An Analysis of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learners' Problems in Speaking Skills Based on Their Perception at Senior High School

Emylia Malik¹*; Rohmatillah²; Istiqomah Nur Rahmawati³

1,2,3English Education, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia
*1*Corresponding Email: emyliamalik3@gmail.com, Phone Number: 0821 xxxx xxxx*

Abstract: This study examines the factors contributing to speaking difficulties among EFL secondary school learners and offers teachers insights for effectively addressing these challenges. The study aims to augment pedagogical techniques to enhance speaking proficiency results. The study utilized a descriptive qualitative methodology, with 30 class XI students chosen to reflect varied experiences and viewpoints. Data has been collected via open-ended surveys and interviews, using thematic analysis to discern patterns and recurring themes. The results indicate that lacking confidence, restricted vocabulary, and an unsupportive classroom atmosphere substantially impede students' speaking skills. Furthermore, students identified the fear of errors and peer evaluation as significant obstacles. The research emphasizes effective measures for enhancement, including participation in English clubs, consistent practice, and cultivating a supportive teaching environment. These findings underscore the significance of customized instructional strategies and inclusive practices that foster an optimal learning environment. This research highlights the essential function of educators in enabling students to surmount speaking difficulties, enhance self-assurance, and improve communication abilities. By tackling these challenges, EFL learners can cultivate the proficiency required to excel in academic and practical environments.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki faktor-faktor yang menyebabkan kesulitan berbicara di kalangan pembelajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL) di sekolah menengah dan memberikan wawasan kepada pendidik untuk mengatasi tantangan ini secara efektif. Penelitian ini difokuskan pada peningkatan metode pengajaran guna memperbaiki hasil pembelajaran keterampilan berbicara. Dengan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, penelitian ini melibatkan 30 siswa kelas XI yang dipilih untuk mewakili beragam pengalaman dan perspektif. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner terbuka dan wawancara, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola dan tema yang berulang. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kurangnya kepercayaan diri, keterbatasan kosakata, dan lingkungan kelas yang kurang mendukung secara signifikan menghambat kemampuan berbicara siswa. Selain itu, rasa takut membuat kesalahan dan penilaian dari teman sebaya menjadi hambatan utama. Penelitian ini menyoroti strategi praktis untuk perbaikan, seperti bergabung dengan klub bahasa Inggris, berlatih secara teratur, dan menciptakan suasana kelas yang mendukung. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya intervensi pengajaran yang disesuaikan dan praktik inklusif untuk menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang kondusif. Implikasi dari penelitian ini menunjukkan peran penting pendidik dalam memberdayakan siswa untuk mengatasi tantangan berbicara, membangun kepercayaan diri, dan mencapai keterampilan komunikasi yang lebih baik. Dengan mengatasi masalah ini, pembelajar EFL dapat mengembangkan kompetensi yang diperlukan untuk berhasil di dunia akademik maupun kehidupan nyata.

A. Introduction

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is the learning of English by people who live in countries where English is not the mother tongue or official language of everyday life. One of the countries that implements it is Indonesia. According to Abu-Ayfah (2020), the EFL learners of today are growing up in a digital era. That is one of the big motivations for heading towards the golden Indonesia 2045. Teaching EFL learners depending on the classroom environment, student responses, and preservice teachers' training, EFL instructors' classroom management skills might vary, which influences EFL learners' motivation and performance (Alhaider, 2023). It is tough to develop speaking skills in EFL learners. Studies on the difficulties EFL learners have in creating their speaking abilities are common (Güneş & Sarıgöz, 2021).

In Indonesia itself, the number of EFL learners in one class is quite large—around 30-35 EFL learners in one class. This is impossible if the teachers have to pay attention individually to developing this language skill. Many EFL learners think that speaking is a more difficult skill than the other skills in learning English (Ghita, 2019). This can be justified because there are many reasons why EFL learners' English-speaking skills in Indonesia are still challenging to implement. As a result, it is crucial to understand the abilities that EFL learners are expected to gain (Yaşar et al., 2023). It means writing, speaking, listening, and reading. Effective communication requires these interrelated abilities. By increasing these four language abilities, EFL learners can improve their confidence and English proficiency.

