Research Article

Examining the Effects of Cue Cards on EFL Learners' Speaking Fluency, Accuracy, and Speaking Anxiety

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As using cue cards is not common in Iranian EFL classes, this research aimed at examining the impacts of applying cue cards on developing the speaking accuracy and fluency of Iranian EFL students. Additionally, this study looked at how employing cue cards helped Iranian EFL learners reduce their speaking anxiety. Sixty of the 97 Iranian EFL students who took the Oxford Quick Placement Test were selected as the target sample for the current research. The selected participants were then indiscriminately designated into two groups: control and experimental of equal size. Afterward, the pretests of speaking fluency and accuracy and speaking anxiety were administered to both groups. After pretesting, the experimental group was instructed by using cue cards, and the control group was instructed by a traditional speaking method. After the instruction finished, both groups took the posttests of the mentioned variables. The data analysis revealed that on their speaking accuracy, fluency, and anxiety posttest, the experimental group outperformed the control group. According to results, applying cue cards led to positive effects on speaking fluency, accuracy, and anxiety. Ultimately, based on the findings, some implications and conclusions were proposed.

1. Introduction

Media is an effective tool that is increasingly used in teaching–learning process. Cue card, as a type of media, is a card with pictures or vocabularies used to persuade the learners to reply to questions in group or pair work [1, 2]. Cue cards are applied to offer pupils practice to speak English in genuine situations. Cue cards, which are modified images, offer several benefits, one of which is that they are easily visible. Cue cards can, therefore, help students when they are asked to precisely explain something or someone [3–5]. According to Mora [6], cue cards are picture cards on which cue phrases are used to assist

students to initiate dialogs. Brown et al. [7] believed that the role of cue cards is stimulating learners' interest, saving time; encouraging learners' participation, providing reviews, helping learners learn to transfer their ideas visually, offering a medium for group or individual report; making classrooms attractive, relevant, and dynamic.

The use of cue cards, in speaking instruction, is thought to motivate students to improve at speaking. Cue cards are obviously visible; this can assist the learners in easily explaining the objectives of speaking. Based on Harmer [1], all types of pictures can be used in diverse ways. For example, pictures in the forms of a cue card can be used at any level to advance speaking skills.

Based on what Sarosdy et al. [8] stated, speaking appears to be the central of the four abilities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), as the term "speaker of that language" is used to describe people who learn a language as if speaking is the only way to acquire a language. This suggests that speaking is seen as the standard for language mastery. Speaking is a productive skill in language learning. It is very essential to concentrate on mastering this skill since people can have communication with others orally by speaking.

Speaking skill has two main subcategories: accuracy and fluency. Brown [9] claims that, to some extent, accuracy is achieved by letting students focus on the discourse, phonology, and grammar elements of their spoken output. In instructing English speaking, educators have to teach students accurately (articulate, clear, phonologically, and grammatically correct) and fluent (natural and flowing) language. Accuracy is the state of being exact and correct or without error, meaning that the pupils do not commit glaring phonological flaws, few lexical and grammatical errors, and just one or two blatant mistakes that cause misunderstanding [10–12].

Brown [9] reckons that fluency is the primary goal in language courses. Besides, fluency is the aspect that influences the learners' ability in speaking English. The instructors have to guide the learners to master fluency in speaking. In this case, the students do not use too many unnatural pauses but manage to convey the general meanings and fair range of expressions.

To be capable of speaking English accurately and fluently, learners have to decrease their speaking anxiety level. Fear of making mistakes, sense of embarrassment, shame, and nervousness when speaking are all examples of language anxiety [13–15]. Each student may experience a series of physical and mental feedbacks known as anxiety or panic, especially while speaking in front of the classmates. When speaking practice is taking place, the learners' feelings of anxiety, anxiousness, or fear frequently prevent them from learning a language and developing their speaking abilities [3, 16, 17]. Liu and Chen [18] held that there is no positive correlation between anxiety and foreign/second language learning.

More significantly, understanding English, particularly speaking English, is not an easy task. It is not merely concerned with obtaining information about grammar and pronunciation rules; it is a collection of skills that we learn to perform, thus learners must participate in meaningful, interactive exercises in order to understand how to utilize the language [19–21]. Most people have a mental hurdle when it comes to learning a foreign language, even if they are strong learners in other settings [22, 23]. Learning a foreign language can put learners in awkward situations since they must master a language that is radically different from their own language.

