently, the current study aims to:

(1) Discover the advantages of using Microsoft Teams for improving English speaking skills among female high school students.

(2) Identify female high school students' challenges while using Microsoft Teams to improve their English speaking skills.

(3) Find out if there are statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) according to the students' academic stage variable about the impact of using Microsoft Teams in improving English speaking skills for female high school students at Unaizah.

1.3 Relevant Literature

1.3.1 Historical Background of Speaking

Although speaking has played a unique role in the second and foreign language teaching, it is still neglected for decades. It had seldom been noticed. This may be due to certain reasons. The widespread use of the grammar-translation approach, which has continued to affect language in real-time, disregards teaching communication skills (Bygate, 1987). Students sometimes feel embarrassed when they speak openly. When students get negative remarks, whether from the teacher or classmates, they develop negative attitudes towards speaking. Excluding the grammar-translation approach, most approaches to teaching languages do not emphasize oral communication as discourse skills. Instead, it was a tool for teaching language, memorisation, and developing habits. Pronunciation was another area of emphasis. The interaction was ignored.

To put it another way, audiolingual is one of the language teaching approaches that offer a distinct viewpoint on teaching speaking, assigning input precedence over output and advising teaching oral skills before writing. Repetition was emphasised as a crucial component of speaking instruction because this "helps memorisation, automaticity and the formation of associations between different elements of language" (Bygate,1987, p.15) ignoring the fact that speaking aims to interact. More recently, speaking skill has emerged as a separate skill and a significant element of language teaching, particularly with the advent of the communicative method.

1.3.2 The Importance of Improving Speaking Skills

Speaking is considered one of people's four skills to express their thoughts, points of view, emotions and needs. However, insufficient attention is paid to this skill in English classes. It might result from traditional methods that focus on writing and reading. Since English is an international language and the language of technological advances, including the internet, Twitter, Facebook, industry, marketing, trade and the lingua franca among people of different languages, it has become essential for EFL learners to improve their speaking skills. It is also thought that improving speaking skills helps develop other skills like reading and writing (Torky, 2006). Furthermore, the reality that several examinations, like IELTS, are used internationally to evaluate learners' speaking proficiency is another indication of the significance of speaking skills.

1.3.3 Speaking Skills Challenges

EFL learners who wants to master speaking proficiency face many challenges because they must master several crucial subskills, including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and understanding. Speaking a foreign language is more challenging than listening, reading, or writing for two primary reasons. The first is that speaking happens in real time, unlike reading and writing. The second is that speaking prevents a person from editing and revising what they want to say, but writing allows a person to do this (Asrida, 2016). Alrasheedi (2020) affirms these challenges. It has been shown that Saudi EFL students place insufficient focus on developing speaking skills. These challenges become more difficult because English is not frequently spoken in daily discussions. The research aimed to investigate the factors that affect learners' speaking skills by identifying the challenges and suggesting straightforward solutions to acquiring English speaking skills. A questionnaire was sent to 200 male and female participants at Majmaah University in Saudi Arabia. It has been discovered that psychological factors impacting students' success in speaking skills include shyness, peer pressure, anxiety, and fear of making mistakes. Lack of vocabulary, exposure to the target language, and limited opportunities for speaking practice outside of the classroom are additional barriers to speaking performance.

Ali, Shamsan, Guduru, and Yemmela (2019) studied the difficulties Saudi EFL students face when learning speaking skills. They highlighted the urgent need to enhance speaking skills in education by examining students' opinions of English speaking skills in intensive programs. One hundred students, 50 men and 50 women, enrolled in the rigorous program at Saudi Arabia's universities, specialized in Arts, Business, and Community, were given a questionnaire. The study showed that male and female students had similar views towards learning

English speaking skills and were becoming more conscious of their increasing significance. Students' speaking skills are also impacted by their environment, interest, and determination. Additionally, female students are more enthusiastic about learning English speaking skills.

This exploratory research documents the use of the web conference technology WebEx to expand the variety of focus group data collection methods. Drawn from four synchronous online focus groups with older adults from across Canada, who create and use online personal learning networks to enhance and support their informal self-directed learning processes, these reflections are elaborated to include lessons learned regarding recruitment, group moderation, data triangulation, and the implementation of web-based conferencing. Recommendations for research practice include consideration of research populations, geographical location, research topics, web conference systems, moderation processes, and researcher biases. This application of the WebEx™ platform to conduct synchronous online focus groups demonstrates the validity of integrating online communication tools into the research context, thus bridging the gap between the traditional face-to-face and online focus group methods and heeding the call to researchers to continue to share their experiences of novel approaches to conducting educational research.

1.3.4 Microsoft Teams Definition

Zamora-Antuñano et al. (2021) define "Microsoft Teams" as a communication platform accessed through an enterprise account with Office 365 designed to improve communication and collaboration between work teams by creating custom spaces that include many different communication tools. Nicoletti and Bernasch (2021) define it as a collaboration and communication platform developed by Microsoft to replace Microsoft Skype. It allows teachers to communicate and share information with their students' using computers and mobile devices. Thus, we find that Microsoft Teams is based primarily on providing synchronous and asynchronous communication among learners through many tools that enable teachers to create virtual classes, and share files and various programs through private or public work teams.