English language learning includes several key skills: listening, speaking, writing, and reading. Mastery of these skills is vital. Speaking is an essential ability to learn a new language (Abdulaal et al., 2022). This is particularly true for EFL learners, who may lack opportunities for regular language practice. Tang (1997) stated in her book, "A Course in Language Teaching: Practice in Theory," that out of the four talents (speaking, listening, reading, and writing), speaking seems to be the most important. People who are proficient in a language are called "speakers" of that language, as speaking includes all other forms of knowledge, and speaking is the primary goal of most foreign language learners. It is essential to be able to master speaking skills. Additionally, instruction in the productive talent of speaking must be provided (Broughton et al., 1980). This means that speaking skills must continue to be honed and mastered.

English-speaking skills are considered productive skills, a priority for second-language or foreign-language learners (Nunan, 2003; Richards, 2008). It means speaking is a skill that can hone our skills in speaking and even socializing with people. Those who talk about a language are assumed to be informed about it (Turco, 2021). EFL learners must correctly pronounce phonemes, employ suitable stress and intonation patterns, and engage in linked speech if they hope to speak English successfully (Harmer, 2007). This means that if the learner has paid attention to some rules in speaking, the learner succeeds in speaking. According to Riadil (2020), speaking things that contribute to a person's substandard speaking performance, including elements such as a small vocabulary, insecurity, trouble pronouncing words correctly, grammatical mistakes, and poor communication techniques. These

difficulties may result in unclear communication and misunderstanding, ultimately analyzing the speaker's capacity to express themselves clearly and concisely.

Tang (1997) stated some problems in speaking activities: inhibition, lack of speech, low or uneven participation, and mother tongue use. It means Anxiety caused by inhibition can make students hesitant to voice their opinions. When students have "nothing to say," it is usually because they don't know enough words or are unfamiliar with the topic of conversation. When specific EFL learners dominate the conversation while others remain silent, this can lead to low or unbalanced participation. Reliance on the mother tongue can also hinder the development of fluency in the target language and language practice. These challenges may be caused by several things, such as inadequate exposure, a fear of making mistakes, and inefficient training strategies (Kondo & Ratuwongo, 2023). This means that the problem arises due to various factors.

Mamudi stated that perception is a perspective applied to an event or a method of examining an issue that arises (Mamudi & Alamry, 2021). The process by which a person receives, deciphers, and gives meaning to the information acquired is known as perception. Perceptions are meaningful things, events, and relationships individuals experience that represent their sense of self (Jumiaty & Kuswoyo, 2021; Rakhmanina et al., 2020). This process is crucial to understanding how individuals interpret their environment, which impacts their responses, beliefs, and social interactions. Therefore, knowing how EFL learners view and feel about involvement is crucial for studying instructional technology and offers learning advantages (Redmond et al., 2023).

Perception allows people to create a subjective understanding of reality, and this understanding can differ significantly from person to person.　Another definition of perception is a reaction or assessment of an item generated by an individual's knowledge and experience (Yunita & Maisarah, 2020). In this perception, the reader will be able to see that there are many problems in speaking based on the opinions of each school student. These speaking problems occur not only in some schools but also in most schools in Indonesia. EFL perceptions in social settings are complex, and the classroom setting is no exception (Li & Li, 2022). Various factors also cause this problem, and cultural and environmental class factors influence it. Therefore, to overcome these problems, EFL learners must learn a lot and practice speaking English. Louma (2004) in Islam stated that becoming proficient in spoken English is complex, and both EFL learners and regular people must put in a lot of effort to reach the required level (Islam & Stapa, 2021). Many EFL learners want to be able to speak, but a few want to learn or practice more.

