

# Online Communication versus Face-to-Face Interaction: the Effect of Chatting Communication on Iranian EFL Learners' Oral Performance

Samad Mirza Suzani\*

English Department, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht – Iran

## Article Information

Received 05 September 2021

Accepted 26 October 2021

Published January 22, 2022

## Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the impact of chatting communication on Iranian EFL learners' oral performance. To this end, the author randomly selected fifty 17-to-18-year-old male Iranian EFL learners attending Top Notch communicative classes in language institutes in Shiraz. First, they applied the Oxford Placement Test as a proficiency test to homogenize learners, and then the learners were divided into experimental and control groups (n = 25 in each group). Both groups had a pretest to estimate their oral performance before applying treatment. The experimental group received instruction and materials via online context as treatment. However, the participants in the control group just received instruction via traditional teaching methods in the class. Finally, both groups had a post-test to measure the effect of treatment on their oral performance. The mean and standard deviation were calculated for two groups. In the data collection and analysis, a paired samples t-test was conducted. Based on the results, between the two groups, there was a substantial disparity in terms of oral presentation skills, and the experimental group learners outperformed the control group's learners. The findings can be helpful for teachers to find practical ways to develop students' skills and their incentives.

Keywords: chatting; online communication; oral performance; Iranian EFL learners

## Introduction

The progress of computer technology has guided language teachers to apply computer technology into the classroom, as computer-assisted language learning and teaching (CALL) method, to promote various proportions of foreign language teaching and learning. Some functional applications and features such as word processing, games, corpus linguistics, blogs, and social media as computer-mediated

communications, web-based recourses, audio, video, images, and other multimedia materials, are made through applying CALL and other digital resources. Bahrani (2011) declared that learners are motivated via applying CALL in classrooms (Bahrani, 2011).

An investigation of the influence of Facebook use on the development of writing abilities in English as a second language was conducted by Klimova and Pikhart (2019). There are several

---

\*Corresponding Author: Samad Mirza Suzani  
(smirzasuzani@yahoo.com) Marvdasht, Fars  
Province, Iran

benefits of incorporating Facebook into EFL classrooms, such as raising student motivation and fostering peer-to-peer cooperation as well as growing vocabulary and diminishing shyness, according to this review research. However, based on the results of the studies cited, it appears that the ideal technique for teaching and learning how to write is a combination of traditional face-to-face instruction and online learning via Facebook. Students can benefit greatly from the use of blended learning, which combines conventional educational techniques with contemporary communication and e-learning. As a result, students are able to keep in touch with one another while utilizing the most up-to-date technologies. For the younger generation, peer influence is a significant social and psychological phenomenon. This advantage is essential from a psychological aspect.

A study by Jiang and Eslami (2021) looked at the influence of computer-mediated collaborative writing on individual EFL writing abilities. There is no correlation between task type, dyadic type, or language competency in terms of improving overall writing performance or fluency, although there is a correlation between these factors. However, understanding students' learning requirements, online teaching practices, and the importance of combining traditional classroom teaching techniques into online delivery were all factors that contributed to instructors' ICT literacy, according to Gao & Zhang (2020). Using Web 2.0 applications has made more methods available for learners to learn a language and instructors to teach a language. Applying these applications can improve learners' essential skills, such as oral communication, global awareness, critical

thinking, and information literacy (Buchem & Hamelmann, 2011).

Through perceptions, ICT self-efficacy and conducive situations were positively connected with continuation intention (i.e., perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness). ICT fear had a negative effect on continuation intention, whereas interest had a favorable effect. Through the use of ICT, a growth mindset had a favorable impact on the intention to continue (i.e., adaptive help-seeking) (Bai et al., 2021). According to the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study, course educators and students had a good attitude toward the usage of educational technologies since it positively impacted students' performance (Jaiswal, 2020).

In three separate contexts, language teacher education programs in Turkey, Portugal, and Poland appeared to utilize teacher education practices to prepare future teachers for moderate use of educational technology. Feedback and instructional design techniques were found to be problematic for the programs, whereas modeling teacher educators and reflection on technology use were found to be key strategies used. Furthermore, the findings revealed a lack of resources, institutional support, and qualified teacher educators capable of successfully integrating technology into their classrooms (Aşık et al., 2020).

The concept of a Community of Practice was helpful in boosting native cultural awareness among the participants. With the growth of trust and familiarity among group members, students grew more inclined to participate in their English chat community or WeChat. Through peer and multimodal dialogues, students were encouraged to apply their personal, local, and global knowledge to share and learn new English

terms in a Chinese cultural context (Wu & Miller, 2021).