According to Nazir et al. [24], speaking has always been an essential ability for ESL/EFL learners. It is the most difficult of the four talents to master since it is a productive skill that requires a sophisticated process of meaning construction [25–27]. According to Juhana [28, p. 100], there are various psychological issues that prevent students from speaking in English class, such as fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, and a lack of enthusiasm. Anxiety is one of the elements that impact speaker reluctance. Almost all EFL students encounter it when speaking. Suleimenova [29] defined anxiety as mental anguish or unease generated by an apprehension of risk or catastrophe. According to Cui [30], stated in harmony, speaking anxiety is a type of uneasy sensation that occurs in the mind. According to Gaibani and Elmenfi [31], anxiety is a state of uncomfortable sensation that occurs when danger is recognized, and the victim has a feeling of powerlessness accompanied by the manifestation of tension in anticipation of the threat. Communication phobia, exam anxiety, and a fear of receiving unfavorable feedback were all aspects of the individual's performance anxiety [22, 32, 33]. When studying a second language or a foreign language, anxiety can be a typical obstacle. Anxiety caused by public speaking is a typical issue for students learning a foreign language. Almost all students of English as a second language experience anxiety before public speaking. The fact that earlier study has shown that there is a connection between public speaking fear and public speaking success is what prompted this writer to conduct more research on the topic of public speaking anxiety [34].

It is hoped that the findings of this research will be of benefit to students who enrolled in private English Language Institutes and wish to improve their speaking performance through the utilization of cue cards as a medium. The findings of this research will, as a consequence, provide alternative forms of media for use by educators in the process of teaching and learning English, particularly in speaking classes. This research has the potential to add to the authors' existing body of knowledge, and it is anticipated that it will also contribute to their growing experience in the field of educational research. In addition, it is anticipated that this study will be able to provide additional researchers with sources or references of the media that can be used for improving or developing students' speaking achievement, expanding their general knowledge, and assisting them in the development of their research in the same field.

To reduce speaking anxiety levels among students and also to develop their speaking fluency and accuracy, this research aimed to inspect the impacts of cue card implementation in Iranian EFL classes.

2. Review of the Literature

If you want to be able to communicate verbally, one of the most crucial and essential skills you need to practice is speaking. People are able to have a better understanding of the many circumstances that exist in the world via the act of communicating. The ability to communicate orally is considered a productive talent in English language teaching. Its purpose is to communicate verbally and in writing, and this purpose is grounded in the fundamental structure and meaning of all languages [35]. According to Hornby [36], being able to talk is defined as having the ability to utilize a certain language. Speaking is a natural ability that begins to emerge in a human baby's first year of life and continues throughout life. According to Bailey [37], the act of speaking is an

interactive process of building meaning that involves both the production and reception of information as well as its subsequent processing. Speaking, as defined by Cameron [38], is an active use of language to communicate meaning in a way that allows other people to make sense of what is being said. Under authentic circumstances, students have the opportunity to hone their speaking skills via participation in regular activities. Due to the fact that they practice it on a daily basis, it will help them feel more confident in themselves. If students wish to develop their speaking abilities, they need to put in the effort to practice. The notion of becoming a master in speaking is best described as learning by doing [39].

Speaking fluent English is the primary objective for many students of the language. Many students view their ability to speak fluently as the best indicator that they have mastered a language. They consider being able to communicate orally to be the most valuable talent they can get, and they measure their success in terms of the level of proficiency they have achieved in this area [40–42]. Teaching people how to talk well should be geared at improving their ability to communicate effectively. Speaking also involves the ability to articulate oneself, to communicate one's thoughts or feelings to others. Teaching kids how to utilize language to communicate their ideas or thoughts is what we mean when we talk about teaching speaking. The most effective method for teaching children how to communicate orally is to have them collaborate and speak with one another in small groups. Make it clear to the pupils that their linguistic talents are recognized and appreciated in the classroom. Past to commencing a task such as writing or problem solving, introduce the concept of idea collecting as a practice and then provide the students an opportunity to share their ideas, and enhance their prior knowledge by building on one other's contributions [43, 44]. According to Brown [45], if a person can speak a language, it indicates that they are able to carry on a conversation in a reasonable and competent manner in that language. In addition, he asserts that the capacity to fulfill pragmatic goals through interactive dialog with other speakers of the target language is the gold standard for measuring successful language learning [46].

To develop learners' speaking ability, instructors need the media that are employed to form schemata for the learners through cue cards. Media, according to Arsyad [47], is any event, material, or person that creates the conditions that allow pupils to obtain attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Teaching media are devices that can arouse the pupils' minds, feelings, intentions, motivations and interests, so that the learning and teaching process goes on ideally. Cue card is one of the media that is offered.