Speaking remains a challenge for speakers of second and foreign languages, especially EFL learners who cannot pick it up quickly (Nasihin & Oktarini, 2022; Islam & Roy, 2024). Based on previous research, in this era, many high school EFL learners are shy, lack confidence, and fear being judged when speaking English. Some of them are looking for motivation to be able to speak English by participating in competitions, including storytelling, poetry, and even debates. Most EFL learners need help learning a foreign language (Leonita et al., 2023). It can't cover the fact that many EFL learners still need internal and external help

in learning English as a foreign language because of environmental factors. One of the main factors learners can understand English as a foreign language is the environment. EFL learners have to make sure our learning environment can help us in our efforts to understand English or not.

EFL learners fear judgment from their classmates and worry about making mistakes when speaking in English (Khoirunnisa & Ahmad, 2022). The same thing is experienced by that school, where they feel a lot of problems speaking, as described in the theory and previous journals. These problems can be due to many factors, including environmental factors. Anggraeny et al. stated that EFL learners who experience anxiety when speaking a foreign language may find it challenging to communicate effectively in English(Anggraeny et al., 2020). A small example is the classroom environment. There are still many who often use their mother tongue. Besides that, there is low motivation to learn English because of the many fears present when learning to speak, and I don't have a goal to learn English.

In this study, the researchers analyzed EFL learners' perceptions of speaking difficulties, as previous researchers did. Nowadays, many Tidar University English Department students are still hesitant to use the language on campus (Riadil, 2020). However, previous researchers mainly examined EFL learners' perceptions at the university level. This study analyzed EFL learners' perceptions at the high school level, precisely at that affirmation school. University-level research offers insightful information but cannot fully capture younger students' distinct experiences and developmental requirements. The social dynamics, cognitive development, and educational environments that middle school adolescents often encounter can significantly influence their perception and understanding of speech issues because the academic environment analysis also dramatically affects the development and learning of these EFL learners.

This study prioritizes ethical concerns related to specific organizations, which is crucial while researching. Checking the names of participating schools is an integral part of upholding ethical standards. This ensures the confidentiality of the identity of the school, students, and employees, preserving their privacy and preventing any risk or stigma that may arise from publishing the study findings. The researchers can ensure that participants' rights are upheld and the integrity of the study is maintained by referring to the school using a code or pseudonym. In addition, it protects it from unwanted impacts that could damage its reputation or attract unwanted attention, which could impact how the school operates or the well-being of its community. In this instance, they made sure that the study respects and defends the rights of everyone participating and helps advance science.

This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the elements that cause speaking difficulties among EFL learners in secondary schools. In addition to enhancing scholarly discussions on EFL teaching, this study intends to educate teachers about the unique needs of secondary school students, which are then analyzed to produce better teaching methods and improve learning outcomes for speaking proficiency. Based on the above phenomenon, researchers are interested in further researching the occurring problems. They

analyzed the phenomenon by examining several theories of speaking problems mentioned above to answer the research question: what causes EFL learners to have difficulty speaking?

B. Method

In this study, the researchers analyzed students' perceptions of their difficulties in speaking skills. This research used a qualitative research method. According to Patton & Cochran (2007) in the book "A Guide to Using Qualitative Research Methodology," Qualitative methods generally aim to understand the experiences and attitudes of patients, the community, or health care workers. Using descriptive data collection techniques like observations, Questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. It is possible to investigate its causes, viewpoints, and opinions using qualitative research (Han et al., 2023). This research study analyzes EFL learners' perspectives on English speaking difficulties. A scientific inquiry process known as qualitative research strongly emphasizes the complexity and richness of voice and context in comprehending social phenomena (Lim, 2024). Therefore, this research analyzed understanding and social phenomena regarding EFL learners' perceptions of English speaking difficulties.

