

**PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY ENGLISH FOREIGN
LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS:
SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW**

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to investigate what problems are encountered by EFL (English Foreign Language) learners. English speaking skill is one of the most important skills in English. Then speaking skill is not easy to learn. Previous research has highlighted common difficulties learners face in acquiring English speaking skills. This Systematic Literature Review analyzes 20 articles related to the problems encountered by EFL learners in English speaking skills. The result of this research showed that the learners' problems in English speaking skills covered linguistic problems and non-linguistic problems. Problems encountered by learners showed that linguistic problems involve a lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and grammar. Then non-linguistic problems encountered by learners, showed that there are so many non-linguistic problems, but the most common and often found non-linguistic problems are felt not confidence, fear of mistakes, shyness, nervousness, anxiety, lack of motivation, afraid negative responses, mother tongue, insecurity, uneven participant, never practice, nothing to say.

Keywords: EFL learners, Problems, Speaking skill

Introduction

Language is important for people in this world. Without language, people will face many difficulties. Without language, how can survive? Language makes us communicate with each other. Language helps people to find solutions to their problems. Language makes people find so many new great things. So that is why language is crucial for humans that exist in this world. There are so many languages in this world. Although each country has its own language, English has emerged as the global language, making it essential for navigating the demands of globalization. Each person needs

English in various matters.

English is divided into four aspects of English skills namely speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Speaking is an important aspect of learning. Bryne in Rahayu et al. (2020) “defines speaking as a two-way process between speaker and listener.” Then explained further by Setiawati et al. in Rahayu et al. (2020) “The process involves productive and receptive skills of understanding”. Through speaking people can convey their opinion, their ideas to others. However, speaking in English is not easy for EFL learners. EFL learners face obstacles in speaking English. Rahayu et al. (2020) said "Based on the fact in real life, most of the students are confronted with problems in speaking". They give more explanation that most of them cannot speak English well for various reasons, and speaking is the only skill using the combination of vocabulary, pronunciation, brogue, and grammar.

As we know in fact, learners are shy if speaking in English for instance; in front of the class or a public place, because usually when someone speaks in English they make a mistake in grammar, pronunciation, or something else they will be laughed at. Maybe if that happens in the class a teacher can reprimand the learners who laugh at their friends not to laugh at them anymore, because it becomes one of the factors that make the learners can not speak in English. Then sometimes learners who have an opportunity to speak in front of the class suddenly get nervous and don't have any idea how to speak, etc

There are previous researches that have analyzed speaking problems faced by learners. The first research is from Maulana et al (2016) their research entitled “Students’ Views On EFL Speaking Problem” found that all students encounter some of the most problems in speaking such as less vocabulary, poor pronunciation, less confidence, and fear of making errors. The second research is from Anh Tram (2020) in his research entitled “Problems of Learning Speaking Skills Encountered by English Major Students at Ba Ria-Vung Tau University, Vietnam” found that there are two problems. The first is linguistic problems such as “thinking their mother tongue first, lack vocabulary, poor pronunciation, do not know appropriate

words in different contexts, lack grammar knowledge, difficulty making completed sentences, hard to remember vocabulary especially words having more than one meaning.” The second one is non-linguistic problems such as afraid of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, insecurity, and difficulty finding opportunities to practice speaking outside the classroom. The third research is from Asworo (2019) in their research entitled “Students’ Difficulties in Speaking English at the Tenth Grade of Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan.” The finding showed that the difficulties of the students include linguistic and non-linguistic. The linguistic problems are “a lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge.” The non-linguistic problems are “inhibition, nothing to say, uneven participation, mother tongue interference, anxiety, shyness, lack of self-confidence, and low motivation.” This research has the purpose of knowing what are the problems encountered by English Foreign Language learners in speaking skills using SLR.

Methods

This research used a *Systematic Literature Review (SLR)*. Based on Shahrol et al. (2020) “A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) identifies, evaluates, interprets and analyses the available research findings related to formulated research questions, topic area, or phenomenon.” Then he explains further that “The main purpose of conducting a systematic review is to construct a general vision, gather evidence of specific questions and give a summary of the literature.” This research was conducted in several stages; the objective of the research, literature search, literature selection, data presentation, data processing, and conclusions. The researcher choose 20 articles that focused on one language skill, namely speaking, where the articles discussed the problems faced by English foreign language learners in that language skill. Where the criteria are articles that discuss linguistic or non- linguistic speaking problems or both.