Briton [48] indicated that media aid educators persuade the pupils. Cue cards help the pupils explain someone or something in the pictures orally. Cue cards are cards having images or text on them that are used to drive students to respond [1, 49]. For both instructors and students, this media is captivating, appealing, and simple to create. Additionally, cue cards are immediately recognizable, which can assist students in explaining subjects more easily with lesser

preparation time [1, 3]. It is possible to reuse image collections, especially when they are covered, so they can suit different levels. They could be used in storytelling in classes, and they are also one of the most prevalent methods to provoke students' oral performance at both extensive and intensive levels [9]. Meanwhile, choosing a proper cue card is also vital. A cue card needs to be appropriate not only for the goals at hand but also for the class they are being used for. A cue card may not be well-liked by the student if it is excessively cartoonish. Cue cards need to be noticeable and long-lasting. As cue card users, learners must therefore take into account the importance, visibility, and timing in the learning process [1, 3, 50, 51]. In addition, some features of the appropriate cue cards have to be considered. Their images should be proper for the interest and age of pupils. In order to maintain accurate impressions, images featuring characters must depict real individuals rather than animated characters. Besides, the pictures should be culturally biased-free and while applying, and before speaking performance, the teachers must allot enough time to assess, scrutinize, and assimilate the information presented in the image [52, 53].

Harmer [1] believed cue cards can also force learners to speak up on particular situations, words, or phrases in conversations or in sentences. It can be said that cue cards make learners expand their vocabulary. Also, cue cards can be applied as group work in crowded classes, so they are applicable in the context of Iran classrooms. Cue cards can be one of the favorite methods to problem-solving in classes. For example, according to the students' number in each class, cue cards can be accepted as a substitute for other instructional methods because they help the instructor manage classroom situations.

As claimed by Mulyana [54], pupils use cue cards to remember what to utter. Cue cards should involve key facts, main words, headings, and thoughts, not perfect sentences. Cue cards as reminder cards are the leading ways by which talk structure and content can be monitored. The vast bulk of the students' discussions would be meaningless ramblings without these cards. Reminder cards can neatly arrange the vocabularies in the sentences. Cue cards are fascinating because of their attractiveness and simplicity. Furthermore, the practice of making these cards is not so complex. In light of the fact that learning is a problem-solving process, cue cards can assist students in developing an awareness of alternatives and antecedents both through and after risky circumstances. To examine the effectiveness of cue cards on language learning, several studies were conducted. For example, Budiastuti [55] carried out a research to examine the cue card uses in instructing spoken descriptive text. The results of the research revealed that using cue cards as an instruction tool enhanced the average of the speaking score among the eighth-year pupils of SMP 13 Semarang academic year 2006/2007 by 18.4 points, involving pupils' fluency (31.3 points), and pupils' pronunciation (25.3 points), but unluckily, their grammar did not progress (−1.3 point).

The implementation of cue cards in the classroom can help pupils enhance their overall performance. According to Utami [56], the use of cue cards will provide students with

the opportunity to communicate with one another or in small groups and will assist them in developing a greater awareness of the perspectives of their classmates. Cue cards, as defined by Harmer [1], are playing cards that have both text and images and are utilized by students in activities requiring them to work in pairs or small groups. It is obvious whether or not cue cards can encourage pupils to interact with one another. Students are required to confer with their closest friends inside their group to choose how to proceed with the lesson. They need to connect each piece of evidence to the others. They have the potential to increase their speaking ability when they engage in conversation together. Every student has the opportunity to gain knowledge either from their own experiences or from those of their peers [57, 58]. As opposed to merely sitting and leaning forward in the classroom, it will be more productive to do this. Even if not all of the students will be interested in participating in that activity, the instructor will at least be able to get them to speak English for a short while. In line with this definition, Harmer [1] asserts that cards work really well if the educators want the learners to speak on the spot or use particular words or phrases in a conversation or in sentences. They will spontaneously speak English when they get a card and when they debate it with the other members of the group. As a consequence of this requirement, the students will become acclimated to speaking English since they will be required to communicate their viewpoints on the subject matter with the other members. It is possible to reach the conclusion that cue cards encourage student participation in speaking class [59–61].

In a research, Farah [62] tried to improve the learners' English-speaking skills through cue card media in the eighth-grade students of junior high school who were afraid to talk in front of the class. The cue cards were used to develop the pupils speaking ability and their motivation to speak. The findings showed that applying cue cards as a learning and teaching media was effective in developing the learners' speaking ability in the speaking class.