Another field of technologies for language learning related to the current study is Human Language Technologies (HLT) for Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Gupta et al. (2010) show that progress in HLT was made possible in significant part by the insights drawn from linguistics and language acquisition research (Gupta et al., 2010). Udeshinee (2021) looked into the viewpoints of university teachers and students on the use of text chat in the classroom. Examine the benefits and drawbacks of using text chat for instructor corrective feedback from the perspectives of university teachers and students. The findings revealed that professors continue to use traditional technology, despite the fact that students prefer to use the technology of their generation. Teachers, on the other hand, claimed that their CF in the traditional methodology, in which CF is provided in front of the entire class, did not appear to operate well. As a result, they appear to be looking towards alternatives to their usual teaching, recognizing the potential of text chat as a CF mediator in a specific challenging sociocultural setting. The findings also suggest that, because text chat is a popular form of communication among teachers and learners, and because learners may review the history of the text chat and learn about their language problems, providing teachers' CF via text chat may be feasible and valuable.

Students have a strong passion for smart mobile phones with all their smart applications in the present globalized world. Thus, English language teachers can use mobile phones, from each now and then, to increase the students' motivation. Nowadays, learners live amidst

many digital tools and software applications, and they own computers and portable devices such as smartphones with their ever renewable applications at hand every minute. Thus, they are interested in having the most updated smart mobile phones with the latest applications in the market. Therefore, there is a trend to benefit from this passion by adopting mobile phones in English classes (Zayed, 2016).

Notably, online communication is time-and place-independent. Learners communicate with each other anywhere and anytime as long as there is access to the internet (Zayed, 2016). Still, the prevalence of network connections has helped to shift gradually learning settings from the traditional face-to-face classroom to an online learning environment, where learners interact with the instructor and with other learners (Bataineh, 2014). Teaching pupils to speak a foreign language well is a challenging task, but it is one that must be overcome. Iranian pupils, for example, speak a common mother tongue and have little or no exposure to English outside of the classroom, making this a particularly difficult issue.

An investigation of the impact of social media websites on ESL students' English proficiency was carried out by Ibrahim Alfaki. The study found that learning through social networks was more successful than traditional learning because it views the classroom as a place to obtain information and helps students overcome their fear of making errors or engaging in any bad conduct in the classroom. Collaborative learning was also found to be a useful approach for learning a new language (I. M. Alfaki, 2018).

P. D. Rodrigues (2015) investigated the learners' feedback effect on the English

Proficiency in Conversation (EPiC) online learning program. The results showed that feedback influences the speaking performance of the EPiC group and non-EPiC group students in a 12-week Intensive English Program (IEN). Furthermore, the results showed that the EPiC group outperformed the non-EPiC group regarding improvement in speaking grades and vocabulary and listening skills despite unstable Internet connections (Rodrigues, 2015).

In the academic year 2013-2014, Mohammed Alhawiti studied the impact of WhatsApp on the academic performance of Tabuk community college students studying English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Students in the experimental group made much more progress in ESP post-test terminology than those in the control group. Statistically significant results demonstrated that the WhatsApp-based platform was more successful than the conventional training mode, as seen by the differences in mean scores between the two groups on the post-test ( $p < 0.05$ ) (M. Alhawiti, 2015).

Zayed investigated the motivation of students through the use of mobile phones in the educational process. For students, social networks provided a way out of the classroom anxiety that stemmed from their dread of making errors or engaging in any other undesirable conduct. Additionally, these findings are in line with the notion of connectivity, which holds true in today's technologically advanced digital world due to the prevalence of internet apps, social media, and other emerging forms of multimodal communication among digital natives (Zayed, 2016).

In Iran, Maftoon & Sharifi Haratmeh (2012) showed that many Iranian EFL learners lack

