# A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPING EFL LEARNERS' SPEAKING SKILLS

**\*Dorothy Dewitt**
**Zeynab Moosavi**
Faculty of Education,
Universiti Malaya
*\*dorothy@um.edu.my*

## Abstract

*In today's globalized world, speaking is considered as a crucial language skill to learn as it allows people to communicate with others. However, the majority of EFL learners around the world found it challenging to improve their speaking skills. The objective of this systematic review study is to present a critical overview of relevant existing research studies to explore barriers to speaking development among EFL learners in any levels of education and solutions to overcome them in EFL contexts. To this end, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) was used to analyse 19 empirical studies from SCOPUS, ERIC, and Google Scholar databases published between 2018 and 2022 in different EFL contexts. The findings of this review revealed that psychological problems were the primary barriers to EFL learners' development in speaking, followed by environmental, and linguistic problems. Suggestions offered by most of reviewed studies entailed applying more communicative activities, using digital technology and creating a stress-free learning environment. This study also suggests significant implications for providing a better language learning experience among EFL learners particularly in developing speaking skills.*

***Keywords:*** *English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Speaking Challenges, Speaking Skills, Systematic Review*

## INTRODUCTION

Language as a tool enables people to communicate and express their thoughts, opinions, feelings and points of view in order to exchange information, experiences, likes and dislikes. English as the international language of communication is considered as one of the dominant languages of the global market today which is widely used in business, politics, technology, industry, medicine, education and many other fields. Therefore, communication in English is acknowledged as the passport to better education and career growth (Ahmad, 2016; Durga, 2018). Of all the four language skills, speaking is one of the most essential skills that allows people to communicate effectively with each other (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Liew & Aziz, 2022; Namaziandost et al.

2019; Rao, 2019). There is no doubt that English as foreign language (EFL) learners always give a high priority to speaking skill as the most important characteristic of language learning and wish to be able to communicate orally in real situations (Diyyab et al., 2013). However, improving speaking skills had always been the most challenging skill in EFL contexts where foreign learners have limited amount of exposure to English language (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Al Zoubi, 2018; Hibatullah, 2019; Ramdani, 2018; Dincer, 2017; Ganjouee et al., 2018). As previous studies revealed, EFL learners have a relatively good command of English grammar but are unable to communicate in English properly (Movahed & Karkia, 2014; Namaziandost et al., 2020). Many studies were carried out on speaking difficulties and found a number of factors leading to EFL learners' speaking deficiency (Al-Roud, 2016; Darginavičienė & Šliogerienė, 2020; Ghafar & Amin, 2022; Noughabi, 2017; Raja & Selvi, 2011; Yunus et al., 2016). Such factors might be related to difficult grammar, lack of vocabulary, fear of making mistake, use of mother tongue, lack of motivation and so many others. Moreover, other research studies have made an attempt to find some pedagogical strategies and techniques to facilitate learning and teaching speaking in different EFL contexts (Alimorad & Yazdani, 2020; Ratnasari, 2020; Al-Sobhi & Preece, 2018; Ali et al., 2019; Liu, 2021; Maasin-Ceballos & Ceballos, 2018). Therefore, the objectives of this systematic literature review (SLR) are to critically present an overview of the challenges faced by EFL learners worldwide in learning speaking skills and the teaching methods implemented by instructors to overcome these challenges.

## *Aim of the Study*

A systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted to consider the perspectives and suggestions of various researchers on the problems the EFL learners face in speaking and instructional methods implemented to improve it. As a result, this study aims to analyse and synthesise the findings of studies published between the years 2018 and 2022 on the challenges faced by EFL learners in speaking skills and solutions to overcome them. To achieve the research objectives, the study attempted to address the following research questions:

1. What are the problems faced by EFL students in acquiring speaking skills in any levels of education?

2. What are the teaching methods employed for enhancing speaking skills in EFL contexts?

## METHODOLOGY

The current study employed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 checklist to conduct this systematic review. The checklist comprises 27 criteria which provides sufficient explanation and examples for each item that allow reviewers to assess the appropriateness of the findings and guide them on what to include in reporting systematic reviews (Page et al., 2021; Sarkis-Onofre et al., 2021). This study aims to provide a better understanding of EFL students' challenges while acquiring speaking skills and also explore the strategies proposed to improve their English language learning particularly speaking skills. For this purpose, research papers were collected from the databases of Scopus, Google Scholar and ERIC that were published between the years 2018 and 2022. While the Google Scholar and Scopus databases provide a comprehensive peer-reviewed literature across a wide range of disciplines, enabling the researchers to gain a broad overview of the research area, the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), provides access to education-related papers and resources which are particularly relevant to the present research objective. The researchers utilised four phases based

on PRISMA 2020 checklist in conducting this systematic review including the identification phase, screening phase, eligibility phase and lastly, inclusion phase.