1.3.5 The Importance of Using Microsoft Teams

According to Dr Hamad bin Muhammad Al-Sheikh, the former Minister of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, e-learning could eventually be a strategic option for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and not just an alternative (Naar, 2020). Thus, Microsoft Team is one of the important e-learning tools both at present and for the upcoming generations. Demina and Kaskova (2021) points out using Team Microsoft in the educational setting as follows:

(1) It aids in the electronic assessment of students.

(2) It increases students' motivation and enthusiasm for learning.

(3) It develops students' independence and self-discipline in their learning.

(4) It helps introverts to submit their questions to the teacher more freely.

(5) It provides continuous communication anytime anywhere.

Sobaih, Salem, Hasanein and Elnasr (2021) assessed the use of Microsoft Teams. They identified student responses to training courses delivered through social networks and Microsoft Teams. The questionnaire was applied to undergraduate students at various colleges. The study concluded that social networks and Microsoft Teams have the same ability to access information and learning resources, build knowledge and critical thinking, and express ideas. So the importance of Microsoft Teams is confirmed. Wea and Kuki (2021) explored the perceptions of UNIPA students towards learning using Microsoft Teams. The study sample consisted of 176 students in physics, chemistry, and biology programs. The study showed students' positive attitudes towards using Microsoft Teams and their interest to continue learning. Students believe that the application helped them keep pace with studying in light of the epidemic. It is based on the interaction between the teacher and students and makes students more excited to attend lectures.

1.3.6 Challenges of Using Microsoft Teams in Education

Like any other technology, Microsoft Teams has advantages and disadvantages. As for the disadvantages, teachers are unable to recognise the body language of their students. It denotes that the instructor can use nonverbal cues from the students' expressions to gauge their knowledge (Rojabi, 2020). Additionally, there are times when students and teachers cannot communicate face-to-face. Fatimah (2020) argues that even though most students nowadays are technologically literate, utilising a computer to take an online course or learn a new topic can be a nightmare for certain students. Demina and Kaskova (2021) confirm that identifying obstacles to using Microsoft Teams indicates that:

(1) It is an ineffective tool for teaching practical skills.

(2) It needs a solid and reasonable internet network for communication.

(3) Its reliance on the Internet is a problem for students of low economic level.

(4) Lack of social interaction among the students leads to social isolation, and mental and psychological problems, such as introversion, and negative thoughts.

Bui (2022) investigated the challenges faced by EFL learners at Van Lang University when they learned to write in an online course via Microsoft Teams. Ninety-six third-year students were asked to complete a 10-item questionnaire for a 10-week online writing course. The results revealed that they faced nine types of challenges related to technical problems, lack of focus, lack of interaction, time management, health problems, knowledge acquisition, motivation, psychological problems, and cooperation. The study suggests some implications of teaching writing skills to EFL learners online through Microsoft Teams. Ha and Ngo (2021) also looked at the challenges English majors at Van Lang University encountered when learning listening skills through Microsoft Teams. One hundred thirty-five students took part in the study and had to fill out questionnaires and answer a semi-structured interview. Results showed that while studying listening skills online via Microsoft Teams, students faced challenges such as psychology issues, technology usage, English proficiency, listening activities, and learning environment. However, they suggested teaching and learning listening skills online via Microsoft Teams. Nguyen and Duong (2021) analysed the difficulties faced by EFL students at Van Lang University. Students took an online course via Microsoft Teams. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the research; 144 EFL students participated in the study. The students took the course during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, all survey participants had to study online. The paper has suggested that identifying these challenges may help English language teachers design well-rounded teaching methods. This is the reason for considering the roles of e-learning. Therefore, the result of the research found that there are challenges in the use of electronic platforms.

1.3.7 The Importance of Microsoft Teams for Improving English Skills

The Saudi Vision 2030 initiative provided e-learning infrastructures systems, such as Microsoft Teams, Blackboard and McGraw-Hill in their education plans. To facilitate e-learning for many educational institutions in Saudi Arabia, such as Qassim University, King Saud University, Taibah University, King Khalid University, Islamic University of Madinah, Al-Baha University, and King Abdul-Aziz University (Hassounah, Raheel, & Alhefzi, 2020). In reality, universities, schools, students, academics, and administrators face challenges (Tanveer et al., 2020). However, this only lasted a short period since Saudi educational institutions have indicated that by the end of 2020, "102 million users were conducting 107,000 hours of web-based learning in more than 7600 virtual classes" (Hassounah et al., 2020, p. 5).