Cochran stated that qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods, which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis (Patton & Cochran, 2007). The main emphasis is on the point of view and experiences of people or groups in a particular setting. The focus of this research is on contextual and in-depth understanding. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research establishes the detailed meaning of information rather than generalizing the results and standardizing the responses from all participants in the study. Therefore, Researchers analyze and explore information in detail and collect data using descriptive studies.

While the researchers used descriptive studies, this study analyzed class XI at the school. The researchers examined the population in the entire class XI with a sample size of 30 participants. The researchers chose it as a sample to represent a variety of viewpoints and experiences. Class XI-4 was selected by the researchers as the research sample because it could accurately reflect the range of views and experiences among EFL students in the school. This was a calculated decision as it made it possible to gain a more thorough understanding of the difficulties that students with different backgrounds and ability levels face when speaking. The researchers wanted to gather various perspectives on language learning challenges by concentrating on one particular class, which could represent the experiences of a large number of grade XI students.

Class XI-4 demographics were similar to other classes in the same grade level. It was considered representative of the whole class XI population. Because of these similarities, the results might comprehend the broader difficulties EFL students face in that particular educational environment. Class XI-4 diversity revealed information on peer support networks and anxiety, which affects language learning. Additionally, according to the researchers, the EFL students in class XI-4 showed a high enthusiasm for participating in the study. They tend

to give honest and thoughtful feedback about their experiences and difficulties in learning English because they desire to participate. Therefore, the combination of participant excitement and demographic representativeness positioned the best sample for examining the intricacies of language learning anxiety and how it affects EFL learners' speaking abilities in class XI-4.
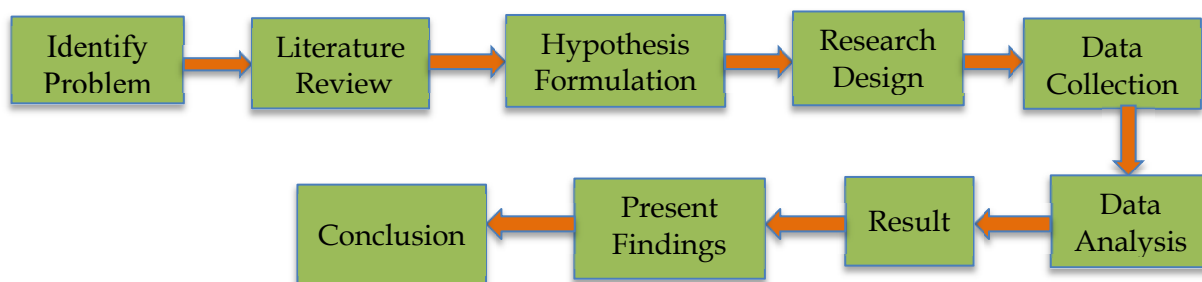

Figure 1. Research Flow of the Research

The researchers' primary technique for examining the qualitative information gathered from the open-ended questionnaires and interviews is thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the primary method used by the researchers to analyze the qualitative data acquired from the open-ended questionnaires and interviews. The thematic analysis provides a thorough understanding of the experiences and perspectives of the participants, enabling the discovery of patterns or themes in the data. The first stage in this procedure is to read the replies several times. After that, data segments were given codes that captured the key points of the participants' responses, a process known as initial coding. To look for themes, the researchers combined related codes into broader categories that reflected typical experiences or challenges encountered by EFL learners. To ensure the accuracy and dependability of the data, the researchers employed data triangulation.

According to Creswell (2012), More open-ended methods are used in qualitative approaches, where participants help shape the potential answers to general questions the researchers pose. By comparing ideas from several sources, researchers might identify persistent discrepancies, increasing the credibility of the results. By employing this rigorous technique, the researchers want to provide a comprehensive and trustworthy study on the speaking difficulties faced by EFL learners at that school. The researchers used semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires as their primary tools to collect in-depth qualitative data. The open-ended questionnaires and interviews contained targeted questions such as: What do you think is the most significant inhibition you face when speaking English in or outside class? In your opinion, are your school environment or friends supportive enough to improve your English-speaking skills? Explain with examples, if any. Are you given enough opportunities in class to practice speaking English? What do you think is the best way to improve your English-speaking skills?