linguistic proficiency like grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and intonation. Many learners suffer from limited vocabulary knowledge while speaking, which prevents them from communicating. Not enough grammar knowledge or making grammatical errors, especially when they want to translate the structure from one language to another, is another crucial factor (Abbasi & Karimnia, 2011). The next factor is the students' poor pronunciation. According to Hashemian & Heidari Soureshjani (2013), the reason for wrong pronunciation could be insufficient knowledge of phonology and mispronouncing (Hashemian & Heidari Soureshjani, 2013). Besides, the teachers might not teach pronunciation well for many reasons, including "lack of time, motivation, resources, materials, and educational facilities like computer technologies" (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Finally, the highlighted issue could be EFL Iranian learners' accents and dialects. As Tajeddin, Tajeddin et al. (2020) are concerned, the perspective of many teachers in Iran is to be exposed to English rather than Englishes. Therefore, they prefer to pronounce and lead their students to pronounce like a native speaker rather than obeying their accent, making the speaking process difficult and challenging for the learners. Another problematic area for language learners, especially Iranian nonnative EFL learners, is psycholinguistic issues. (Tajeddin et al., 2020). In this vein, many students suffer from confidence-based issues such as a lack of self-confidence, being afraid of making mistakes, and unwillingness to speak (Ghanbarpour, 2016; Ghonsooly et al., 2012). In other words, low self-confidence can influence learners' speaking ability because they assume not to have enough capacity to communicate in a nonnative

language (Asakereh & Dehghannezhad, 2015). Moreover, being afraid of making mistakes is very common because they may think that the teacher or classmates are aware of their problems and the issues of World Englishes is not acceptable for them (Azarfam & Baki, 2012; Soodmand Afshar & Asakereh, 2016).

In addition, students' anxiety can frequently influence the quality of speaking skills. As recent studies report, although learners have enough knowledge in general English, they cannot speak accurately and fluently because they have anxiety in their performance (Abedini et al., 2017; Safari Moghaddam & Ghafournia, 2019). Moreover, shyness can be considered another psychological problem among EFL learners, especially university students in applied linguistics, putting the learners in trouble (Babapoor et al., 2018; Mohammadian, 2013). A Recent study by Alavinia et al. (2012) revealed that the problem of shyness and low self-confidence could occur because of the unfriendly behavior of classmates or teachers (Alavinia et al., 2012). Another study showed that teachers' emphasis on pushing the learners to speak could make students anxious and hysteric (Abedini et al., 2017; Safari Moghaddam & Ghafournia, 2019). Subsequently, teachers' lack of encouragement in improving speaking skills can be listed as a source to create psychological problems for language learners (Soodmand Afshar & Asakereh, 2016).

Regarding sociolinguistic Issues, learners may suffer from improper context, sense of agency, and sociolinguistic aspects that impact their language learning, especially speaking skills. An important reason for hesitating to speak is the lack of opportunity to speak in English outside the classroom because Persian is the official

language in Iran, which may make them weak in English speaking skills. (Khajavy et al. (2016) asserted that cooperation and communication are interrelated with learning inside the classroom (Khajavy et al., 2016), that is, higher cooperation among students means a higher level of proficiency in learning and speaking. A classroom is a context of different individuals gathered together with various backgrounds, lifestyles, and cultures; hence, it is a collection of various factors (Mirhosseini et al., 2017). When people sit close to each other and raise different ideas and attitudes, the atmosphere would be more fruitful friendly, and highly integrated into any educational setting; otherwise, an unfriendly atmosphere weakens communication and interaction. Being ignored by the teacher or classmates is another factor that prevents learners from speaking. All learners must have equal opportunities to participate in discussion both inside the classroom (Cortazzi, M., Jin, L., Kaivanpanah & Nemati, 2015) and through online classrooms (Cortazzi, M., Jin, L., Kaivanpanah & Nemati, 2015). In addition, teachers should attempt to make classes more interactive in both learner-centeredness and teacher-centered classes Zohrabi et al. (2012) and in both online communication and face-to-face interaction (Zohrabi et al., 2012).

A wide variety of apps are increasingly using chatbots, particularly those that give intelligent help to users. Chatbots can interpret user requests and provide an appropriate answer in real time and with high accuracy in many of these systems (Mohamed, 2021). According to Bataineh, tenth-graders' fluency and authentic oral texts output in English were improved by

using audiovisual chat in the first semester of 2013-2014. Students' English language fluency might be improved by using audiovisual chat, according to research (Bataineh, 2014).

Teachers aim to make their classrooms as engaging as possible in order to entice pupils. Learning environments that are rich and varied can be provided through online chat. Cooperative initiatives among schools are made possible by digital technologies, which hasten the educational progress of children. Text conversation and word processor use were shown to be more effective for students studying for a post-test than traditional methods of instruction (Bataineh, 2014).