Microsoft Teams allows direct communication with professional native speakers to develop speaking skills. Alfallaj (2013) assessed the effectiveness of e-learning tools. Data were collected using a questionnaire from three different institutes in Buraydah, Saudi Arabia. The sample was 67 students. It was found that students prefer to communicate with native speakers via online tools under the supervision of their teachers to improve their fluency. Therefore, teachers should use the necessary methods to enable learners to communicate with native speakers via the Internet as a part of their curriculum. This may be easier to implement by using Microsoft Teams.

Some researchers have studied Microsoft Teams-based online learning. Rojabi (2020) investigated EFL learners' attitudes towards online learning. Twenty-eight college students participated in the study and completed Google Forms surveys. The findings demonstrated that using Microsoft Teams for online learning significantly enhances the learning environment for students. They viewed relationships between students and teachers favourably after using Microsoft Teams. It concluded that future research should focus on the advantages of online courses delivered using Microsoft Teams and student satisfaction with it, together with overcoming the disadvantages. Fatima (2020) examined EFL learners at Muscat College, Oman, to discover changes in teaching English language skills and their impact on students. It was found that most study participants preferred to learn using online applications. The study found that e-learning yielded good results. Moreover, students were more likely to learn independently. It was concluded, although e-learning has become an integral part of the 21st century with abundant benefits for both teachers and students, language faculties everywhere need solutions to overcome challenges in this regard. A change in attitudes and technology literacy should be encouraged among students to benefit from e-learning effectively.

Wichanpricha (2021) studied the use of on Microsoft Teams in teaching. The study involved 250 undergraduate

students. Academic English courses, based on three specific educational areas, have been conducted in Thailand on pedagogy in the context of EFL. The study used an online questionnaire. It examined perceptions and difficulties of synchronous learning in an academic English course by Microsoft Teams. The results indicated that Microsoft Teams enabled students to enhance their contemporary understanding of the academic English course with a greater incentive to learn English language skills. Moreover, most participants positively viewed learning through Microsoft Teams as important and useful. However, it has been found that a weak internet connection is a critical factor that prevents them from studying online.

At Van Lang University, Tran (2021) evaluated the efficacy of utilising Microsoft Teams for first-year students' EFL learning. Eighty first-year students completed a fifteen-item survey. The research showed that Van Lang University successfully used Microsoft Teams in teaching. The students had favourable opinions regarding the benefits of using Microsoft Teams. However, a few drawbacks were mentioned regarding using Microsoft Teams for online instruction and learning.

At Vietnam universities, Yen and Nhi (2021) argued that enhancing online teaching is essential to ensure student learning progress in light of the critical events of the Covid-19 pandemic. The selection and use of Microsoft Teams for online teaching met the requirements of the Ministry of Education in the context of epidemic prevention. The study described the effectiveness of online instruction via Microsoft Teams in EFL classes through student feedback. They surveyed fifty EFL learners at Da Nang University. The study found advantages and disadvantages of teaching English online and suggested solutions to improve efficiency in devising teaching methods and forms.

At the Department of English at Hong Bang International University, Dung (2020) indicated that as a result of the expansion of virtual courses, there are growing concerns about the quality of education. The study identified the challenges faced by teachers and students. The advantages and disadvantages of virtual learning experienced by faculty and students were examine. A questionnaire was applied to 205 students and 16 lecturers. The results revealed two problems: the digital division and the lack of social skills and interaction among students in the virtual learning environment.

Thus, it is clear from previous studies that the positive and negative attitudes of students and teachers towards Microsoft Teams supported it examination in the current research.

1.4 Study Hypotheses

Following are hypotheses of the study:

(1) There are positive effects of using Microsoft Teams in improving English speaking skills.

(2) Students face several challenges while using Microsoft Teams to improve their English speaking skills.

2. Method

The current study adopts the descriptive analytical approach to describe the effect of using Microsoft Teams on improving the speaking skills of female high school students at Unaizah. Moreover, it seeks to identify the challenges they face when they use Microsoft Teams. Finally, to determine if there are statistically significant differences at the significance level in the students' responses to using Microsoft Teams.

2.1 The Study Population

The study population comprises all female high school students at Education Department at Unaizah Governorate in their first term, 2022. According to the official statistics, the total number of the study is 4098 female students.

2.2 Study Sample

Due to the large study population size, the Robert Manson equation was used. It is commensurate with human studies. The sample size is 351 female students selected randomly. Robert Manson equation is done by dividing the standard degree corresponding to the significance level (0.95); dividing (1.96) by the error rate (0.05). Their ages are between 16-19 years old. They study in different schools at Unaizah. Table 1 describes the study sample.