The semi-structured interviews also allowed for deeper insight into the participants' experiences. This set of tools provides a thorough understanding of the difficulties faced by the participants. The researchers used thematic analysis to verify the responses, ensuring that

every participant's perspectives were appropriately conveyed. The researchers took the individuals' experiences by reviewing the data again and categorizing it into themes. A more thorough understanding of the speaking difficulties faced by EFL learners was also made possible by the triangulation of data from the survey and interviews, which increased the confidence of the findings. This methodical approach aimed to produce accurate and perceptive findings regarding the variables affecting speaking ability among class XI students at that school.

Protecting the rights and privacy of participants is crucial in this study, in addition to getting informants' consent. Before starting the study, participants must be fully informed about the research's goals, methods, and advantages to acquire their informed consent. They must be free to decide whether to participate without coercion. To preserve participant privacy, anonymity must also be maintained by excluding participant identification information from the research report. To avoid information misuse, the gathered data must be safely stored and accessible only by those permitted. By following these ethical guidelines, researchers can conduct studies that uphold participant's rights and dignity and yield reliable and trustworthy results.

C. Result and Discussion
Result

The researchers analyzed EFL learners' perceptions of english speaking difficulties in class XI at that school to determine the reasons behind their speaking issues. The researchers needed the right way to identify the problems or challenges they have experienced in speaking so far. In analyzing this, the researchers saw the validity of the data between the interview and the open-ended questionnaire, with the question absorbing the results of identifying problems in speaking. They used thematic analysis to find themes by going over and marking participant replies several times. Segments that indicated important concepts were then marked to code the gathered data. For example, "speaking anxiety" could be used to describe a participant's statement, "I feel very nervous every time I have to speak in front of the class." Afterward, related codes were categorized into broader topics like "coping strategies" and "anxiety." They could recognize themes and patterns that arose from the experiences of the individuals in this way. Citations like "I often feel insecure when I have to speak in English" can support the validity of the findings and offer verifiable proof of students' difficulties in speaking.

Figure 2. Interviewing Student

Figure 3. Interviewing Student

Figure 4. Interviewing Student

Figure 5. Interviewing Student

Some of the documentation above explains that one of the researchers was conducting interviews with the interviewees, asking their opinions about their speaking skills problems. She also asked whether the classroom environment was supportive enough for students to improve their speaking skills; besides that, students also gave opinions about what they needed and the best way to improve their speaking skills, as in the following interview extract.

Researcher: Good morning, how are you?
Student: Morning, sis. Okay, thank God.
Researcher: I want to know your opinion. Do you feel confident when speaking?
Student: Hmmm… no, sis, I lack confidence because I'm afraid of pronouncing it wrong, forgetting the words I want to use, so I often stop in the middle of a sentence. I fear saying the wrong thing and my friends will laugh at me.
Researcher: Oh, I see. What are the challenges or difficulties you face when speaking English?
Student: The challenges or difficulties I experience in the classroom usually occur when we learn conversation. We're often called English-speaking.
Researcher: Do you feel that the classroom environment is not very supportive? Then, do your friends and teachers allow you to invite you often to speak English?

Student: Yes, sister, I rarely speak to friends, but with teachers, I'm often asked to talk in English continuously

Researcher: Okay, what is the best way to improve your English speaking skills? Are there any activities at school that can help you be more confident?

Student: Take an English course, sis, or join an English club

Researcher: Okay, so it's better to take the course, okay? Thank you very much for your time. This information will be helpful for my research.

Student: You're welcome, sis. I hope you always succeed.