Another research in using cue cards in speaking was accomplished by Ambarini [63]. He conducted a study on applying cue cards in developing the writing skills of the eight-grade pupils at SMPN 1 Rembang in the educational year of 2013/2014. The results of the survey showed an improvement on the learners' writing skills over cue cards. These improvements included vocabulary, text organization, motivation, and generating ideas.

Ariati [64] carried out a study on developing pupils' descriptive speaking ability through cue cards at the VIII 2 of a public junior high school in Bengkulu city. This study found that the pupils' descriptive speaking performance improved through cue cards.

Rosalinda [5] intended to examine the development of speaking ability by the implementation of cue card media among the tenth-grade pupils of SMA Muhammadiyah Limbung. This study focused on learners' accuracy and fluency. The research method was a pre-experimental design that included one-group pretest and posttest design class. The sample of this research included 35 tenth-grade students.

The research findings showed that the tenth-grade pupils of SMA Muhammadiyah Limbung were very low in speaking ability, but after treatment, their speaking ability significantly improved. They revealed that the application of cue cards was helpful to develop the learners' speaking abilities.

Setiawati [65] tried to inspect the role of applying cue cards in expanding vocabulary among seventh-grade pupils of SMP N 16 Mandau. Associated to the research object, the investigator implemented pre-experimental method. The research design was pretest and posttest one. The study sample was 30 learners. From the results, the researcher figured out that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is confirmed and the null hypothesis (Ho) is disproved, meaning that using cue cards had a significant effect on pupils' vocabulary expansion at seventh-grade students of SMP 16 Mandau.

After reviewing the literature, it was found that the mentioned studies on effectiveness of cue cards are not adequate. None of the studies has examined the implementation of cue card media on improving learners speaking accuracy and fluency and reducing speaking anxiety. Also, no studies have explored the use of cue cards as a media to decrease pupils' speaking anxiety. To fill the gap, the current research tried to explore the impacts of cue cards on Iranian EFL students' speaking fluency, accuracy, and anxiety. Consequently, the following research questions were posed:

(RQ1) Do cue cards influence Iranian EFL students' speaking fluency positively?

(RQ2) Do cue cards influence Iranian EFL students' speaking accuracy positively?

(RQ3) Do cue cards influence Iranian EFL students' speaking anxiety positively?

Two null hypotheses were offered in this study based on the previously indicated questions:

(HO1) Using cue cards does not influence Iranian EFL learners' speaking fluency positively

(HO2) Using cue cards does not influence Iranian EFL students' speaking accuracy positively

(HO3) Using cue cards does not influence Iranian EFL students' speaking anxiety positively

3. Methodology

3.1. Design. Quasi-experimental method of research was used in this study. Accordingly, the study employs a pretest and posttest design to extract the needed data of one experimental group and one control group. This study focused on the variable of cue cards as an independent variable and speaking fluency, speaking accuracy, and speaking anxiety as three dependent variables, which are hypothesized to be affected by the independent variable. The collected data will be analyzed quantitively by using independent and paired samples *t*-test.

3.2. Participants. The participants were 60 learners elected from 97 Iranian EFL learners according to the Oxford Quick

Placement Test (OQPT) results. They were chosen from a private English language institute. Their proficiency level was intermediate and they were all male. The selected participants were then indiscriminately designated to two equal groups; experimental (cue cards) and control (conventional). It is worth mentioning that to meet the ethical requirements, the researchers earned the participants' consent. For this purpose, prior to running the main study, the participants who were willing to participate in the study signed written consent and submitted it to the researchers.

3.3. Instruments. To accomplish the research, at first, the OQPT was utilized by the researchers to homogenize the subjects. It was applied to help the investigators know the precise level of their participants. A set of 60 multiple-choice items was inserted and subsequently, those participants whose performance scored between 40 and 47 were intermediate and were designated as the subject of the present study.

The speaking anxiety scale was another instrument implemented in the research. This scale was an 18-item questionnaire developed by Öztürk and Gürbüz [66]. In fact, this questionnaire included 18 questions with five options: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The validity of this instrument was accepted by a group of English instructors by asking for their opinions and the reliability was calculated by using Cronbach's alpha ($r = 0.88$). It is worth citing that the aforementioned scale was implemented as the pretests and the posttests in this survey.

The third instrumentation exploited in this research was a speaking test used prior to the treatment as the pretest. Indeed, we used a researcher-designed pretest that included some topics such as weather, sport, traveling, World Cup, coronavirus epidemic, etc. The researchers then asked the participants to talk about each subject for about 3–4 min. When the test-takers started talking, their voices were recorded to be analyzed. Some English instructors confirmed the test validity and the test reliability was determined by Pearson's correlation analysis ($r = 0.83$).