**Phase I: Identification Phase**
As the initial step, the researchers identified relevant work on the topic. In this step, the researchers chose relevant articles from online databases such as Scopus, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and Google Scholar published between 2018 and 2022. Table 1 illustrates how the combination of keywords were utilized in this process to identify the relevant articles.

**Table 1.** *Journal Source and Keywords Used to Find Relevant Articles*

| Journal Source | Keywords |
|---|---|
| Google Scholar | Challenges of improving speaking skills and solutions towards improving speaking skills, speaking challenges, speaking difficulties, speaking problems |
| Scopus | |
| Eric | |

**Phase II: Screening Phase**
A total of 181 articles obtained from the databases were reviewed by the authors which were reduced to 149 articles after duplicates removed. After records screened, 40 articles were excluded as ineligible after being screened by their titles and abstracts.

**Phase III: Eligibility Phase**
Then, the full-text copies of potentially relevant papers were assessed independently online by the review authors to ensure they match the criteria outlined in Table 2's inclusion section. As a result, the remaining 109 articles were checked for eligibility resulting in the exclusion of 90 studies.

**Phase IV: Exclusion Phase**
After evaluating the studies for eligibility, the articles that clearly met one or more of the exclusion criteria were excluded. Therefore, only 19 publications remained that met the researcher's requirements (see Figure 1).

Based on the exclusion criteria, book chapters, book, and conference proceedings were excluded. Studies that were not published between 2018 and 2022 were also removed. As the focus of the study was to find out the challenges faced by EFL students in speaking skills, all reviewed studies had to include speaking skills in EFL contexts. Therefore, articles focusing on reading, listening, or writing were excluded and only articles conducted on EFL learners were included.

**Table 2.** *Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*

| Inclusion Criteria | Exclusion Criteria |
|---|---|
| 1. Speaking challenges in EFL contexts | 1. Native learners and non EFL learners |
| 2. Research articles related to teaching and learning speaking and oral communication skills | 2. Listening/reading/writing skill or general English language skills |
| 3. Sample or respondents at primary, secondary or tertiary level | 3. Articles are not available or not published in English |
| 4. Published between 2018 and 2022 | 4. Articles are not published between 2018 and 2022 |

| 5. Peer-reviewed research articles | 5. Book chapters, book, conference proceedings, review papers, meta-analysis studies |
|---|---|

**Figure 1.** *PRISMA Flow Chart for Selecting Process of Article*
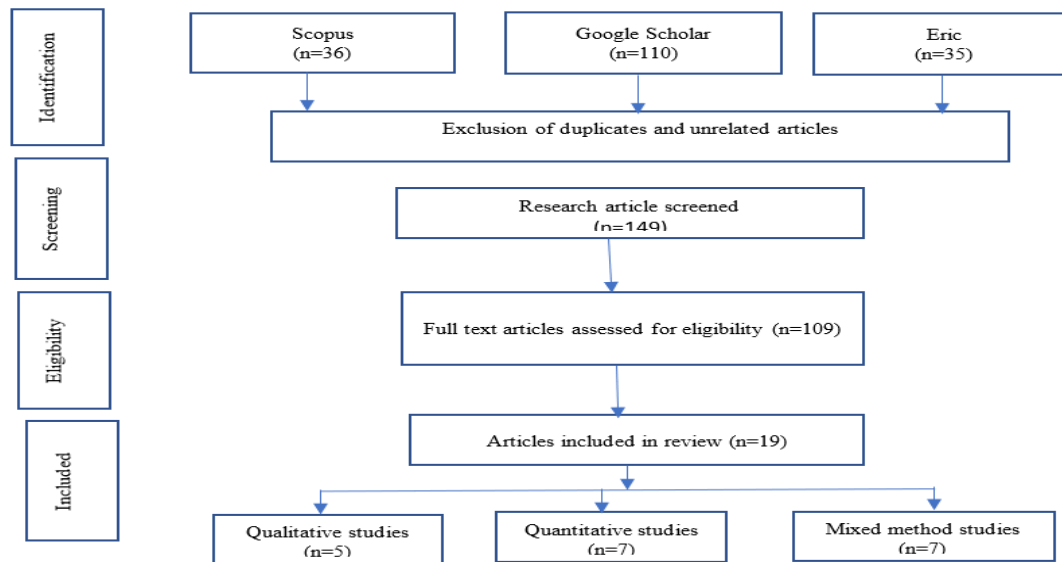


## RESULTS

A total of 18 articles from the year 2018 till 2022 on learners' speaking challenges and teaching techniques suggested for developing speaking skills were selected for this systematic review. All the investigated articles were carried out in EFL contexts (Figure 2). Majority of the previous studies conducted utilised quantitative method as the research design (n = 7), followed by mix-method (n = 7) and qualitative method (n = 5). Most of the studies were conducted at universities (n = 18) rather than schools (n = 1), as illustrated in Table 3. It is clear that learners' speaking skill difficulties at school level were neglected during the past five years.