Table 1. Description of the study sample

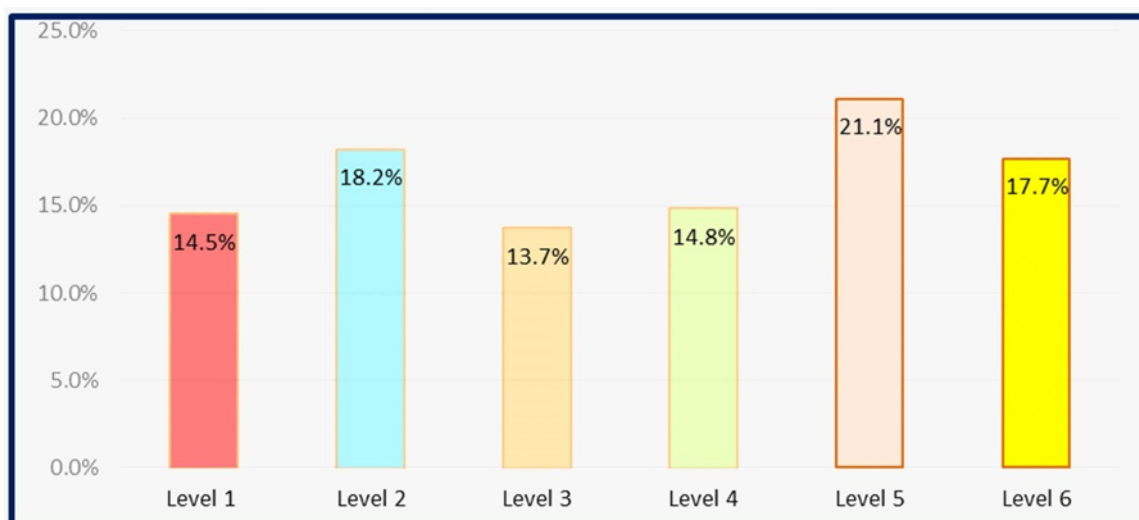| Students' Grade Level	No.	Percentage
Level 1	51	14.5%
Level 2	64	18.2%
Level 3	48	13.7%
Level 4	52	14.8%
Level 5	74	21.1%
Level 6	62	17.7%
Total	351	100.0%

Figure 1. Description of the study sample according to the students' academic level

2.3 Research Instrument

Based on the nature and objectives of the study, a questionnaire was used as an appropriate instrument. To answer the study questions, a quantitative method was used. A 10-item questionnaire adapted from Bui (2022) was part of the used questionnaire. The rest of the items were conducted by the researcher. The instrument was designed based on the effect and the challenges of using Microsoft Teams to improve the speaking skills of female high school students.

The participants were given the opportunity to answer the items on a 5-point Likert scale. The scale measures the degree of the impact of using Microsoft Teams on improving the speaking skills of high school students. The responses include strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The responses are given scores (5, 4, 3, 2, 1) respectively. As the questionnaire was given to Arab EFL learners, it was translated into Arabic to ensure they understood the exact meaning of the items and could answer the items. It was translated by the researcher and evaluated by a lecturer from the English faculty of Qassim University, who approved it with some modifications which were made. In order to prepare the study instrument in terms of its items based on the study variables, the researcher reviewed the related educational literature represented in the conceptual framework and previous studies related to the topic of the study. instrument

2.3.1 Validity of the Questionnaire

The validity of the study instrument was achieved in two ways as follows: items

2.3.2 External Validity

The questionnaire consisted of (19) items divided into two axes. After completing the questionnaire preparation and preparing its items in the initial form, it was presented to a jury specialized in the field of study. They were

(14) jurors. Furthermore, they were requested to review the questionnaire and express their opinion on it: in terms of the clarity of the items, the appropriateness of each item to its axis, the correctness of the linguistic formulation of the items. They jury may add or delete what they see fit.

2.3.3 Internal Validity

After confirming the external validity of the study instrument, the researcher measured the internal consistency validity by applying the initial form of the questionnaire to an exploratory sample with (14) participants. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to measure the correlation coefficient between the score of each axis in the total score of the questionnaire, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Pearson correlation coefficient correlations between the score of each axis and the total score of the questionnaire

No.	axes	Correlation coefficient
1	Advantages	.855[**]
2	Challenges	.926[**]
**Statistically significant when the significance level is less than (0.01)		

2.3.4 The Reliability of the Questionnaire

To measure the reliability coefficient, the questionnaire was applied in its initial form to an exploratory sample of size (14) participants of the study population. The statistical analysis of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used. Cronbach's alpha equation verified the reliability of the questionnaire Table 3 shows the relevant results.

Table 3. Questionnaire's reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha equation

No.	Axes	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Advantages	10	.850
2	Challenges	5	.852
3	Total	15	.891

2.3.5 Procedures

In the second week of October 2022, the questionnaire was applied. The high school female principals were contacted by phone and informed about the researcher's intention to conduct the study in their schools. Approval was obtained to send it to their students. The questionnaire was sent electronically in a Google form to the students through the use of WhatsApp and Telegram applications. These two applications are among the most used among teenagers. As a precaution, the questionnaire was sent to 400 female students, and the responses were 351 students, matching the study sample size. The responses were completed within two weeks.

2.3.6 Obstacles Faced during Conducting the Study

Research becomes difficult when specific difficulties arise. The researcher in the current study faced several challenges in conducting the research. It was not easy to persuade the school principals to allow the researcher to complete the study. A few of the students refused to participate. It took a while to convince them to participate.