The next instrument was a researcher-made speaking posttest. Some of the aforementioned subjects and some new issues, such as body fitness and finding jobs, were incorporated into the speaking posttest. The pupils were required to talk about each topic and the investigators recorded their voices. The validity of the posttest was proved and also, the researchers calculated test reliability by using Pearson's correlation analysis ($r = 0.79$).

The final instrument used was Hughes's [67] checklist of speaking skills. The checklist was employed to aid evaluate and score the test-takers' speaking. The raters scored the partakers' speeches based on a checklist of speaking.

3.4. Procedure. To carry out this research, first, the OQPT was administered to decide the test-takers' homogeneity in terms of their English proficiency level. Sixty participants were chosen out of 97 as the sample subjects of the present survey. Then, the students were split randomly into two equal groups (control and experimental). After that, two groups were presented with a speaking pretest. Then, the applicants in two groups took the treatment differently.

TABLE 1: Groups' mean scores on the fluency pretest.

Groups	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Control	30	11.66	2.23	0.40
Experimental	30	12.13	2.40	0.43

considering the treatment, the members in experimental group were instructed by using cue cards. The experimental group was given some cue cards prior to starting each conversation. These cue cards, which contained clues related to the aforementioned topics, were given to the students and they were required to accomplish some speaking tasks such as explaining the images orally. The learners wanted to apply this kind of media in a group or pair work. Meanwhile, the control group participants were instructed by using traditional speaking methods comprising overlearning and repetition. The whole instruction took 15 sessions of 50 min. In the first sessions, the participants were homogenized and in the following session, they were given the pretest on speaking. In the third session, they were pretested on speaking anxiety. During 10 sessions, the treatment was administered, and in the final two sessions, the two groups received the posttests of speaking and speaking anxiety, respectively. Finally, the data were analyzed through using SPSS software.

3.5. Data Analysis. The researchers examined the data's normality distribution once all the data had been collected using the aforementioned methods. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was applied to ensure the normality. After that, descriptive statistics like standard deviation and mean score were calculated. Finally, inferential statistics such as paired samples *t*-tests and independent samples *t*-tests were utilized to analyze the data.

4. Results

Both descriptive and inferential statistics pertaining to speaking accuracy, fluency, and speaking anxiety were presented in the result division. As follows, the results and statistics are presented in detail.

The descriptive statistics for two groups on the fluency pretest are displayed in Table 1. Both groups' means are practically identical. The experimental group's mean score is 12.13, whereas the control group's is 11.66. This indicates that prior to the treatment, both control and experimental group members were almost at the identical level of fluency.

Table 2 displays the fluency pretest results for both groups. The difference among these groups is not substantial at ($p > 0.05$), as Sig. (0.43) is >0.05. They obviously had the same level of fluency prior to the treatment.

On the fluency posttest, two groups' descriptive data are shown in Table 3. There are differences between these groups' means. The control group had a mean score of 12.56, while the experimental group received a mean score of 17.60. This implies that the experimental group performed better than the control group in the posttest.

Table 4 indicates that there is a noteworthy difference ($p < 0.05$) between the groups. The experimental group

TABLE 2: Independent samples t-test of fluency pretest.

		Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test for equality of means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
Scores	Equal variances assumed	0.08	0.77	−0.77	58	0.43	−0.46	0.59	−1.66	0.73
	Equal variances not assumed			−0.77	57.69	0.43	−0.46	0.59	−1.66	0.73

TABLE 3: Groups' mean scores on the fluency posttest.

Groups	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Control	30	12.56	2.32	0.42
Experimental	30	17.60	1.63	0.29

TABLE 4: Independent samples t-test of fluency posttest.

	Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test for equality of means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	4.45	0.03	−9.69	58	0.00	−5.03	0.51	−6.07	−3.99
Equal variances not assumed			−9.69	51.93	0.00	−5.03	0.51	−6.07	−3.99

TABLE 5: Paired samples test (fluency pre and posttests of each group).

		Paired differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean	95% confidence interval of the difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Conpre–conpost	−0.90	1.90	0.34	−1.60	−0.19	−2.59	29	0.11
Pair 2	Expre–expost	−5.46	2.75	0.50	−6.49	−4.43	−10.88	29	0.00

actually outperformed the control group on the posttest of fluency.

In Table 5, the fluency pre- and posttests of the groups are compared using a paired samples t-test. The difference between the fluency pre- and posttests of the control group is not remarkable, according to the fact that Sig. (0.11) is >0.05, but it is significant for the experimental group because Sig. (0.00) is <0.05.