**Table 3.** *Research Studies, Country, Research Design and the Level of Research Participants*

| N | Author | Territory | Research Design | Participants |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Abrar et al. (2018) | Indonesia | mix-method | 8 EFL student teachers |
| 2 | Amoah & Yeboah (2021) | China | mix-method | 75 university students |
| 3. | Almutairi (2021) | Kuwait | quantitative | 331 university students |
| 4 | Alrasheedi (2020) | Saudi Arabia | quantitative | 200 university students |
| 5 | Chand, (2021) | Nepal | mix-method | 15 undergraduate level students |
| 6 | Darginavičienė & Šliogerienė (2020) | Lithuania | quantitative | 145 undergraduate students |
| 7 | Ghafar & Amin (2022) | Iraq | qualitative | 12 university students |

| 8 | Hamad & Seyyedi (2020) | Iraq | quantitative | 121 students |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | Holandyah et al. (2022) | Indonesia | qualitative | 8 learners in an Islamic boarding school |
| 10 | Huwari (2019) | Jordan | qualitative | 12 undergraduate students |
| 11 | Islam & Stapa (2021) | Bangladesh | qualitative | 21 university students and 11 teachers |
| 12 | Kosar (2020) | Turkey | mix-method | 52 university students |
| 13 | Kusuma (2021) | Indonesia | mix-method | 20 university students |
| 14 | Naser & Hamzah (2018) | Saudi Arabia | mix-method | university instructors |
| 15 | Qasemi (2020) | Afghanistan | quantitative | 108 undergraduate students |
| 16 | Rani (2020) | Bangladesh | quantitative | 113 ELT teachers and 151 MA students |
| 17 | Wulandari et al. (2021) | Indonesia | qualitative | 12 University students |
| 18 | Xie (2020) | China | quantitative | 22 undergraduate students |
| 19 | Yokubov (2022) | Uzbek | mix-method | 41 university students |

**Figure 2**. *EFL Contexts of the Studies*
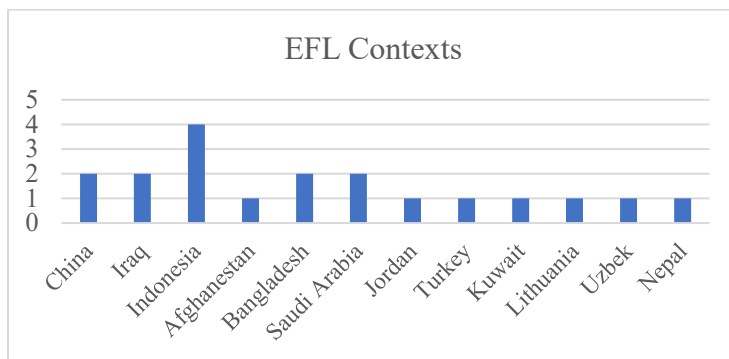


As shown in Figure 3, most speaking challenges experienced by EFL learners were related to psychological problems (n = 17), followed by linguistic problems (n = 14) and environmental problems (n = 14). Based on the articles, the major speaking problems among EFL learners were feeling of anxiety (n = 11), fear of making mistakes (n = 9), lack of motivation (n = 6), lack of self-confidence (n = 4), lack of vocabulary (n = 8), pronunciation (n = 9), insufficient knowledge of grammar rules (n = 10), mother tongue interference (n = 7), topics of speaking (n = 4), teaching methods (n = 4), and lack of practising (n = 7). Table 4 shows the speaking problems faced by EFL learners with different sub-aspects in each domain.

**Table 4.** *Speaking Problems Faced by EFL Learners*

| N | Authors | Psychological Problems | | | | | Linguistic Problems | | | | | Environmental Problems | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Anxiety | Fear of mistakes | Lack of motivation | Lack of self-confidence | Other | Lack of vocabulary | Pronunciation | Mother tongue interference | Insufficient knowledge of grammar rules | Other | Topics of speaking | Teaching methods | Lack of practising | Other |
| 1 | Abrar et al. (2018) | / | | / | | | / | / | | / | | / | | / | |
| 2 | Almutairi (2021) | | | / | | / | | | | | | | | / | / |
| 3 | Alrasheedi (2020) | / | / | | | | | | | | | | / | / | |
| 4 | Amoah & Yeboah (2021) | / | / | / | | / | / | / | | / | / | | | | |
| 5 | Chand (2021) | / | / | | / | | / | / | / | / | | | / | | / |
| 6 | Darginavičienė & Šliogerienė (2020) | / | / | | / | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Ghafar & Amin (2022) | | / | / | | | / | / | | | | | | / | |
| 8 | Hamad & Seyyedi (2020) | / | / | | / | | / | / | | / | | | | | |
| 9 | Holandyah et al. (2022) | / | | | | | / | / | / | / | / | / | | | |
| 10 | Huwari (2019) | | | | | / | | | | | | / | | / | / |
| 11 | Islam & Stapa (2021) | | | | | / | | | / | | / | / | | | / |
| 12 | Kosar (2020) | | | | | | | | / | | | | / | | |
| 13 | Kusuma (2021) | / | | | | | / | | / | | | | | | |
| 14 | Naser & Hamzah (2018) | | | / | | | | / | / | / | | | / | | |
| 15 | Qasemi (2020) | / | / | | | / | | | | | | | | / | |
| 16 | Rani (2020) | / | | | | | | | / | | | | / | | |
| 17 | Wulandari et al. (2021) | | / | | / | | / | / | | / | | | / | | |
| 18 | Xie (2020) | | | | | | | | | / | | | | / | / |