From the interview excerpt above, the researchers obtained results regarding the problems experienced by students in speaking skills, and they also received information about how to improve English skills based on their perceptions. The following are the results of interviews conducted by them with grade 11 students.

Table 1. EFL Learners' Perception of Inhibition in Speaking Skills

No.	Interview Results	Initials
1.	Lack vocabulary	TS,N,A,R,D,AS,AN,C,SA,ISL,J,DA, L,D,P,AU,AGN
2.	Lack of confidence	N,TS,W,S,ENR,R,A,F,NG,EM,H,R, D,H,D,R,A,SA,ISL,L,D,P,I.AU,AGN
3.	Fear of public speaking	F, W
4.	It is challenging to understand speaking.	EM, I
6.	Fear of ridicule	R, N, F, H, OR
7.	Difference between written and words	I
8.	Less capable	DM
9.	I don't know the meaning of speaking	. A, DA
10.	Nervous	I, D, R, DI
11.	Talking to people who speak English	DA
12.	Grammar and Pronunciation	RDL

Based on the results of interviews in Table 1 about EFL learners' barriers, it can be concluded that most EFL learners have different barriers, but after analyzing EFL learners' barriers in speaking skills, most of them lack vocabulary.

Table 2. EFL Learners' Perception of Class Environment

No.	Interview Results	Initials
1.	Less support	TS, ENR, EM, H, R, A, L
2.	Only some of them can respond by using English	S, AS
3.	Not supportive enough	R, N, W, S, F, SA, DA, D, P, I, A, AGN, RLD, RA
4.	Quite supportive	AU
5.	A little supportive	ISL, K

No.	Interview Results	Initials
6.	Supportive	N, DI, C, J, DM, RO, RI, H, DI

From this table, one statement stated that the classroom environment is supportive and supportive because he is often criticized and helped by his peers to learn to speak English. Most of the answers from these EFL learners are the lack of support from their class to process together in learning to speak English.

Table 3. EFL Learners' Perceptions of the Opportunities Provided
by the Class Speaking Skills

No.	Interview Results	Initials
1.	Enough	AKT, N, DI, C, J, DM, RO, RI, H
2.	Have been given opportunities such as reading stories in English	VI
3.	Not enough speaking skills	PAD, R, N, W, S, F, SA, DA, D, P, I, A, AGN
4.	Lack of opportunity to speak	DES, TS, ENR, EM, H, R, A, L

From the table above, their perception of the opportunities given by the class, or referring to the teacher, is lacking. Some answered that they felt they had enough opportunities, but not all EFL learners felt this.

Table 4. EFL Learners' Perceptions of the Best Way to Improve Speaking Skills

No.	Interview Results	Initials
1.	Join English courses	AN, J, AGN
2.	Join the extracurricular English club.	TS, R, DA, L, A
3.	Learn more	N, A, F, H, SA, P, DI, RO, RI
4.	Dividing groups so that they can share learning with friends	W, AS
5.	Practice more	S, EM, R, I, DM, PAD
6.	Find an environment where English is often spoken	ENR
7.	Increase vocabulary every day.	D, ISL
8.	Learn from watching movies with English subtitles	N, DES
9.	Learning through scrabble	A
10.	Listen more to English songs	C
11.	Read more English dictionaries.	D
12.	Learn from English games.	MFY
13.	Strengthen and multiply English learning materials.	A

EFL learners' opinions about the best ways to improve their English-speaking abilities are shown in this table. Many students stress the value of real-world experiences, such as

conversing with classmates or participating in language exchange programs, since these experiences let them use what they have learned in authentic settings.