2.3.7 Data Analysis

Data were gathered, examined, and analysed. Version 20 of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. The means, standard deviation, and effects were measured. The results of 5-point Likert-scale items for the student survey were reported using mean scores. Participants' responses were collected, described, and interpreted.

3. Results

The study results are presented by responding to the items and then linking them to the study's hypotheses.

Question One: What are the effects of using Microsoft Teams on improving the English speaking skills of female high school students at Unaizah? The arithmetic means standard deviation, order and degree estimate were used to answer the first question as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Advantages of using Microsoft Teams

NO	Statement	Mean	Deviation	Order	Degree
2	I feel motivated when I take English online speaking classes via Microsoft Teams.	4.09	0.845	1	Agree
8	I feel a little nervous about using English for communication purposes after studying via Microsoft Teams.	4.07	0.801	2	Agree
6	Learning through Microsoft Teams breaks the fear barrier of speaking in English.	4.05	0.816	3	Agree
5	I find using Microsoft Teams helpful me to speak more confidently and fluently than in traditional classes.	4.02	0.810	4	Agree
4	I find that there are much more student-student and student-teacher interactions when I take online English speaking classes courses via Microsoft Teams.	4.00	0.804	5	Agree
7	Learning through Microsoft Teams helps me speak with native speakers so as to develop my English fluency.	3.99	0.819	6	Agree
9	I have acquired a lot of English vocabulary as a result of studying via Microsoft Teams.	3.99	0.828	7	Agree
10	Learning English via Microsoft Teams has increased my interest to learn English and opened new horizons for more synchronic learning.	3.99	0.847	8	Agree
3	I find it very helpful to collaborate with my classmates when I take English online speaking classes via Microsoft Teams.	3.98	0.803	9	Agree
1	It is effective for me to gain knowledge when I take English online speaking classes via Microsoft Teams.	3.90	0.804	10	Agree
	Total	4.01	0.256		Agree

Regarding the effects of using Microsoft Teams on improving the English speaking skills of high school students at Unaizah, all the advantages refer to (Agree). The arithmetic means indicate the rating category (3.40 to less than 4.20).

The results approve the study hypothesis that using Microsoft Teams has advantages in improving speaking skills; therefore, its effects are positive. These results reflect those of Sobaih et al. (2021), Wichanpricha (2021), Tran (2021), Yen and Nhi (2021), Rojabi (2020), Fatima (2020) and Wea and Kukis (2021) indicating that the students were comfortable participating in group discussions and actively participating in online learning because it was novel and efficient. It is also consistent with Alfallaj (2013) study as it helps students to contact native speakers to develop their English language fluency. Moreover, it is in accordance with Fatima (2020) study which indicates that it is effective for students to gain knowledge when they take English online classes via an online platform. Finally, it is in accordance with Demina and Kaskova (2021) study that using Microsoft Teams provides students with an effective learning environment, increases their motivation and enthusiasm for learning, which eventually encourages them to enjoy learning the English language.

The findings indicate that Microsoft Teams improved EFL learners English speaking skills. This improvement can be attributed to several factors:

(1) Microsoft Teams learning provided the participants with new experience where they learned to speak fluently, use more vocabulary, break fear barriers and contact with native speakers; it was difficult to achieve in their face-to-face learning experience where students had limited time.

(2) Learning by using Microsoft Teams, which aimed at urging students to collaborate and practice their speaking skills, made participants more involved in the required discussion and more attentive to responding to

the speaking tasks.

(3) Microsoft Teams learning allowed students to collaborate and speak English in a non-threatening and comfortable environment where participants had the opportunity to use vocabulary, phrases and knowledge to check their pronunciation before engaging in discussion with their peers.

However, this result contrasts Dung (2020) who found that online platforms, including Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Blackboard, have some issues related to student-student and student-teacher interaction, generally social interaction. It is also contrary to Bui (2022) who claimed that Microsoft Teams causes psychological problems for students, eventually leading to slow language learning. Moreover, it contradicts Demina and Kaskova (2021) who concluded that Microsoft Teams causes a lack of social interaction among students and leads to social isolation and mental and psychological problems, such as introversion and negative thoughts.

Question Two: What are the challenges of using Microsoft Teams to improve English speaking skills from female students' perspectives? To answer the second study question, the arithmetic means, standard deviation, order and degree estimate were used. Table 5. shows the results. Three of the challenges refer to the degree of (strongly agree). The arithmetic mean refers to the rating category (4.20 less than 5.00). Two of the challenges refer the degree (neutral). The arithmetic average refers to the rating category (2.60 less than 3.30).