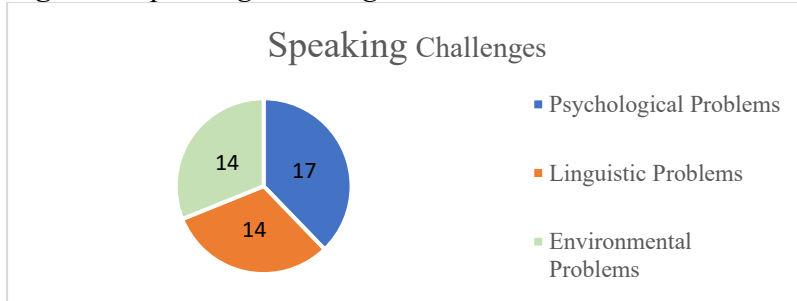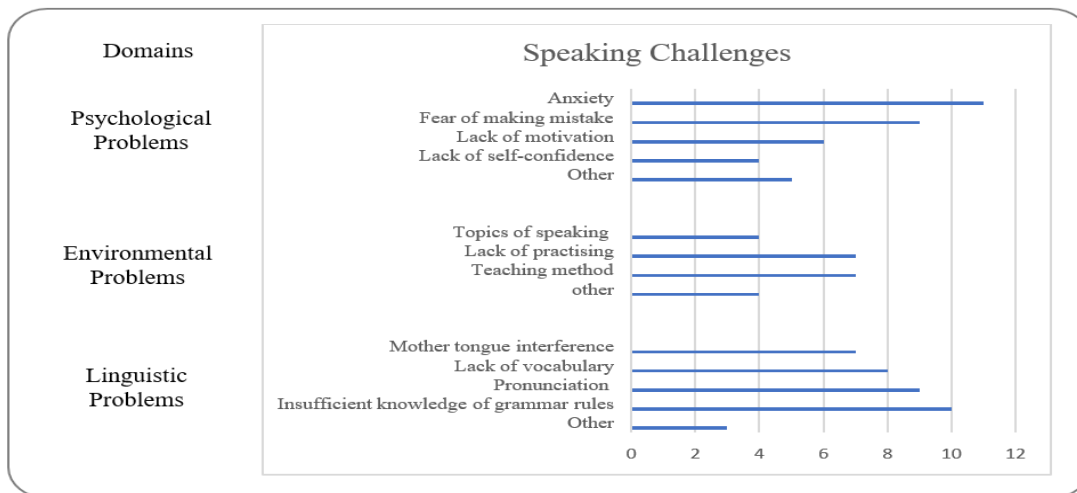| 19 | Yokubov (2022) | / | / | / | | | / | / | / | |
|----|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**Figure 3.** *Speaking Challenges*



**Figure 4.** *Summary of Evidence on Speaking challenges Faced by EFL Learners*



## DISCUSSION

The aim of this study is to identify speaking challenges faced by EFL learners in any levels of education from the previous studies and their suggested solutions for developing speaking skills. According to the results, it has been found that three main reasons lied behind the weakness of speaking skills among EFL learners: psychological problems (such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, lack of motivation, lack of self-confidence), linguistic problems (such as lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, insufficient knowledge of grammar rules, mother tongue interference), and environmental problems (such as topics of speaking, teaching methods, and lack of practising). The results of the study are presented and discussed according to the research objectives:

**(i) To investigate speaking skill challenges encountered by EFL learners**
From 2018 to 2022, nineteen studies investigated speaking skill problems experienced by learners in EFL contexts. The findings of the systematic review showed that learners' speaking problems are attributed more to psychological factors than environmental or linguistic factors. Learners' anxiety was found as the biggest barriers to their speaking development in EFL contexts (Amoah & Yeboah, 2021; Abrar et al., 2018; Holandyah et al., 2022; Kusuma, 2021; Qasemi, 2020; Darginavičienė & Šliogerienė, 2020; Hamad & Seyyedi, 2020; Yokubov, 2022; Alrasheedi, 2020).