The first stage is a research objective. The objective of this research is to find out what problems are encountered by learners in English speaking

skills. The second stage is a literature search on the Google Scholar database. In the next stage, the researcher records the article in the table. Then the researcher reviews and examines the research. At the end, the researcher compares the research results of several articles and makes conclusions.

Findings and Discussions

The researcher arranges the findings in a table. It aims to make it easier for readers to understand the results of the research. This systemic literature review analyzes 20 journal articles related to the problems encountered by EFL learners. The results are as follows:

No	Research Author	Journal	Research Result
1.	(Sayuri, 2016)	Indonesia Journal of EFL and Linguistic	The students encountered several problems related to vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency. Then felt not confident, fearful of mistakes, shy, nervous, inhabit in speaking English, never practiced, and had nothing to say (Sayuri, 2016).
2.	(Andas, 2020)	ELT Worldwide	The result showed that there were students' problems in speaking such as fear of mistakes, fear of negative evaluation, and shyness, lack of vocabulary and grammar, Uneven participation, and the influence of the mother tongue (Andas, 2020).
3.	(Ester et al., 2020)	Journal Littera: Fakultas Darma Agung	The research showed that students experience problems in speaking English such as insufficient basic knowledge of English, the influence of the mother tongue, disadvantaged socio-economic factors, non-English classroom instruction, and anxiety about English speaking (Ester et al., 2020).
4.	(Amoah & Yeboah, 2021)	Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies	The result of the research showed that Chinese EFL learners' speaking problems have more to do with psychological factors namely fear

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| 5. | (Souisa, 2020) | MATAI:
International
Journal of
Language
Education | of mistakes, fear of negative evaluation unwillingness, and anxiety (Amoah & Yeboah, 2021).
The research found that the general students' speaking problems such as a lack of vocabulary, grammatical incomprehension, lack of practice, and an unsupported environment (always speaking in their mother tongue). Then most psychological factors such as low motivation, fear of mistakes, feeling nervous and tense, not being confident in speaking presentation, and confusion about their thought. (Souisa, 2020). |
| 6. | (Komariah Misna, 2017) | Research in
English and
Education
(READ) | The research found that the most controlling problems are "pronunciation, grammar, and fluency." Then the interview showed that the students' problems were "inhibition, nothing to say, low participation, and mother tongue used" (Komariah Misna, 2017). |
| 7. | (Huwari, 2019) | International
Journal of
Innovation,
Creativity, and
Change. | The findings about the problems speaking encountered by the students were divided into four main themes namely first linguistic problems; pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Then the second one is psychological factors; inhibition, and lack of motivation. The third is the learning environment; topics speaking modules, and limited time. The last is lack of practice (Huwari, 2019). |
| 8. | (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020) | European
Journal of
Educational
Research | The result of the research showed that the students' speaking problems were a lack of the following aspects such as appropriate vocabulary, grammar mastery, correct pronunciation, the input of English outside the class, confidence, and the development of English speaking curriculum (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020). |
| 9. | (Nakhalah, 2016) | International | The result of the research showed |