Discussion

In this study, many factors hinder their learning to speak. As shown in Table 1, there are many types of barriers that they currently experience that lead to a sense of self-consciousness in speaking English. It makes sense that inhibition could cause EFL learners to be reluctant to use English (Anh et al., 2020). The interviews' findings revealed a range of difficulties people encounter when speaking in front of an audience and communicating verbally. From the data obtained, most students perceive that a lack of vocabulary and confidence causes inhibition in speaking. Lack of vocabulary was one of the primary problems found, making respondents feel they couldn't adequately express themselves. Conventional learning methods or one-sided instruction might lower student interest and impede vocabulary growth, which are some of the causes of a lack of vocabulary. According to research, having a strong vocabulary is crucial for speaking and writing because it predicts success in both areas (Kılıç, 2019). A strong vocabulary helps people communicate more effectively by allowing them to express their ideas and thoughts more succinctly. Although they affect fewer students, several other issues are encountered.

Most EFL learners lack confidence, which was found in the second largest number, namely 13 informants who answered the same, which was made worse by their dread of making a mistake in speech and of being laughed at by others. EFL learners who possess self-confidence can take advantage of their skills, overcome obstacles with fortitude, and accomplish their academic and personal objectives (Dafit, 2024). Without realizing it, this confidence is essential and contrasts in speaking skills. Additionally, many felt puzzled when conversing because of the disconnect between spoken and written language. The psychological load they experienced was exacerbated by negative self-perceptions, such as feeling less competent than others. These difficulties highlight the need for further assistance and instruction to help people get beyond obstacles in verbal communication and develop their public speaking abilities.

Table 2 shows that although some informants felt supported in the learning process, many said that the classroom environment did not provide enough assistance, according to the study's findings on EFL learners' opinions of the classroom environment. There are claims in the table that the classroom environment is very encouraging and that EFL learners frequently receive feedback and assistance from their peers to improve their english speaking skills. However, most EFL learners said they did not receive enough help during the learning process, making it challenging to work together and improve their speaking abilities. They feel that their environment is not supportive enough because many of their friends still use their mother tongue. Fear of unfavorable peer evaluation and a lack of teacher support are two common reasons people lack confidence when speaking English (Nety et al., 2020). Therefore, to encourage students to participate and learn actively, teachers should establish a more encouraging and inclusive learning atmosphere.

The opinions of EFL learners about the chances they have in the classroom to improve their speaking abilities are shown in Table 3. The findings of the interviews revealed that EFL learners' opinions on how adequate the opportunities they received were varied. One participant, who went by the initials AKT, contended that the classroom possibilities were sufficient to foster the growth of their speaking abilities. According to this perspective, the instructional strategies fostered an atmosphere encouraging students to practice speaking. However, a participant with the initials VI said they had been allowed to speak, mainly through English-language story-reading exercises. In addition to helping them with intonation and pronunciation, this exercise enhanced their comprehension of the language structure and setting of the stories they read. Other participants, nevertheless, weren't happy with the opportunities offered. According to PAD, students thought there were still not enough possibilities to meet their learning needs, which may suggest that other teaching strategies are needed to boost student engagement. Furthermore, DES clarified that there were insufficient speaking chances, suggesting that some students did not believe they had enough room to engage in active speaking practice.

This discontent may remind educators to reconsider their methods and consider incorporating more participatory and cooperative exercises, like role-plays, group discussions, or presentations, to give every student more chances to practice speaking. Teachers may design more inclusive and productive learning environments that help all students improve their speaking abilities by being aware of and responsive to these attitudes. Furthermore, it's critical for teachers to regularly evaluate the success of their instructional methods and ask students for input on their classroom experiences. By fostering an honest discussion about what functions well and what doesn't, children are more likely to participate actively in speaking exercises when they feel heard and appreciated, which boosts their confidence and language proficiency.

The 4th table shows that in addition to EFL learners knowing what makes their obstacles in speaking English, EFL learners also have various strategies that they consider effective in improving their english speaking skills based on their respective perceptions. Some methods include taking English courses, learning through Scrabble, increasing vocabulary daily, and joining extracurricular activities (English Club). Most students perceive that learning more speaking and practicing more is the best way to improve their speaking skills. EFL learners can meet new people and practice their English in a laid-back setting by joining an English club (Hamadameen & Najim, 2020). It means you can support or motivate EFL learners to be more enthusiastic in practicing their speaking skills. EFL learners also suggested watching movies with English subtitles, practicing more, and listening to English music to enhance their speaking abilities. These techniques demonstrate how EFL learners can improve their speaking abilities by combining formal and informal strategies.