As pointed out by Wulandari et al. (2021), Ghafar and Amin (2022), and Chand (2021), EFL learners felt anxious to speak English in front of the class as their friends might make fun of them. The findings indicated that the feeling of anxiety that EFL learners experience is closely related to their linguistic difficulties, fear of being misunderstood, and also attitude (Abrar et al., 2018). Another psychological challenge which influenced learners' speaking was their fear of making mistakes. Similarly, in a study conducted on seventy-five students at Nanjing Tech University in China by Amoah and Yeboah (2021), learners reported that their fear of making mistakes while speaking was the main reason why they hesitated to speak or voluntarily answer questions. Finally, a deficiency of confidence and lack of motivation seemed to be two key psychological obstacles for EFL learners to improve their speaking skills.

In addition to psychological problems, linguistic-related problems seemed to be another critical issue for EFL learners which affected their speaking. A significant amount of research reviewed in this analysis has shown that learners' deficient knowledge of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary caused the difficulty for them to actively engage in speaking activities. A study conducted on twenty-one students from five universities in Bangladesh by Islam and Stapa (2021) identified that the obvious barrier to learners' development in speaking is their insufficient knowledge of grammar rules and vocabulary as they struggled to remember appropriate words and to construct grammatically accurate sentences when they attempted to speak English. Incorrect pronunciation was another issue that prevented EFL learners from speaking English accurately. In a study in Nepal by Chand (2021), it was found that learners did not use the words that they struggled to pronounce correctly. Similarly, in another study by Ghafar and Amin (2022) in Iraq, EFL learners reported difficulties to pronounce central and high back vowels in English words correctly so that they substituted them with Kurdish words. In addition, the influence of mother tongue was recognised as another linguistic issue that played a vital role in EFL learners' speaking difficulties. It was reported that most of EFL learners first thought in their native language and then they translated it into English while speaking which inhibited them to speak fluently (Chand, 2021).

Another important speaking issue faced by EFL learners was related to learning environment problems. Ineffective teaching methods of EFL instructors was reported as one of the dominant environmental barriers for learners to progress in developing speaking skills (Xie, 2020; Naser & Hamzah, 2018; Rani, 2020; Kosar, 2020; Alrasheedi, 2020; Islam & Stapa, 2021; Chand, 2021). According to the results, the great emphasis on teaching grammar and the use of traditional teaching methods were exhibited as the obstacles to enable learners to practice speaking skills. Additionally, the use of learners' mother tongue by instructors as the medium of instruction while teaching English was also another challenging factor to hinder learners from developing their speaking skills (Koşar, 2020). Another issue related to teaching methods which influenced EFL learners' English speaking was the absence of a speaking assessment in the syllabus and instructors' emphasis on grammar and vocabulary to prepare them for paper-pencil exams (Almutairi, 2021; Koşar, 2020). In such conditions, it is obvious that learners rarely find an opportunity to practice speaking skills (Ghafar & Amin, 2022; Abrar et al., 2018; Qasemi, 2020; Xie, 2020; Huwari, 2019; Alrasheedi, 2020). Uninteresting topics of discussions selected by instructors seemed to be another important problem experienced by EFL learners that hindered their eagerness to actively engage in conversations (Abrar et al., 2018; Holandyah et al., 2022; Wulandari et al., 2021; Huwaria, 2019). In a study conducted by Holandyah et al. (2022), difficult topics of discussions were mentioned as an obstacle for the Indonesian students to express their ideas and discuss about the topics as they reported that they sometimes lacked enough information or ideas about those topics to share (Holandyah et al., 2022).

**(ii) To find effective Strategies to overcome speaking challenges**
The second research question of the present study aimed at finding practical solutions to the challenges faced by EFL learners in speaking. Of the 19 reviewed studies, 14 studies contributed in solving these problems. The findings of the research studies posited that instructors are required to apply more communicative and interactive activities to involve EFL learners in speaking and boost their speaking confidence (n=6). Amoah and Yeboah (2021) suggested the use of regular presentations as an effective strategy to motivate EFL learners to practice speaking so that they can reduce their anxiety and fear of making mistakes. In another study by Xie (2020), Chinese learners expressed a desire for more oral activities, especially group work, pair work and dialogs. According to the results, the use of learner-centred approaches such as task-based learning and cooperative learning also engage learners more in speaking tasks and facilitate their improvement in speaking skills (Islam & Stapa, 2021). In addition to speaking practices, joining speaking clubs was offered as another possible solution for EFL learners to develop their speaking skills (Amoah & Yeboah, 2021; Kosar, 2020; Yokubov, 2022).

Furthermore, the results found an encouraging stress-free learning environment as one of affective factors influencing EFL learners' willingness to speak English. The findings revealed that instructors need to build a supportive and friendly climate where learners feel comfortable to freely ask their questions, share their ideas or discuss in English. Alrasheedi (2020) believed that learners must not be criticized for their mistakes so that they can talk in English without shame or fear.