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| | | Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention | that there were several difficulties in speaking because of “fear of mistakes, shyness, anxiety, and lack of confidence.” (Nakhalah, 2016). |
| 10. | (Rahayu et al., 2020) | Lexeme: Journal of Linguistic and Applied Linguistics | The result of the research showed that there are four important themes of students' problems in speaking skills such as lack of vocabulary, lack of grammar mastery, fear of negative responses, and lack of confidence. (Rahayu et al., 2020). |
| 11. | (Riadil, 2020b) | JETAL: Journal of English Teaching & Applied Linguistic | The result of the research showed that the students’ problems include linguistic problems such as considerably reduced grammar, lack of vocabulary, and bad pronunciation. The second one is psychological problems such as loss of confidence, insecurity, and nervousness (Riadil, 2020b). |
| 12. | (Dalem, 2017) | Premise Journal | The result of the research highlights the speaking difficulties encountered by the students namely “fear of mistakes, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation” (Dalem, 2017). |
| 13. | (Krismanti & Siregar, 2017) | LENTERA: Journal Ilmiah Pendidikan | The result of the research showed that there were four dominant students’ speaking problems; “lack of confidence, fear of mistakes, shyness, and anxiety” (Krismanti & Siregar, 2017). |
| 14. | (Riadil, 2020a) | IJELR: International Journal of Education, Language, and Religion | The result of the research showed that the biggest problem in learning to speak English is the use of the mother tongue (Riadil, 2020a). |
| 15. | (Jannah & Fitriati, 2016) | EEJ English Educational Journal | The result of the research showed that the psychological problems encountered by the students were fear of mistakes, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation (Jannah & Fitriati, 2016). |
| 16. | (Candraloka & Rosdiana, 2019) | JELE (Journal of English | The result of the research showed that the students' problems in |

- Language and Education speaking were “vocabulary (100%), pronunciation (100%), grammar (83.9%), and fluency (96.7%).” They also have problems such as “shyness, anxiety, confusion, lack of confidence, and fear of mistakes.” (Candraloka & Rosdiana, 2019)
17. (Franscy & Ramli, 2022) Pioneer: Journal of Language and Literature The result of the research showed that Indonesian EFL learners experience linguistic and non-linguistic problems. The linguistic problems involve “comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency.” Then the non-linguistics problems involve nervousness, no motivation, fear of errors, and low participation in class (Franscy & Ramli, 2022).
18. (Pratiwi, 2021) Journal of English Education and Linguistic The result of the research showed that the students' problems in speaking during the pandemic are as follows: understanding conversation, less vocabulary, pronunciation, shyness, worrying about grammatical errors, lack of technology, and lack of motivation (Pratiwi, 2021).
19. (Handini et al., 2021) Journal of Language and Literature The result of the research showed that there are students' difficulties in speaking English such as a lack of vocabulary, difficulties in pronouncing certain words, confusion in arranging words, afraid of speaking English (Handini et al., 2021).
20. (Manguntungi Andi, 2019) International Journal of Research in English Education ijreeonline The result of the research showed that students' speaking problems were “accuracy, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency.” Then based on the interview there were several students' speaking problems such as “performance condition, affective factors, listening ability, and topical knowledge.” (Manguntungi Andi, 2019).

Figure 1 The Previous Research on the Students' Problems in Speaking Skills

From the result above it can be described that there are two kinds of problems in speaking skills namely linguistic problems and non-linguistic problems.

a. Linguistic Problems

From the 20 articles researcher found 14 articles that discussed the learners' linguistic problems in speaking skills. Based on the 14 articles about linguistic problems encountered by learners, showed that the linguistic problems involve a lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and grammar.

No	Author	Discussion
1.	(Sayuri, 2016)	The learners encounter several problems related to vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency.
2.	(Andas, 2020)	The learners encounter problems such as a lack of vocabulary and grammar.
3.	(Ester et al., 2020)	The learners encounter problems namely insufficient basic knowledge of English (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, etc)
4.	(Souisa, 2020)	The learners encounter problems like a lack of vocabulary and grammatical incomprehension.
5.	(Komariah Misna, 2017)	The learners encounter problems like “pronunciation, grammar, and fluency.”
6.	(Huwari, 2019)	The learners encounter problems namely pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary
7.	(Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020)	The learners encounter problems like the lack of appropriate vocabulary, the lack of grammar mastery, and the lack of correct pronunciation
8.	(Rahayu et al., 2020)	The learners' problems are a lack of vocabulary and a lack of grammar mastery.
9.	(Riadil, 2020b)	The learners' problems such as considerably reduced grammar, lack of vocabulary, and bad pronunciation.
10.	(Candraloka & Rosdiana, 2019)	The learners’ problems in speaking were “vocabulary (100%), pronunciation (100%), grammar (83.9%), and fluency (96.7%).”
11.	(Franscy & Ramli, 2022)	The learners' problems are “pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency.”
12.	(Pratiwi, 2021)	The learners' problems are less about vocabulary, pronunciation, and worrying about grammatical errors
13.	(Handini et al., 2021)	The learners' problems such as a lack of vocabulary, difficulties in pronunciation of

- certain words, and confusion in arranging words (grammar)
14. (Manguntungi Andi, 2019) The learners' problems are "accuracy, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency."