During the 2015-2016 academic year, Ta'amneh performed a study to examine the impact of "WhatsApp Messenger" on university students' English language acquisition. EFL students' language skills were enhanced by using WhatsApp in the classroom, according to the research. In addition, it demonstrated that conventional techniques of English instruction might be improved upon via the use of modern technology, such as WhatsApp messaging (Ta'amneh, 2017). On the contrary, Bataineh (2014) found no difference in learners' performance and language skills via online English-speaking chatrooms. Moreover, M. M. Alhawiti (2015) revealed no statistically significant difference in learners' oral performance via applying online English-speaking chatrooms. With the above studies, the following research question is whether online chatting communication has

a statistically significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' English oral performance.

## Method

Like a true experiment, a quasi-experimental design aims to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between an independent and dependent variable; however, as true experiments could not be used for practical reasons in the present research, a quasi-experimental design was used. First, the subjects were selected by administering a proficiency test, and they were randomly assigned into two groups. Then the participants were given a pretest and post-test in their regular English lesson.

### Participants

The study participants comprised 17-to-18-year-old male Iranian EFL learners attending Top Notch communicative classes in English language institutes in Shiraz in summer 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants' native language was Persian. First, the authors used Oxford Placement Test (OPT) to select homogenous participants regarding their English oral performance. After that, out of 80 individuals, 50 participants with one standard deviation above or below the mean were selected as the main participants and were randomly divided into experimental (online English speaking chatrooms) and control (traditional classroom learning) groups. The experimental group (N = 25) received an online teaching method via the telegram platform, while the control group (traditional learning) (N = 25) was taught via traditional teaching methods. The book *Top*

*Notch 3* was used in both experimental and control classes.

### **Instruments**

The materials used in this study were as follows:

#### ***The Oxford Placement Test (OPT)***

The Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was applied to homogenize the study participants regarding their English language proficiency. It is a valid, reliable, and very effective test for grouping learners in different proficiency levels. It consists of 40 questions taking 45 minutes to answer. The results were reported on 0 to 120 with 20 points corresponding to each level A1 to C.

#### ***Pretest***

At the beginning of the study and before applying the treatment, the participants were asked to answer some questions orally to estimate learners' oral performance. The pretest comprised 20 teacher-made questions whose validity was approved by three experts in the field (see Table 3). Also, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  formula calculated the items' reliability coefficient as 0.84, which appeared to be within the acceptable range (see Table 4).

#### ***Posttest***

Regarding the effect of online English-speaking chatrooms on learners' oral performance, the participants in both control and experiment groups were asked to answer some questions orally. The post-test questions comprised 20 teacher-made items whose validity was approved by three experts in the

field (see Table 3). Cronbach's  $\alpha$  formula calculated the items' reliability coefficient as 0.84, which appeared to be within the acceptable range (see Table 4).

### ***Procedures***

At first, the researcher applied the OPT as a proficiency test to homogenize learners. Then, learners were divided into experimental and control groups, 25 in each. At the beginning of the study, both groups had a pretest to estimate their oral performance before treatment. Next, the experimental group received instruction, materials, feedback, and online context feedback as treatment. However, the control (traditional) group just received materials and instruction via traditional teaching methods in the class. All participants received treatment in 8 sessions (1.5 h per session). The book *Top Notch 3* was used in experimental and control classes by the same teacher. Finally, both groups had a post-test to measure the effect of treatment on their oral performance. The data obtained from the tests were analyzed using SPSS version 21. The authors calculated mean, standard deviation, and variance for two groups to describe the data. Then, they ran a paired samples *t*-test to analyze data and answer the research question.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **Reliability and Content Validity Analysis of Oxford Placement Test**

Cronbach's alpha was applied to measure the reliability index of the Oxford Placement Test. The findings show that the internal consistency reliability of this test is high ( $r = 0.84$ ).

**Table 1**

*Reliability Statistics of Oxford Placement Test*

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.84	60

Three language experts as raters rated the items on a scale of 1 to 5. Intra-Class Correlation was used to measure the agreement among

raters. The findings of the correlation coefficient show that there is a high agreement among raters (ICC = 0.94).

**Table 2**

*Intra-Class Correlation*

Variables	ICC Coefficient	Number of Raters	Number of Items
Items	0.94	3	60

**Reliability and Content Validity Analysis of Oral Performance Test**

Three experts estimated the content validity of the oral performance test on a scale of 1 to 5.

The intra-class correlation was used to estimate agreement among raters. The findings show a high agreement among raters (ICC= 0.92).

**Table 3**

*Intra-Class Correlation to Estimate Content Validity*

Variables	ICC coefficient	Number of raters	Number of items
Items	0.92	3	20

Cronbach's alpha estimates the reliability of the oral performance test. The results present high reliability (r= 0.84).