Furthermore, it was recommended that instructors need to build a supportive and friendly climate where learners feel comfortable to freely ask their questions, share their ideas or discuss in English. The results found that one way to inspire EFL learners' willingness to speak English and enhance their self-confidence in order to tackle the fear of making mistakes and anxiety is to avoid immediate error correction. Alrasheedi (2020) also believed that learners must not be criticized for their mistakes so that they can talk in English without shame or fear.

Moreover. the development of digital technologies and their integration into learning have paved the way for educators around the world to facilitate language learning and teaching. It was revealed that learners took advantage of social media and technology such as videos, songs, podcasts, videos and online applications to expand their vocabulary and improve speaking (Amoah & Yeboah, 2021; Abrar et al.,2018; Kosar, 2020). Therefore, EFL instructors also must be aware of the unique features and capabilities of learning technologies to effectively integrate technology tools in their teaching (Almutairi, 2021). The effective strategies suggested in teaching and learning of speaking skills are summarized in Table 6, and the discussion of each researcher is illustrated in Tables 7 below.

**Table 6.** *Summarization of the Strategies Found Effective in Teaching and Learning Speaking Skills*

| Effective Strategies | Frequency |
|---|---|
| **Creating a supportive and friendly environment** | **9** |
| **Using multi-media and technology** | **7** |
| **Communicative activities** | **6** |

**Table 7.** *Summary of Evidence on Strategies Found Effective in Teaching and Learning Speaking Skills*

| Article/ Study | Strategies found effective / Suggestions / Recommendation |
|---|---|
| Abrar et al. (2018) | using technology. |
| Almutairi (2021) | Placing speaking skills in the EFL syllabus; Including oral assessment; Providing a comfortable environment for EFL students; Using technology. |
| Alrasheedi (2020) | Creating a positive learning environment; using multimedia; the prohibition of using native language. |
| Amoah & Yeboah (2021) | Creating a conducive environment; Applying oral presentations or classroom debates; English debating clubs or societies; Applying native English movies, news, etc. |
| Chand (2021) | Creating a favourable environment; Changing teaching methods; Using speaking activities |
| Ghafar & Amin (2022) | Creating a positive English-speaking atmosphere; Modifying teaching methodologies; Shifting instructors' role. |
| Islam & Stapa (2021). | Using task-based learning and cooperative learning. |
| Kosar (2020) | the prohibition of using L1 in classes; Joining speaking clubs; Use of technology; more presentations |
| Kusuma, I. (2021) | Focusing on academic communication and discussion. |
| Qasemi (2020) | Using a variety of interesting teaching activities; Psychological training. |
| Rani, S. (2020) | provide fearless environment; using audio and video materials |
| Wulandari et al. (2021) | Giving sufficient preparation time; Sincere atmosphere. |
| Xie (2020) | Having free discussion about various topics; Using English in class; Using multimedia resources; speaking practices. |
| Yokubov (2022) | Applying more communicative activities (pair and group work); Creating a friendly environment; Having students join speaking clubs. |

## CONCLUSION

The current systematic review study analysed 19 articles on English speaking challenges experienced by EFL learners and the suggestions for overcoming their speaking problems. The results showed that most speaking challenges faced by EFL learners are attributed to psychological problems (such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, lack of motivation, lack of self-confidence), followed by linguistic problems (such as lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, insufficient knowledge of grammar rules, mother tongue interference), and environmental problems (such as topics of speaking, teaching methods, and lack of practising). EFL learners' feeling of anxiety seemed to be the biggest barrier influencing their speaking skills. Fear of making mistakes, deficient knowledge of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary were also identified as other main difficulties learners faced while speaking.

Most of the reviewed research further suggested some practical solutions to cope with the above speaking challenges in different EFL contexts, e.g., creating a supportive and friendly environment, using multi-media and technology, and communicative activities. The research studies found using more communicative activities and joining the speaking clubs could reduce EFL learners' anxiety, enhance their confidence and encourage them to practice English, particularly, speaking skills. It

was also suggested that instructors create a friendly English-speaking environment so that learners can freely ask their questions and express themselves in English. Another suggestion made by some studies was to use media and technology to facilitate the development of speaking. There are many digital resources, websites, applications and technology tools freely available that instructors must gain a full knowledge of how effectively to apply them to engage learners in speaking activities.

**Implications and Recommendations**
The present study examined speaking challenges faced by EFL learners and potential solutions to cope with those challenges from many perspectives. It is hoped that the findings of this systematic review would provide more meaningful insights to educators on the speaking challenges faced by EFL learners and aspire them to use innovative teaching methods to address and support learners' needs and expectations as well as help them overcome the barriers affecting the development of their speaking skills.