Based on Table 6, the control group's mean score in pretest of accuracy is 12.33 and the mean score of the experimental group is 12.56. As expected, both groups spoke English accurately at the same level.

Due to Sig. (0.68) being >0.05, Table 7 shows that the difference between the experimental and control groups is not very significant. The pretest results of the control and

TABLE 6: Groups' mean scores on the accuracy pretest.

Groups	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Control	30	12.33	2.15	0.39
Experimental	30	12.56	2.32	0.42

experimental groups do not significantly differ from one another, as seen in Table 7.

The mean scores from the accuracy posttests for the control and experimental groups are shown in Table 8. The experimental group's mean score was 18.06, whereas the control group's mean score was 14.43.

Table 9 shows that there is a significant difference between the experimental and control groups since

TABLE 7: Independent samples t-test of accuracy pretest.

| | Levene's test for equality of variances | | t-test for equality of means | | | | | | |
| | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean difference | Std. error difference | 95% confidence interval of the difference | |
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	0.21	0.64	−0.40	58	0.68	−0.23	0.57	−1.39	0.92
Equal variances not assumed			−0.40	57.65	0.68	−0.23	0.57	−1.39	0.92

TABLE 8: Groups' mean scores on the accuracy posttest.

Groups	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Control	30	14.43	2.88	0.52
Experimental	30	18.06	1.50	0.27

TABLE 9: Independent samples t-test of accuracy posttest.

| | Levene's test for equality of variances | | t-test for equality of means | | | | | | |
| | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean difference | Std. error difference | 95% confidence interval of the difference | |
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	11.11	0.00	−6.11	58	0.00	−3.63	0.59	−4.82	−2.44
Equal variances not assumed			−6.11	43.73	0.00	−3.63	0.59	−4.83	−2.43

TABLE 10: Paired samples test (accuracy pre and posttests of each group).

| | | Paired differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| | | Mean | Std. deviation | Std. error mean | 95% confidence interval of the difference | | | | |
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Conpre–conpost	−2.10	3.59	0.65	−3.44	−0.75	−3.20	29	0.11
Pair 2	Expre–expost	−5.50	2.71	0.49	−6.51	−4.48	−11.10	29	0.00

Sig. (0.00) is <0.05. Table 9 specifies that there are notable differences between the accuracy posttests of the control and the experimental groups in favor of the experimental group. We can accordingly claim that the difference among the groups is due to the cue cards.

As Sig. (0.11) is >0.05, Table 10 shows that there are not many variations between the accuracy pretest and accuracy posttest of the control group. On the other hand, Table 10 shows that, as Sig. (0.00) is <0.05, the differences between the experimental group's accuracy pretest and accuracy posttest are striking. It can be claimed that the treatment had a considerable impact on the experimental subjects.

Based on Table 11, the mean score of the control group in speaking anxiety pretest is 35.66 and the mean score of the experimental group is 36.23. Seemingly, the participants in both had experienced equal speaking anxiety prior to applying treatment.

TABLE 11: Groups' mean scores on the speaking anxiety pretest.

Groups	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Control	30	35.66	7.77	1.41
Experimental	30	36.23	8.58	1.56

Given that Sig. (0.79) is >0.05 in Table 12, it can be discerned that there is not a substantial difference between the two groups of the experimental and the control. The experimental and control groups' pretests in speaking anxiety did not significantly differ from one another, as seen in Table 12.

The experimental and control groups' mean scores on the speaking anxiety posttests are displayed in Table 13. According to the findings, the experimental group's mean score is 71.06 while the control group's mean score is

TABLE 12: Independent samples *t*-test of speaking anxiety pretest.

	Levene's test for equality of variances		*t*-test for equality of means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	0.22	0.64	−0.26	58	0.79	−0.56	2.11	−4.80	3.66
Equal variances not assumed			−0.26	57.43	0.79	−0.56	2.11	−4.80	3.66

TABLE 13: Groups' mean scores on the speaking anxiety posttest.

Groups	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Control	30	37.13	9.17	1.67
Experimental	30	71.06	11.59	2.11

TABLE 14: Independent samples *t*-test of speaking anxiety posttest.

	Levene's test for equality of variances		*t*-test for equality of means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.45	0.23	−12.56	58	0.00	−33.93	2.70	−39.33	−28.52
Equal variances not assumed			−12.56	55.08	0.00	−33.93	2.70	−39.34	−28.52

TABLE 15: Paired samples test (speaking anxiety pre and posttests of each group).