**Table 4**

*Reliability Statistics of Oral Proficiency Test*

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
0.84	20

**Results for responding to the research question**

To investigate the research question and find the effect of online English speaking chatrooms

on Iranian EFL learners' oral performance, the researcher divided participants into experimental and control groups. Instruction, materials, feedback, and comments via online context as treatment were given to the



experimental group. However, the participants in the control group were taught materials and instructions via traditional teaching methods. Finally, a speaking test, a post-test, was

administered to estimate learners' oral performance. Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of participants' oral performance in the pretest.

**Table 5**

*Descriptive Statistics for Oral Performance Pretest*

	Group	N	Mean	SD
Pretest	Control	25	11.60	2.12
	Experimental	25	11.02	1.75

According to Table 5, the mean and standard deviation for the experimental group are 11.02 and 1.75, while the mean and the standard deviation for the control group are 11.60 and 2.12, respectively. Mean score differences show

that the control group slightly outperformed the treatment group. However, to ensure this difference is statistically significant, the authors ran an independent sample t-test as depicted in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*The results of Independent Samples T-Test for Oral Performance Pretest*

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
Control	25	11.60	2.12	48	-1.13	.128
Experimental	25	11.02	1.75			

As Table 6 presents, the amount of t-observed ( $t=-1.13$ ) is not significant at the probability level ( $p= .128$ ), which is bigger than the set value ( $P<.05$ ). So, it can be inferred that there is not any significant difference between learners in the experimental and control groups in the pretest that shows homogeneity among the participants in terms of oral performance

Finally, after applying online context as a treatment, learners had a post-test to estimate their oral performance. The following table presents the descriptive statistics of the post-test.

**Table 7**

*Descriptive Statistics for Oral Performance Posttest*

	Group	N	Mean	SD
Posttest	Control	25	12.05	2.14
	Experimental	25	19.42	1.50

According to Table 7, the mean and standard deviation for the experimental group are 19.42 and 1.50, while the mean and standard deviation of the control group are 12.05 and 2.14, respectively. Based on the results, it can be asserted that learners in the experimental group

outperformed learners in the control group on the post-test. To ensure that this difference is statistically significant, the authors ran an independent sample t-test as depicted in Table 8.

**Table 8**

*The Results of Independent Samples T-Test for Oral Performance Posttest*

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	T	P
Control	25	12.05	2.14	48	-2.13	0.03
Experimental	25	19.42	1.50			

As Table 8 shows, the amount of  $t$ -observed ( $t=-2.13$ ) is significant at the probability level ( $p=0.03$ ), which is smaller than the set value ( $P<.05$ ). So, it can be inferred that applying online context as the treatment worked well. So the hypothesis that *online English-speaking chatrooms do not have a statistically significant effect on learners' English oral performance* is rejected.

Current research findings revealed that learners who received instruction, materials, feedback, and comments via online context outperformed in post-test compared to learners in the control group. Thus, it can be inferred that online context as treatment worked well in this study, which is in line with the results of Ta'amneh (2017). He found that when learners receive instruction, materials, feedback, and comments via online context, their scores in oral performance tests will be higher. Regarding the role of social networks in language skills, I. Alfaki's (2014) results align with the present study (I. M. Alfaki, 2018). Likewise, Kitano (2001) expressed that improving learners' oral performance is directly related to applying

online context (Kitano, 2001). The findings of this study are also in line with Rodrigues (2015), who found that online English-speaking chatrooms positively impact learners' speaking and listening skills (Rodrigues, 2015). Furthermore, the findings of this study are consistent with Warschauer (1997), who claimed that online communication is more effective than face-to-face interaction due to the following reasons:(a) the exchanges are viewed as natural, not pedagogical; (b) learners develop accessible and spontaneous, though not flawless communication while using highly complex structures and vocabulary; (c) learners express deep satisfaction at being able to manage themselves as leaders and contributors in the target language; and (d) learners benefit substantially from the increased opportunity to practice target language outside the classroom (Warschauer, 1997).

Nonetheless, Bataneh (2014) found no difference in learners' performance and language skills via online English-speaking chatrooms. Therefore, it can be asserted that Bataneh's results are not in line with the current

research findings. In addition, the findings of the present study contrast sharply with the one by M. M. Alhawiti, who asserted that there was not a statistically significant difference in learners' oral performance via applying online English speaking chatrooms (M. Alhawiti, 2015).