Most of the reviewed studies were conducted at tertiary level, however, there is a need to investigate EFL learners' speaking problems at school level in the future. Besides, this review was limited to only three databases namely ERIC, Scopus and Google Scholar. Other academic databases could be used to address the review topic. This study focuses on challenges experienced by EFL learners in speaking. It would be fascinating to explore learners' difficulties in other English language skills such as listening, writing and reading. Moreover, the reviewed studies were carried out on EFL learners in 12 countries which shows a research gap in some other EFL contexts such as Iran, Thailand, and Cambodia.

## REFERENCES

Abrar, M., Mukminin, A., Habibi, A., Asyrafi, F., & Marzulina, L. (2018). " If our English isn't a language, what is it?" Indonesian EFL Student Teachers' Challenges Speaking English. *The Qualitative Report, 23*(1), 129-145. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.3013

Ahmad, S. R. (2016). Importance of English communication skills. *IJAR, 2*(3), 478-480.

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

Alimorad, Z., & Yazdani, S. (2020). Self-image improvement and Iranian EFL learners' oral performance: effects on complexity, accuracy, and fluency. *Journal of Language and Education*, *6*(4), 11-29. https://doi.org/10.17323/jle.2020.9772

Almutairi, M. A. (2021). Underachievement in English speaking skills among Kuwaiti EFL students at the College of Basic Education: Possible causes and possible solutions. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 12*(1), 206-210.

Alrasheedi, S. (2020). Investigation of factors influencing speaking performance of Saudi EFL learners. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), 11.* https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no4.5

Alrashidi, O., & Phan, H. (2015). Education Context and English Teaching and Learning in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: An Overview. *English Language Teaching*, *8*(5), 33-44. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1075240

Al-Roud, A. A. (2016). Problems of English speaking skill that university students encounter from their perspectives. Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science, 18(3), 1-9. http://www.journalrepository.org/media/journals/BJESBS_21/2016/Oct/Roud1832016BJESBS28404_1.pdf

Al-Sobhi, B. M. S., & Preece, A. S. (2018). Teaching English speaking skills to the Arab students in the Saudi school in Kuala Lumpur: Problems and solutions. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, *6*(1), 1-11. https://doi.org/10.7575/AIAC.IJELS.V.6N.1P.1

Al Zoubi, S. M. (2018). The impact of exposure to English language on language acquisition. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, *5*(4), 151-162. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331833254_The_Impact_of_Exposure_to_English_Language_on_Language_Acquisition

Amoah, S., & Yeboah, J. (2021). The speaking difficulties of Chinese EFL learners and their motivation towards speaking the English language. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 17*(1), 56-69. https://10.52462/jlls.4

Chand, G.B. (2021). Challenges Faced by Bachelor Level Students While Speaking English. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, 6*(1), 45-60

Darginavičienė, I., & Šliogerienė, J. (2020). Learners' perceptions of performance in major speaking activities at tertiary level. *The Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes, 8*(2), 135-145. https://doi.org/10.22190/JTESAP2002135D

Dincer, A. (2017). EFL Learners' beliefs about speaking English and being a good speaker: A metaphor analysis. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *5*(1), 104-112. 10.13189/ujer.2017.050113

Diyyab, E. A., Abdel-Haq, E. M., & Aly, M. A. S. (2013). *Using a Multimedia-Based Program for Developing Student Teachers' EFL Speaking Fluency Skills.* ERIC Clearinghouse.

Durga, S. (2018). The need of English language skills for employment opportunities. *Journal for research scholars and professionals of English Language Teaching, 2*(7), 1-5.

Ganjouee, A., Ghonsooly, B., & Hosseini Fatemi, A. (2018). The Impact of task-based instruction on the enhancement of Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking skill and emotional intelligence. *Applied research on English language*, *7*(2), 195-214. https://doi.org/10.22108/are.2018.109441.1240

Ghafar, Z. N., & Amin, M. Y. M. (2022). Difficulties in Speaking English among the EFL Students in Iraqi Kurdistan Region. *World, 12*(6). https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n6p28

Hamad, K. Q., & Seyyedi, K. (2020). Communication challenges facing Soran University students in speaking English as a Foreign Language. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation, 3*(8), 40-53.

Hibatullah, O. F. (2019). The Challenges of international EFL students to learn English in a non-English speaking country. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching & Learning*, *4*(2), 88-105. https://doi.org/10.18196/ftl.4240

Holandyah, M., Marzulina, L., Erlina, D., Harto, K., Amalia, F., Fridiyanto, F., & Mukminin, A. (2022). Speaking challenges in a life skill program for Islamic Boarding school students: A case study. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 13*(3), 670-677. https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1303.23

Huwari, I. F. (2019). Problems faced by Jordanian undergraduate students in speaking English. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change, 8*(9), 203-217. https://www.ijicc.net/images/vol8iss9/8915_Huwari_2019_E_R.pdf

