

The Impact of Discussion Topic of Interest on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Speaking Ability

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Abstract The present study explored the effect of discussion topic of interest on developing Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking ability. The study was carried out in three intermediate classes, including ninety students. Established upon OPT test direction, sixty intermediate students who scored 31 in grammar and vocabulary and 8 in reading subdivisions were preferred as the main sample. The participants' age varied between 18 and 42. First, the subjects were required to talk on an oral proficiency test, which was a criterion-referenced, direct, and face to face interview about topics they were not familiar with. Their performance was evaluated as pretest. Then, they were given some topics for the following sessions in order to work on them, before attending the class. They could have access to the information that they needed about the ed topics through the Internet, books, magazines, newspapers, etc. Thus, they became familiar with the topics. Therefore, they were able to talk about those ed topics more easily and for longer periods of time. Their performance was regarded as posttests. A statistical analysis of the results obtained independent samples T-tests, paired samples T-test, and Pearson correlation test provided some evidence in support of the positive effect of discussion topic of interest on developing Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking ability. **Key Words** Speaking ability, Discussion topic, Psychological factors, Fluency

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