		Paired differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean	95% confidence interval of the difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Conpre–conpost	−1.46	4.59	0.83	−3.18	0.25	−1.74	29	0.09
Pair 2	Expre–expost	−34.83	10.89	1.98	−38.90	−30.76	−17.50	29	0.00

37.13. This suggests that in the speaking anxiety posttest, the experimental students outperformed the control group.

Derived from Table 14, the difference between the experimental and control groups is considerable as Sig. (0.00) is <0.05. Table 14 shows that there are notable differences between the control and the experimental groups speaking anxiety posttests in favor of the experimental group.

According to Table 15, the conventional group's speaking anxiety pre- and posttest results did not change significantly since Sig. (0.9) is >0.05. On the other hand, Table 15 shows that the experimental group's speaking anxiety pretest and speaking anxiety posttest differences are notable since Sig. (0.00) is <0.05. It may be argued that the experimental subjects were profoundly impacted by the treatment.

In short, the results show that two groups' levels of speaking accuracy, fluency, and anxiety were the same, but their performances on the posttests were different.

Subsequently, one can come to conclusion that using cue cards can generate constructive effects on EFL learners' speaking accuracy, fluency, and anxiety.

5. Discussion, Conclusion, and Implications

Having completed the data analysis and obtained the final findings, the investigators found that the experimental group who had used cue card instruction outflanked the control group in the posttests. The researchers found that the effects of the cue cards on Iranian EFL learners' accuracy, fluency, and speaking anxiety were substantially positive. The pupils in the experiment could develop their accuracy and fluency and lower their speaking anxiety thanks to cue cards. The reason that the experimental group outperformed the control applicants can be logically attributed to their exposure to cue cards the researchers had provided for them.

The findings of our study endorse the findings of Budiastuti [55] whose survey revealed that exploiting cue cards as an instruction tool enhanced the speaking average in eighth-grade students. Also, our study lends support to Farah [62] who showed that applying cue cards as a learning and teaching media was effective in developing the learners' speaking ability. Additionally, the present findings are supported by Rosalinda [5] who concluded the application of cue card media was efficient to progress the learners' speaking ability. Furthermore, the present study outcomes are consistent with Ambarini [63]. His study showed the development on the pupils' writing skills over cue cards. These improvements included vocabulary, text organization, motivation, and generating ideas.

Also, this study is supported by Caballero and Connell [68] who investigated the influence of cue cards on social communication skills among three preschool-age children who were inflicted with autism spectrum disorders. The outcomes showed that using social cue cards was helpful to improve the rates of social communication conduct among all partakers. Moreover, the results of this study are compliable with Suryani [69], whose research displayed that utilizing cue cards can be regarded as one of the best alternatives in teaching spoken descriptive text and it could boost the students' motivation to learn descriptive texts.

An English teacher at a high school should be able to use the most effective method for teaching speaking to students in order to inspire pupils to have a greater passion and interest in speaking English. Learners need to be provided opportunity to enhance their fluency in addition to their accuracy, as stated by Nunan [70, pp. 54–55]. The first concept for teaching speaking is to offer pupils practice with both fluency and correctness. The second strategy is to have students work in groups or in pairs. Both of these strategies may be used to improve the amount of time that students are able to communicate in the target language while the lesson is being taught. As Harmer [1, p. 136], notes, a cue card is a little card that students use while they are working in pairs or groups. Therefore, the use of group or pair work is consistent with the usage of cue cards. Students are going to be more engaged if you use cue cards. When it comes to learning due to the fact that they are able to correlate the contents with the picture or script. It is evident that pupils will engage in conversation with one another if cue cards are used. They are able to increase their speaking ability when they communicate with one another. Every single student is capable of gaining knowledge from either their own experiences or those of their peers. It will be more productive than just sitting and leaning forward in the classroom. Even if not all of the students will be interested in participating in that activity, the instructor may at least ensure that they speak English for a short period of time.

This research indicated that cue cards were helpful instruments to help Iranian EFL learners develop their speaking fluency and accuracy. Cue cards include pointers to help learners remember what they are speaking about. As Mulyana and Yayan [54] stated, learners who employ cue cards remind what to talk about. Additionally, cue cards involve key facts, keywords, headings, and thoughts, which assist students to recall materials better. The reason of development of students' speaking fluency and accuracy by using cue cards can be related to the fact that the pupils enjoy speaking because cue cards guide them to talk and also enable them to remind what to say [71]. Consequently, the structure and the content of their talk can be well-ordered and monitored. Besides, the instructor explained how to use cue cards as media as faultless as possible. Therefore, the pupils were not mixed up although this was the first time they were using this kind of media in their learning and it was fruitfully practiced in the classrooms. Furthermore, cue cards helped the pupils to learn new words or expressions more permanently. They are easier to remember when illustrated with pictures. The observation revealed that the learners were attracted to using cue cards in learning process. They looked confident and less anxious while doing teaching and learning tasks and activities, meaning that cue cards were efficient to attract the learners' interest and attention.