Table 5. Challenges of using Microsoft Teams

No.	Item	Mean	Deviation	Order	Score
5	I am unable to concentrate on my learning when I take online English speaking classes course via Microsoft Teams.	4.50	0.501	1	Strongly agree
2	I face challenges in using Microsoft Teams in terms of slow internet connection and the unavailability of a laptop.	4.47	0.500	2	Strongly agree
4	I have technical problems when I use Microsoft Teams during English classes.	4.42	0.593	3	Strongly agree
3	I am not good at managing time when I take online English speaking classes courses via Microsoft Teams.	3.38	1.127	4	Neutral
1	I feel embarrassed when I mispronounce a letter or a word when speaking in English via Microsoft Teams.	2.99	1.368	5	Neutral
	Total	3.95	0.387		Agree

The second axis of the survey as a whole related to the challenges of using Microsoft Teams in improving the English speaking skills of female high school students came to a degree (Agree) and an average of (3.95). The finding indicates that students face challenges while using Microsoft Teams to improve their English speaking skills. It reflects those of Bui (2022), Ha and Ngo (2021), and Nguyen and Duong (2021) who discussed the challenges of using Microsoft Teams in a language learning environment in terms of the lack or the weakness of the internet and the unavailability of the laptop and time management. It is consistent with Demina and Kaskova (2021) who concluded that Microsoft Teams is an ineffective tool for teaching practical skills. It needs a solid and reasonable internet network for communication. Its reliance on the Internet is a problem for students of low economic level.

These challenges are attributed to several factors as follows:

Inconsistent internet access challenges students to improve speaking skills using Microsoft Teams.

Failure to create an appropriate environment for students while using Microsoft Teams challenged them regarding focus, class time management, and active participation with the instructor.

Failure to prepare students, train them to use the platform, know how to activate all its services, and take advantage of its features may be challenging for students to improve their speaking skills using Microsoft Teams.

Alrasheedi (2020) and Ali et al. (2019) argued that Saudi EFL learners have difficulties in English language skills, and their need for an effective program to develop these skills may overcome the difficulties.

Question Three: Are there statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the responses of the study sample about using Microsoft Teams in improving English speaking skills for female high

school students at Unaizah according to the students' academic level variable? Using one-way ANOVA, Table 6 show the results.

Table 6. Results of the (One Way ANOVA) Test

Axis		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Advantages	Between Groups	.373	5	.075	1.143	.338
	Within Groups	22.516	345	.065		
	Total	22.889	350			
Challenges	Between Groups	.432	5	.086	.574	.720
	Within Groups	51.963	345	.151		
	Total	52.396	350			

Table 6 shows that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the responses of the study sample about the reality of using Microsoft Teams for improving English speaking skills for high school students at Unaizah. This is based on the variable of students' academic level. The significance levels for all axes are more significant than (0.05). This is attributable to the following:

(1) Since the students are of the same age at these levels, and they are considered from the same generation, there are no statistically significant differences.

(2) These levels have the same linguistic score, so there are no statistically significant differences.

4. Discussion

It can be concluded that Microsoft Teams effectively develops EFL speaking skills among female high school students at Unaizah. Microsoft Teams provides a way of improving English speaking skills and highlights student-student and student-teacher interaction, which leads to more engagement in the learning process. Besides, Microsoft Teams helps students to practice their EFL speaking skills by interacting orally with one another and receiving feedback from peers via Microsoft Teams.

The results of the present study are inconsistent with Dung (2020) who argued that online platforms, including Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Blackboard, have some issues related to student-student and student-teacher interaction, generally social interaction They differ from Bui (2022) who claimed that Microsoft Teams causes psychological problems for students, eventually leading to slow language learning.

The study discusses adopting the use of Microsoft Teams to help learners to overcome the problem of shyness, hesitation, or fear of speaking they encounter during their attempts to speak the English language in front of an audience. It is also hoped that the study will pave the way for further studies in teaching and learning English speaking skills to enrich teachers' and students' knowledge about the effectiveness of using Microsoft Teams in the instructional field. Finally, it is hoped that Saudi educators will get better insight into the use of Microsoft Teams. To sum up, the results of the present study can provide the basis for many other studies to be based on Microsoft Teams to develop different language areas and aspects.

4.1 Implications of the Study

The results of this study showed the practical effect of using Microsoft Teams in improving English speaking skills in terms of its advantages. Besides, the challenges that female high school students face at Unaizah were elaborated. Based on the findings of this study, some implications for researchers, educators and curriculum designers are proposed as follows:

(1) Since the goal of teaching and learning English language in the first place is to be able to speak and communicate fluently among high school students, the Ministry of Education should promote the role of Microsoft Teams as a direct approach rather than a backup in critical and emergency circumstances in improving English skills, mainly speaking skills.

(2) Teachers should encourage students to use Microsoft Teams by introducing it. To ensure proper and automatic use of Microsoft Teams, they should provide students with more time and activities to practice with.

(3) It is recommended that EFL trainers and teachers be trained to use Microsoft Teams to facilitate their

teaching practices of EFL speaking skills.

(4) When developing EFL speaking skills, curriculum developers should consider using Microsoft Teams.