Based on the findings of previous theories, Tang (1997) stated that there are several problems in speaking activities: inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven participation, and use of the mother tongue. Based on the data above, according to recent research on the best ways to improve speaking skills based on EFL learners' perceptions, being aware of the

obstacles they encounter, they can also pinpoint the best tactics for them. They appreciate the social connection and practical experience in a nurturing setting, as seen by strategies like enrolling in English classes, learning more speaking, practicing more, learning through games like Scrabble, and joining an English club. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that informal activities like viewing movies with subtitles and listening to English-language music help enhance speaking abilities. These results highlight how crucial it is to combine formal and informal learning and how social settings and individual experiences might affect the drive and self-assurance of EFL learners when speaking. Thus, the growth of students' speaking abilities can be significantly aided by a varied and flexible approach to English instruction.

The information from EFL learners about their speaking difficulties emphasizes the value of self-awareness and proactive participation in the language learning process. Learners can successfully negotiate language learning challenges by acknowledging their problems and actively seeking solutions. When combined with instructor assistance, this method improves speaking ability and creates fun. Finally, EFL learners can achieve more success by overcoming what inhibits speaking skills through self-awareness, strategic practice, and supportive instruction to have the competence and confidence they need to communicate well in English. Furthermore, this study aims to inform educators about the unique requirements of middle school students, which will eventually lead to better teaching strategies and enhanced learning outcomes for speaking proficiency.

Pedagogical implications for overcoming speaking fear in EFL learners have significant educational consequences that require further research. One helpful tactic teachers can use is creating a safe classroom space where children can practice speaking without fear of criticism. Before speaking in front of a larger class, students can get confidence by using cooperative learning strategies like small group discussions. Additionally, anxiety can be decreased by introducing relaxation methods like deep breathing before speaking exercises. Better teaching methods and more successful speaking proficiency learning outcomes are the goals of this study. Teachers can improve learners' learning experiences and promote improved language acquisition by comprehending and treating speaking anxiety.

D. Conclusion

Most EFL learners lack confidence and vocabulary, and they feel that their class environment is less supportive of speaking activities. In addition to knowing their problems, they also give their opinions about the best way to improve speaking skills. They can negotiate language learning challenges by acknowledging their concerns and seeking solutions. Finally, EFL learners can achieve more success by overcoming what inhibits speaking skills through self-awareness, strategic practice, and supportive instruction to have the competence and confidence to communicate well in English. Support from teachers and friends or the classroom environment is critical to create a conducive atmosphere for learning.

In addition to knowing what problems students experience in speaking skills, students will also become more aware of their shortcomings in speaking, can focus on improving them,

and will be motivated to study and practice diligently. Furthermore, this study also intends to educate teachers about the unique needs of high school students, which are then analyzed to produce better and more interesting teaching methods so that students can be more active in learning and improve speaking skills and learning outcomes. The results of this study also encourage the implementation of training for teachers to enhance their competence in teaching speaking skills.

Recommendations for the following researchers are to increase the sample size in future studies by including more people from different geographical locations, educational institutions, and backgrounds. Simultaneous quantitative and qualitative research methods might also yield a more thorough knowledge of speaking anxiety. Furthermore, studies that track how learners' speaking anxiety changes over time can offer essential insights into the variables influencing anxiety. Future studies can contribute more to the knowledge and management of speaking anxiety in EFL learners by addressing these limitations. For teachers, teaching techniques can be more adapted to EFL learners' learning styles and more attractive and interesting in teaching speaking so that students can be more open to learning and more active in exploring speaking.

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