It is not a simple process to teach kids speaking skills since the instructor has to know how to keep the students interested in the session, they need to know what the learners need, and they need to discover the appropriate teaching medium. According to Brown [45, pp. 275 and 276], there are seven principles that should be followed when designing speaking techniques. A teacher should use methods that cover the spectrum of their students' needs, provide techniques that are intrinsically motivating, encourage the use of authentic language in meaningful contexts, provide suitable correction and feedback focus entirely on the natural link between speaking and listening, give learners chances to start oral communication, and support the development of their oral communication skills.

Cue card media, which may boost the learners' speaking accomplishment, was the cause of the experimental group's improved performance, which led to a higher overall grade. Students had a positive reaction to the incorporation of cue card media into the learning process because it presented them with an opportunity to try something new and because it was enjoyable. The students who took part in the experimental group were very active learners in the classroom; they engaged in a great deal of conversation and often shared with their peers what it is that they had on their minds. Students shared what they had learned with one another and engaged in activities that encouraged repetition to help them retain the information. As a result, the kids received a better grade after receiving the therapy. It is further bolstered by Harmer [1, p. 180], who argues that cue cards work particularly well if the instructor wants the students to speak on the spot or use certain words or phrases in a discussion or in sentences. This lends credence to the idea that a cue card is an effective tool. After receiving a card and engaging in conversation with the other members, they will naturally switch to speaking English. As a consequence of this requirement, the students will get acclimated to speaking English since they will be required to communicate their viewpoints on the subject

matter with the other members. The result is supported by the research that was carried out by Shabrina [72], which demonstrated that the use of cue cards in the English teaching and learning process of speaking was effective to increase the students' speaking abilities. This result is confirmed by the study. During the process of speaking, the pupils demonstrated significant development in the area of fluency. In addition to this, both their passion and drive for studying English have significantly increased. They spoke English despite not having received much encouragement to do so. The data indicated that the students' mean scores on the speaking portion of the pretest and posttest increased from 42.65 to 69.68 points. In addition, Utami [56] demonstrated that the use of cue card media was successful in enhancing the students' speaking accomplishment. Furthermore, 93% of the students polled reported that they enjoyed the utilization of cue card media in the course of the instructional process. The students seemed to be perplexed during the first stages of the deployment of cue card media; nevertheless, during the subsequent meeting, it was clear that they were having fun with the exercise.

According to the study findings, we can infer that applying cue cards in teaching and learning process can cause significant effects on language students' learning. Hence, it might be noted that acquiring a second or a foreign language is not restricted to mastering its simple grammar and vocabulary through old methods but encompasses new and fun media like cue cards. Regarding the efficiency of media, EFL instructors are recommended to introduce new ones into their classrooms to ease the way for the pupils to speed up their learning.

This research can produce several instructional implications for students, EFL lecturers, and also syllabus designers. The results of this research can convince teachers to provide their learners with more media-oriented material and activities in their teaching. Moreover, the research findings can help EFL students to develop their English fluency and accuracy and raise their self-confidence in speaking. Students' autonomy will increase when they use cue cards at home for their own learning. Since students themselves can use cue cards for their learning at home they become more motivated. In fact, cue cards can surge the enthusiasm of the pupils. The results of this enquiry can also reassure material developers to focus on incorporating media, here cue cards, into EFL syllabus and curriculum.

This research has some limitations as other researches. Only 60 participants took part in this study. Future researches are suggested to involve more part-takers as their samples in order to increase their result generalizability. The present investigation examined the effects of cue cards on accuracy, fluency, and speaking anxiety, so upcoming researches can inspect the influences of cue cards and other media instruction on other competences and skills. The other limitation was the time shortage of the treatment; next surveys can increase the treatment time length. The research was restricted to Iranian intermediate-level EFL students; subsequent researches may study other levels of proficiency in different environments.

Data Availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Ethical Approval

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by the Ethical Committee of Iranian Private English Language Institutions (No. 69/06/351976). Written informed consent to participate in this study was provided by the participants. The Iranian language institutions follow approved ethical standards which are in line with the protocols of the National Research Committee and are comparable with the 1963 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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