From a theoretical point of view, the study can increase our understanding of applying technology in classes and its impact on learners' learning. According to Sweeny (2010), applying technology and online context has become common in most EFL contexts. Furthermore, as Neves de Jesus & Lens (2005) maintain, teaching a foreign language has many problems; therefore, teachers must pay attention to different factors to improve learners' learning. Furthermore, teachers must attempt to find practical ways to develop students' skills and motivation, and classrooms should be created using all available resources. In this vein, the current study results can benefit both teachers and learners. Teachers can apply the results of this study and use online English-speaking chatrooms in their classes to improve learners' oral performance. Thus, the findings of this study can increase our understanding of applying technology to improve learning. Furthermore, the current study can benefit language institutes and headmasters because they can allow teachers to use online English-speaking chatrooms in their classes. Moreover, curriculum designers can benefit from the results of this study and design courses to enable teachers to use online English-speaking chatrooms in their classes.

## Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate applying chatting communication to learners' oral

performance. The authors first applied OPT as a proficiency test to homogenize learners to conduct the current research. Then, they divided the learners into experimental and control groups. Later, both groups had a pretest to measure their oral performance before applying oral text as a treatment. Next, the experimental group received instruction, materials, feedback, and comments via applying online context. However, learners in the control group received materials and instruction via the traditional teaching method in the class. The treatment lasted for eight sessions (1.5 h per session). Finally, learners in both groups had a post-test to estimate the effect of treatment on their oral performance. Analyzing data revealed that the learners in the experimental group outperformed those in the control group.

Baradaran & Khalili (2009) maintain that chatting can enable learners to communicate inexpensively and quickly with other learners or speakers of the target language worldwide (Baradaran & Khalili, 2009). In this vein, paying attention to online communication compared to face-to-face interaction and chatting as teaching methods is very important in foreign language learning. Chat is considered a natural conversation that happens via electronic devices such as a computer. Once a chat has been initiated, the user can type the text and send it on another user's screen. Chat may be delivered through text, verbal, audio, visual, or audiovisual communication via the internet. Considering chatting communication helps EFL teachers, learners, and syllabus designers become familiar with their students' needs and incentives and select the best teaching method.

Furthermore, chat can help learners enhance their studies by exchanging information, such as

documents, courses, Pdf books, or articles, and sharing their knowledge with others. However, chatting may negatively affect learners' formal writing because of the extensive use of cyber language. Moreover, teachers must provide learners with more opportunities to do online context.

Like other studies, the current study has some limitations. The results cannot be generalized since a limited number of male learners participated in this study. Besides, this study was limited to speaking skills, and the other three skills were not considered. Moreover, different age groups with diverse educational backgrounds can be selected to see if they come up with the same results. Other studies may attempt to compare the students with different proficiency levels. It is also suggested to use large-scale samples and qualitative data collection using interviews.

Many other issues should be considered to improve Iranian EFL learners' speaking skills. For instance, the Iranian educational system should improve the courses by planning and conducting some curriculum-related studies to decrease the issues and problems (Abedini et al., 2017). Moreover, many organizational-related problems such as short speaking courses, untoward early morning classes or late afternoon classes, inappropriate sources in the educational system, and instructors' lack of proficiency should be alleviated (Eslami & Fatahin, 2008; Kalanzadeh et al., 2013). It is also noteworthy that teacher education improvement programs can help teachers and instructors modify the strategies for improving speaking skills among Iranian EFL learners.

## References

- Abbasi, M., & Karimnia, A. (2011). An Analysis of Grammatical Errors among Iranian Translation Students: Insights from Interlanguage Theory. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 25.
- Abedini, F., Abedini, F., & Chalak, A. (2017). Investigating the Inhibitive Factors in the Speaking of Iranian EFL Learners. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 4(6), 82–97. <http://www.jallr.com/index.php/JALLR/article/view/636>
- Alavinia, P., Salmasi, M., & Professor, A. (2012). On the Correlation between Iranian EFL Learners' Shyness Level and their Attitudes toward Language Learning. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(9), 91–102. <https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/RHSS/article/view/3130>
- Alfaki, I. (2014). Towards a Digital World : Using Social Networks to Promote Learners' Language. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 4.
- Alfaki, I. M. (2018). *Towards a digital world: Using social networks to promote learner's language*.
- Alhawiti, M. (2015). The Effect of Mobile Language Learning on ESP Students' Achievement. *Journal of Modern Education Review*, 5(3), 272–282.
- Alhawiti, M. M. (2015). The Effect of Mobile Language Learning on ESP Students' Achievement. *Journal of Modern Education Review*, 5(3), 272–282. [https://doi.org/10.15341/jmer\(2155-7993\)/03.05.2015/007](https://doi.org/10.15341/jmer(2155-7993)/03.05.2015/007)
- Asakereh, A., & Dehghannezhad, M. (2015). Student Satisfaction with EFL Speaking Classes: Relating Speaking Self-Efficacy and Skills Achievement. *Issues in Educational Research*, 25, 354.
- Aşık, A., Köse, S., Yangın Ekşi, G., Seferoğlu, G., Pereira, R., & Ekiert, M. (2020). ICT integration in English language teacher