Table. 2. The learners' linguistic problems in speaking skill

b. Non Linguistic Problem

From the 20 articles, the researcher found 19 articles that discussed the learners' non-linguistic problems in speaking skills. Based on The 20 articles about non-linguistic problems encountered by learners, showed that there are so many non-linguistic problems, but the most common and often found non-linguistic problems are felt not confidence, fear of mistakes, shyness, nervousness, anxiety, lack of motivation, afraid negative responses, mother tongue, insecurity, uneven participant, never practice, had nothing to say.

No	Author	Discussion
1.	(Sayuri, 2016)	The learners' problems are feeling not confident, fear of mistakes, shyness, nervousness, inhabit in speaking English, never practicing, and having nothing to say.
2.	(Andas, 2020)	The learners' problems are fear of mistakes, afraid of negative responses, and shyness. uneven participant, the influencing of mother tongue.
3.	(Ester et al., 2020)	The learners' problems are the influence of the mother tongue, the disadvantaged socio-economic factors, non-English classroom instruction, and anxiety about English speaking.
4.	(Amoah & Yeboah, 2021)	The learners' problems such as fear of mistakes, fear of negative evaluation, unwillingness, and anxiety.
5.	(Souisa, 2020)	The learners' problems are lack of practice, an unsupported environment (always speaking in their mother tongue), low motivation, fear of mistakes, feeling nervous and tense, not confident in speaking presentations, and confused about their thoughts.
6.	(Komariah Misna, 2017)	There are problems encountered by the learners such as "inhibition, nothing to say, low participation, and mother tongue used."
7.	(Huwari, 2019)	The learners' problems such as psychological factors; inhibition, and lack of motivation. The

		third is the learning environment; topics speaking modules, and limited time. The last is lack of practice.
8.	(Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020)	The learners' problems are the lack of input of English outside the class, the lack of confidence, and the lack of development of the English-speaking curriculum.
9.	(Nakhalah, 2016)	The learners' problems are "fear of mistakes, shyness, anxiety, and lack of confidence."
10.	(Rahayu et al., 2020)	The learners' problems are the students' fear of negative responses and lack of confidence.
11.	(Riadil, 2020b)	The learners' problems namely psychological problems such as loss of confidence, insecurity, and nervousness.
12.	(Dalem, 2017)	The learners' problems are "fear of mistakes, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation."
13.	(Krismanti & Siregar, 2017)	The learners' problems encountered by students in speaking are "lack of confidence, fear of mistakes, shyness, and anxiety."
14.	(Riadil, 2020a)	The learners' problem in learning to speak English is the use of the mother tongue.
15.	(Jannah & Fitriati, 2016)	The learners' problems (psychological problems) were afraid of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation.
16.	(Candraloka & Rosdiana, 2019)	The learners' problems such as "shyness, anxiety, confusion, lack of confidence, and fear of making mistakes."
17.	(Franscy & Ramli, 2022)	The learners' problems are nervousness, no motivation, fear of errors, and low participation in class.
18.	(Pratiwi, 2021)	The learners' problems are shyness, lack of motivation, and lack of technology
19.	(Handini et al., 2021)	The learners' problems are afraid of speaking English.
20.	(Manguntungi Andi, 2019)	"The learners' problems such as performance conditions, affective factors, listening ability, and topical knowledge."

Table 3. The learners' non-linguistic problems in speaking skill

Conclusion

The finding of this study indicate that learners face both linguistic and non linguistic challenges in English speaking. Problems encountered by learners showed that linguistic problems involve a lack of

vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and grammar. Non-linguistic challenges commonly encountered by learners include lack of confidence, fear of mistake, shyness, nervousness, anxiety, low motivation, concern over negative feedback, reliance on their mother tongue, insecurity, uneven participation, limited practice opportunities, and difficulty finding topics to discuss.

This research hopefully can be a reference to find out what are the learners' problems in speaking English. So a teacher can devise strategies to help the learners overcome their problems in speaking English and also give motivation.

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