4.2 Recommendations for Future Research

(1) While the main focus of this study was to investigate the impact of using Microsoft Teams on improving English speaking skills, more studies are needed to explore and address other English skills and aspects such as reading, writing and listening skills and their effectiveness via Microsoft Teams in terms of advantages and challenges that students face.

(2) Other studies should prepare a questionnaire that covers all the advantages and challenges students face when using Microsoft Teams. The questionnaire used in this study focused on a small number of advantages and challenges to measure the effect of Microsoft Teams. Therefore, a new questionnaire is recommended to include additional benefits and difficulties that the present survey disregarded.

(3) A replication of this study with another governorate in Saudi Arabia, for example Buraydah, may provide more evidence about the effect of using Microsoft Teams among female high school students.

(4) It is highly recommended to conduct research in instructing pre-service and in-service teachers on how to use Microsoft Teams effectively.

References

Akhter, T. (2020). Problems and Challenges Faced by EFL Students of Saudi Arabia during COVID-19 Pandemic. *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities, 12*(5), 1-7. https://doi.org/10.21659/rupkatha.v12n5.rioc1s23n5

Alfallaj, F. (2013). The Use of Linguistics in Teaching Pronunciation to Saudi Students. *Journal of Science and Technology, 14*(2), 134-143.

Ali, J. K. M., Shamsan, M. A., Guduru, R., & Yemmela, N. (2019). Attitudes of Saudi EFL Learners towards Speaking Skills. *Arab World English Journal, 10*(2), 353-364. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no2.27

Alqahtani, S. S. (2016). Enhancing the Saudi EFL Students' Pronunciation of the English Phoneme /v/ via Immersion in Virtual Platforms. *Arab World English Journal, 7*(3), 463-478. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol7no3.32

Alrasheedi, S. (2020). Investigation of Factors Influencing Speaking Performance of Saudi EFL Learners. *Arab World English Journal, 11*(4), 66-77. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no4.5

Archambault, M., & White, J. W. (2022). *The most common Microsoft Teams problems, and how to fix them*. https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/microsoft-teams-problems-how-fix-them/

Artal-Sevil, J. S., & Valero-Gracia, M. S. (2021). Teaching in Covid times: Microsoft Teams and GSuite, two basic tools to support Learning. In *INTED2021 Proceedings* (pp. 10620-10631). RATED. https://doi.org/10.21125/inted.2021.2228

Asrida, D. (2016). Communicative activities of teaching speaking for the students. *Ta'dib*, *17*(1), 60-65. https://doi.org/10.31958/jt.v17i1.259

Bennis, A., & Bazzaz, V. (2014). The impact of pushed output on accuracy and fluency of Iranian EFL learners' speaking. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research, 2*(2), 51-72.

Bhagat, K., Cheng-Nan, C., & Chun-Yen, C. (2016). The Impact of the flipped classroom on Mathematics concept learning in high school. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society, 19*(3), 134-142.

Bygate, M. (1987). *Speaking*. New York: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from http://www.cambridge.org/servlet/file/9780521805162c02_p1420.pdfITEM_ENT_ID=5744725.

Bui, T. K. L. (2022). The Challenges of Online Writing Learning via Microsoft Teams. *AsiaCALL Online Journal, 13*(1), 132-149.

Dung, D. T. H. (2020). The Advantages and Disadvantages of Virtual Learning. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education, 10*(3), 45-48.

Fatima, N. (2020). English Language Teaching during the Times of COVID-19, Challenges and Opportunities: A Brief Study of GFP Students in Muscat College. *Journal for Research Scholars and Professionals of English Language Teaching*.

Ha, G. L., & Ngo, T. C. T. (2021). Challenges in Learning Listening Comprehension via Microsoft Teams among

English Majors at Van Lang University. *International Journal of TESOL & Education, 1*(3), 142-175.

Hai-Jew, S. (2020). Evaluating "MS Teams" for Teaching and Learning. *C2C Digital Magazine, 1*(13), 7.

Henderson, D., Woodcock, H., Mehta, J., Khan, N., Shivji, V., Richardson, C., Aya, H., Ziser, S., Pollara, G., & Burns, A. (2020). Keep Calm and Carry-on Learning: Using Microsoft Teams to Deliver a Medical Education Programme during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Future healthcare journal, 7*(3), e67-e70. https://doi.org/10.7861/fhj.2020-0071

Hassounah, M., Raheel, H., & Alhefzi, M. (2020). Digital Response during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of medical Internet research, 22*(9), e19338. https://doi.org/10.2196/19338

Heggart, K. R., & Yoo, J. (2018). Getting the Most from Google Classroom: A Pedagogical Framework for Tertiary Educators. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(3), 140-153. https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2018v43n3.9

Kaskova, M., & Demina, O. (2021). Texts rendering into a foreign language. Distant learning experience. In *E3S Web of Conferences* (Vol. 295, p. 05014). EDP Sciences. https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202129505014

Koncova, D., & Kremenova, I. (2021). E-learning in the conditions of the University of Žilina during the coronavirus pandemic. In *INTED2021 Proceedings* (pp. 5725-5731). IATED. https://doi.org/10.21125/inted.2021.1155

Kuśnierek. A. (2015). Developing Students' Speaking Skills through Role-playing. *World Scientific News, 7*(1), 73-11.