- education: insights from Turkey, Portugal and Poland. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 33(7), 708–731. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1588744>
- Azarfam, A. Y., & Baki, R. (2012). Exploring language anxiety regarding speaking skill in Iranian EFL learners in an academic site in Malaysia. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, 1(2), 153–162.
- Babapoor, M., Seifoori, Z., & Chehreh, M. (2018). Intermediate EFL Learners' Shyness, Communication Apprehension, the Accuracy and Fluency of their Oral Performance. *Research in English Language Pedagogy*, 6(2), 205–222. <https://doi.org/10.30486/RELP.2018.542580>
- Bahrani, T. (2011). Some aspects of computer assisted language learning. *Language in India*, 11(9), 271–278.
- Bai, B., Wang, J., & Chai, C.-S. (2021). Understanding Hong Kong primary school English teachers' continuance intention to teach with ICT. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 34(4), 528–551. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1627459>
- Baradaran, A., & Khalili, A. (2009). *The Impact of Online Chatting on EFL Learners' Oral Fluency*. 1.
- Bataineh, A. M. (2014). The Effect of Using Audiovisual Chat on Developing English as a Foreign Language Learners' Fluency and Productivity of Authentic Oral Texts. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 6(3), 85. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v6i3.5563>
- Batiane, A. M. (2014). The Effect of Text Chat Assisted with Word Processors on Saudi English Major Students' Writing Accuracy and Productivity of Authentic Texts. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (IJET)*, 9(9), 32. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v9i9.4119>
- Buchem, I., & Hamelmann, H. (2011). Developing 21st century skills: Web 2.0 in Higher Education-A case study. *E-Learning Papers*, 24. Retrieved, 9(30), 2012.
- Cortazzi, M., Jin, L., Kaivanpanah, S., & Nemati, M. (2015). Candles lighting up the journey of learning: Teachers of English in Iran. In C. Kennedy (Ed.), *English Language Teaching in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Innovations, Trends and Challenges* (pp. 123–138). British Council.
- Eslami, Z. R., & Fatahin, A. (2008). Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy, English Proficiency, and Instructional Strategies: A Study of Nonnative EFL Teachers in Iran. *TESL-EJ*, 11(4). <http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume11/ej44/ej44a1/>
- Gao, L. X., & Zhang, L. J. (2020). Teacher Learning in Difficult Times: Examining Foreign Language Teachers' Cognitions About Online Teaching to Tide Over COVID-19. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.549653>
- Ghanbarpour, M. (2016). Willingness to communicate, linguistic self-confidence, and language-use anxiety: The Iranian EFL context. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 6(12), 2265.
- Ghonsooly, B., Khajavy, G. H., & Asadpour, S. F. (2012). Willingness to communicate in English among Iranian non-English major university students. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 31(2), 197–211.
- Gilakjani, A. P., & Sabouri, N. B. (2016). Why is English pronunciation ignored by EFL teachers in their classes. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 6(6), 195.
- Gupta, P., Schulze, M., & Davies, G. (2010). Human language technologies (HLT). Module 3.5. *Information and*