Islam, M. S., & Stapa, M. B. (2021). Students' low proficiency in spoken English in private universities in Bangladesh: reasons and remedies. *Language Testing in Asia*, *11*(1), 1-31. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-021-00139-0

Kosar, G. (2020). Pre-Service EFL Teachers' Low-Level of Oral Proficiency and Suggestions for Enhancing It. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language), 14*(1), 39-51. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1253530.pdf

Kusuma, I. (2021). Speaking issues faced by indonesian students during classroom discussions in the US. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 18*(1). https://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/v18n12021_005-017_kusuma.pdf

Leong, L. M., & Ahmadi, S. M. (2017). An analysis of factors influencing learners'english speaking skill. *International Journal of Research in English Education.* 34-41. https://ijreeonline.com/article-1-38-en.pdf

Liew, H. S., & Aziz, A. A. (2022). Systematic Review on Speaking Skill Teaching Approaches in the ESL/EFL Classroom: Before and During Covid 19. http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v11-i1/11677

Liu, M. (2021). Changes in and Effects of TED Talks on Postgraduate Students' English Speaking Performance and Speaking Anxiety. *Journal of Language and Education*, *7*(3), 104-118. https://doi.org/10.17323/jle.2021.11632

Maasin-Ceballos, M., & Ceballos, R. (2018). Learner-centered approaches: their effect on the oral fluency of students. *Journal of Language and Education, 4*(1), 6-17. https://doi.org/10.17323/2411-7390-2018-4-1-6-17

Movahed, R., & Karkia, P. (2014). Reading/Listening & the 4/3/2 on EFL students' speaking skills. *International Journal of Linguistics*, *6*(1), 53. https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v6i1.4841

Namaziandost, E., Homayouni, M., & Rahmani, P. (2020). The impact of cooperative learning approach on the development of EFL learners' speaking fluency. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, *7*(1), 1780811. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2020.1780811

Namaziandost, E., Neisi, L., Kheryadi, & Nasri, M. (2019). Enhancing oral proficiency through cooperative learning among intermediate EFL learners: English learning motivation in focus. *Cogent Education*, *6*(1), 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2019.1683933

Naser, I. M. M., & Hamzah, M. H. B. (2018). Pronunciation and conversation challenges among Saudi EFL students. *Journal of English Educators Society (JEES), 3*(1), 85-104. https://doi.org/10.21070/jees.v3i1.1228

Noughabi, M. A. (2017). Current pedagogical challenges in Iranian EFL teachers' views: A qualitative study. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(9), 217-228.

Page, M. J., Moher, D., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., ... & McKenzie, J. E. (2021). PRISMA 2020 explanation and elaboration: updated guidance and exemplars for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ*, *372*.

Qasemi, A. S. (2020). Factors affecting students' speaking performance in English department of Jawzjan University. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Scientific Studies, 3*(4), 129-134. https://doi.org/10.53894/ijirss.v3i4.46

Raja, B. W. D., & Selvi, K. (2011). Causes of problems in learning English as a second language as perceived by higher secondary students. *I-Manager's Journal on English Language Teaching, 1*(4), 40-45.

Ramdani, A. S. (2018). The use of Voki as a media to support the enhancement of first grade students speaking skills at SMPN 4 Tambun Selatan. *Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan MH Thamrin*, *2*(1), 12-25. https://doi.org/10.37012/jipmht.v2i1.32

Rani, S. (2020). Factor analysis: The issues and challenges in English speaking skill of Bangladeshi EFL learners at tertiary level. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, 7.

Rao, P. S. (2019). The importance of speaking skills in English classrooms. *Alford Council of International English & Literature Journal (ACIELJ), 2*(2), 6-18.

Ratnasari, A. G. (2020). EFL Students' challenges in learning speaking skills: A case study in mechanical engineering. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning*, *5*(1).

Sarkis-Onofre, R., Catalá-López, F., Aromataris, E., & Lockwood, C. (2021). How to properly use the PRISMA Statement. *Systematic Reviews*, *10*(1), 1-3. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-021-01671-z

Wulandari, B. A., Piscioneri, M., & Ikram, W. (2021). Examining students' challenges in oracy in academic context classes. *International Journal of Language Education, 5*(1), 598-615. https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v5i1.16002

Xie, Q. (2020). Teaching English oral communication for China's English minor undergraduates: barriers, challenges and options. *The Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 7*(1), 73-90. https://caes.hku.hk/ajal/index.php/ajal/article/view/628/634

Yokubov, U. (2022). Analysis of speaking difficulties Uzbek law students confront in the process of improving their communicative competence. *Pindus Journal of Culture, Literature, and ELT, 2*(2), 23-35. http://literature.academicjournal.io/index.php/literature/article/view/240

Yunus, M. M., Salehi, H., & Amini, M. (2016). EFL teachers' cognition of teaching English pronunciation techniques: A mixed-method approach. *English Language Teaching*, *9*(2), 20-42. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n2p20