Microsoft. (2018). *Welcome to Microsoft Teams*. Microsoft. Retrieved from https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoftteams/teams-overview

Mukhtar, K., Javed, K., Arooj, M., & Sethi, A. (2020). Advantages, Limitations and Recommendations for online Learning during COVID-19 pandemic era. *Pakistan journal of medical sciences, 36*(COVID19-S4), S27. https://doi.org/10.12669/pjms.36.COVID19-S4.2785

Naar, I. (2020). *Distance learning could be strategic choice post-coronavirus crisis: Saudi minister.* Al Arabiya.

Nguyen, H. U. N., & Duong, L. N. T. (2021). The Challenges of E-learning through Microsoft Teams for EFL Students at Van Lang University in COVID-19. *Asia CALL Online Journal, 12*(4), 18-29.

Nicoletti, M., & Bernaschi, M. (2021). *Forensics for Microsoft teams*. arXiv preprint arXiv:2109.06097.

Pal, D., & Vanijja, V. (2020). Perceived Usability Evaluation of Microsoft Teams as an Online Learning Platform during COVID-19 Using System Usability Scale and Technology. *Children and Youth Service Review,* (119), 123-143. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105535

Poston, J., Apostel, S., & Richardson, K. (2020). *Using Microsoft Teams to enhance engagement and learning with any class: It is fun and easy.* Pedagogicon Conference Proceedings. https://encompass.eku.edu/pedagogicon/2019/guidinggrading/6

Rababah, G. (2003). Communication Problems Facing Arab Learners of English. *Journal of Language and Learning, 3*(1), 180-197.

Rojabi, A. R. (2020). Exploring EFL Students' Perception of Online Learning via Microsoft Teams: University Level in Indonesia. *English Language Teaching Educational Journal, 3*(2), 163-173. https://doi.org/10.12928/eltej.v3i2.2349

Schneider, C. (2020). Setting up a Language Learning Environment in Microsoft Teams. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal, 11*(3), 263-270. https://doi.org/10.37237/110312

Sobaih, A. E. E., Salem, A. E., Hasanein, A. M., & Elnasr, A. E. A. (2021). Responses to Covid-19 in Higher Education: Students' Learning Experience Using Microsoft Teams versus Social Network Sites. *Sustainability, 13*(18), 10036. https://doi.org/10.3390/su131810036

Torky, S. A. E. (2006). *The Effectiveness of a task-based instruction program in developing the English language speaking skills of secondary stage students*. Thesis. Ain Shams University, Women's College, Curriculum and Instruction Department.

Tran, M. T. T. (2021). Microsoft Teams in the Context of First-year Students ELF learning. *AsiaCALL Online Journal, 12*(2), 12-23. https://asiacall.info/acoj/index.php/journal/article/view/22

Tu, N. P., & Luong, T. K. P. (2021). Online language learning via Moodle and Microsoft Teams: Students'

challenges and suggestions for improvement. *Proceedings of the AsiaCALL International Conference, 533*(978-94-6239-343-1), 106-113. https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210226.013

Tanveer, M., Richhariya, B., Khan, R. U., Rashid, A. H., Khanna, P., Prasad, M., & Lin, C. T. (2020). Machine learning techniques for the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease: A review. *ACM Transactions on Multimedia Computing, Communications, and Applications (TOMM), 16*(1s), 1-35. https://doi.org/10.1145/3344998

Wea, K. N., & Kuki, A. D. (2021, March). Students' Perceptions of Using Microsoft Teams Application in Online Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series, 1842*(1), 1-7. https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1842/1/012016

Wichanpricha, T. (2021). Synchronous Online Learning through Microsoft Teams at Tertiary Level: Academic English Course. *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 11*(5), 123-123. https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2021-0111

Yen, T. V. M., & Nhi, N. T. U. (2021). The Practice of Online English Teaching and Learning with Microsoft Teams from Students' View. *AsiaCALL Online Journal, 12*(2), 51-57.

Younes, Z. M. B., & Albalawi, F. S. (2016). Investigating the Factors Leading to Speaking Difficulties: Both Perspectives of EFL Saudi Learners and Their Teachers. *Arab World English Journal, 7*(2), 268-287. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol7no2.18

Zamora-Antuñano, M. A., Rodríguez-Reséndiz, J., Rodriguez Segura, L., Cruz Perez, M. A., Altamirano Corro, J. A., Paredes-Garcia, W. J., & Rodríguez-Reséndiz, H. (2021). Analysis of emergency remote education in COVID-19 crisis focused on the perception of the teachers. *Sustainability, 13*(7), 3820. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13073820