- Communications Technology for Language Teachers (ICT4LT)*, Slough, Thames Valley University [Online]. Available from: [Http://Www. Ict4lt. Org/En/En\\_mod3-5. Ht m](http://www.ict4lt.org/en/en_mod3-5.htm) [Accessed 10 December, 2010].
- Hashemian, M., & Heidari Soureshjani, K. (2013). An Analysis of Pronunciation Errors of Iranian EFL Learners. *Research in English Language Pedagogy*, 1(1), 5–12. [http://relp.khuisf.ac.ir/article\\_533586.html](http://relp.khuisf.ac.ir/article_533586.html)
- Jaiswal, P. (2020). Integrating Educational Technologies to Augment Learners' Academic Achievements. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (IJET)*, 15(02), 145. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v15i02.11809>
- Jiang, W., & Eslami, Z. R. (2021). Effects of computer-mediated collaborative writing on individual EFL writing performance. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2021.1893753>
- Kalanzadeh, G. A., Mirchenari, N. A., & Bakhtiarvand, M. (2013). Perceived problems in using communicative language teaching (CLT) by EFL Iranian teachers. *The International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, 2(3), 5–16.
- Khajavy, G. H., Ghonsooly, B., Hosseini Fatemi, A., & Choi, C. W. (2016). Willingness to communicate in English: A microsystem model in the Iranian EFL classroom context. *Tesol Quarterly*, 50(1), 154–180.
- Kitano, K. (2001). Anxiety in the College Japanese Language Classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85(4), 549–566. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0026-7902.00125>
- Klimova, B., & Pikhart, M. (2019). Cognitive and Applied Linguistics Aspects of Using Social Media: The Impact of the Use of Facebook on Developing Writing Skills in Learning English as a Foreign Language. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, 10(1), 110–118. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ejihpe10010010>
- Maftoon, P., & Sharifi Haratmeh, M. (2012). The relative effectiveness of input and output-oriented tasks with different involvement loads on the receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Teaching Language Skills*, 31(2), 27–52.
- Mirhosseini, S.-A., Sazvar, A., & Rashed, F. (2017). "I love foreigners" attitudes towards life": Reproducing lifestyles in an Iranian English language teaching context." *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 47(5), 756–772. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2016.1274880>
- Mohamed, B. A. (2021). A Deep Learning Model for an Intelligent Chat Bot System: An Application to E-Learning Domain. *Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems*, 183, 165–179. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66840-2\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66840-2_13)
- Mohammadian, T. (2013). The Effect of Shyness on Iranian EFL Learners' Language Learning Motivation and Willingness to Communicate. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(11). <https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.3.11.2036-2045>
- Neves de Jesus, S., & Lens, W. (2005). An Integrated Model for the Study of Teacher Motivation. *Applied Psychology*, 54(1), 119–134. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2005.00199.x>
- Rodrigues, P. D. (2015). *The Impact of Online Learning in the Development of*

- Speaking Skills*.
- Safari Moghaddam, M., & Ghafournia, N. (2019). Elaboration on Foreign Language Anxiety in L2 Speaking: A Study of Iranian EFL Learners. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 7(26), 137–156. [http://jfl.iaun.ac.ir/article\\_625739.html](http://jfl.iaun.ac.ir/article_625739.html)
- Soodmand Afshar, H., & Asakereh, A. (2016). Speaking Skills Problems Encountered by Iranian EFL Freshmen and Seniors from Their Own and Their English Instructors' Perspectives. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 13, 112–130.
- Sweeny, S. M. (2010). Writing for the Instant Messaging and Text Messaging Generation: Using New Literacies to Support Writing Instruction. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 54(2), 121–130. <https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.54.2.4>
- Ta'amneh, M. A. A. A. (2017). The Effect of Using WhatsApp Messenger in Learning English Language among University Students. *International Research in Education*, 5(1), 143. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ire.v5i1.10801>
- Tajeddin, Z., Atai, M. R., & Pashmforoosh, R. (2020). Beliefs about English as an International Language (EIL): voices from Persian-speaking English teachers. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 15(2), 127–145. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2019.1684923>
- Udeshinee, W. A. P. (2021). Text chat as a mediating tool in providing teachers' Corrective feedback in the ESL context: Social and cultural challenges. *Asian EFL Journal*, 28(12), 171–195.
- Warschauer, M. (1997). Computer-Mediated Collaborative Learning: Theory and Practice. *The Modern Language Journal*, 81(4), 470–481. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1997.tb05514.x>
- Wu, J. G., & Miller, L. (2021). Raising native cultural awareness through WeChat: a case study with Chinese EFL students. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 34(4), 552–582. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1629962>
- Zayed, N. M. (2016). Special Designed Activities for Learning English Language through the Application of WhatsApp! *English Language Teaching*, 9(2), 199. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n2p199>
- Zohrabi, M., Torabi, M. A., & Baybourdiani, P. (2012). Teacher-centered and/or Student-centered Learning: English Language in Iran. *English Language and Literature Studies*, 2(3). <https://doi.org/10.5539/ells.v2n3p18>

Samad Mirza Suzani