

# Strategies in Enhancing Speaking Skills of EFL Students

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## Abstract

Speaking has traditionally been regarded as the most challenging of the four competencies required of language students. Most recent research has stressed the importance of being able to communicate well. Learners may improve their speaking abilities by using a variety of tools, owing to the widespread use of technology in today's environment. Consequently, it is vital to identify the learners' learning approaches for speaking skills in the new learning setting. This study looked at the most widely utilized language learning approaches for enhancing speaking ability. The papers were published between 2017 and 2021 and were located in ERIC and Google Scholar. The basis for this study is PRISMA 2020. According to the research, metacognitive and cognitive tactics were the most often utilized approaches for improving speaking abilities, followed by compensatory and social procedures. Memory and emotional tactics were the least popular approaches among students. The results may help instructors choose the most successful teaching strategy for their students in today's learning environment. Future research might include a detailed study of learning approaches for various educating abilities.

**Keywords:** PRISMA, speaking abilities, organized literature review, language learning methodologies

## 1. Introduction

Speaking has become one of the most significant learning abilities due to the importance of communication in the job hunt (Anwar, 2021). It is vital to comprehend thriving students' learning methods to generate students with extraordinary communication skills. Because language learning processes vary from one learner to the subsequent, research was performed to understand the students' tactics more. According to researchers, language students who use understanding strategies are usually better students (Anggraeni, 2021, Al-Ahdal & Alqasham, 2020, Al-Ahdal, 2020a). Consequently, more profound knowledge of how students learn is critical to improving teaching preferences and the production of "excellent language learners (Putri & Fatimah, 2021). Students's surroundings have a big effect on their educational outcomes. As teaching procedures evolve in reaction to the current educational environment, students must adapt to new learning tactics (Barrot, 2021). Traditional chalk-and-talk methods are being phased out in favor of more technologically sophisticated alternatives. Students have more learning freedom because of digital resources in a technology-enhanced environment (Healey, 2018). Students' self-esteem is boosted, and they are motivated to enhance their English abilities when relevant technology is included in language workouts (Liping, 2021). Students are also more motivated to join language learning programs. Consequently, technology creates a stimulating learning setting and inspires students (Tze Pheng et al., 2021, Al-Ahdal, 2020b, Magulod Jr., 2018a, Magulod Jr, 2018b, Magulod Jr, 2019). Students will be better equipped to cope with the shifting educational atmosphere caused by the Covid-19 epidemic as a result of the abilities obtained via experience with innovative learning strategies.

Because of the current Covid-19 epidemic, everyone's learning environment has altered. As students divert from face-to-face to virtual learning, teachers are worried about their students' proper learning methods. Learners have more liberty and can choose their learning speed. Apart from that, students who study in a good setting are more likely to succeed (DeviA & Doraisamy, 2021). They were able to focus on their studies since they were separated from the instructor, which led to autonomous learning, in which students must take accountability for their understanding (Yunus et al., 2021). Consequently, it's vital to figure out the most frequent language learners are doing to improve their speaking abilities during this pandemic. A literature review had undertaken to aid professors in deciding the most proper language learning approaches to apply in the current learning atmosphere by specifying the most frequently utilized learning methods for speaking abilities. It began as a research topic. What are the most common language learning approaches used by students to improve their speaking abilities? This query guides the

investigation for the study bound in this review, examining how various teaching approaches were used in today's classroom. The authors believe it is vital to review the most commonly used learning approaches in light of recent developments in the learning environment.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Language Learning Methodologies

It is undeniably nothing new to debate in the context of education. In recent years, many studies on learning approaches have been conducted (Zulkifly, 2021). On the other hand, instructors are worried about language learners' learning methods when the learning environment transforms from traditional to technological settings. The phrase "language learning methodology" has long been connected with "an excellent language learner." An excellent language learner" is defined by "personal traits, styles, and techniques" (Garcia et al., 2021). Analysis of the features, styles, and methods learners use in the contemporary setting is tricky due to incorporating technology into teaching and learning methods. Students' relationships with professors are further constrained while using an online learning medium due to an absence of in-depth reason, enunciation revision, timely feedback, and translation of esoteric jargon (Camelia et al., 2021). Consequently, "the standard definition of a successful language learner" fails to adequately describe how online language students manage their language education (Moorhouse & Kohnke 2021).

The majority of specialists feel that teachers must first figure out how their students learn languages (Lahpai, 2019). In the current technological context, teachers should analyze practical language learning approaches to apply in a virtual learning environment. This demonstrates that the techniques are appropriate for language learning. Consequently, more virtual learning meetings were required to figure out how participants learned (Abe, 2020). According to studies, students who utilized a variety of learning techniques surpass those who used fewer strategies (Hong et al., 2021). Students who employ techniques are more doubtlessly sufficient language amateurs; therefore, language learning techniques impact their capacity to be excellent students (Aguilera-Hermida, 2020).

### 2.2 Communication Abilities

Speaking is the hardest to acquire, corresponding to the other three fundamental learning abilities: reading, writing, and listening (Masuram & Sripada 2020). To enhance their speaking abilities, students must master suitable grammar and vocabulary to speak. Speaking includes many individuals and may be useful (Masuram & Sripada 2020). As a consequence, it takes time to improve these talents. Incompetence among learners, especially in higher education organizations, leads to low speaking skills, making it hard to function effectively (Atabekova et al., 2021). Consequently, communication skills are valued highly by learners in higher education.

The significance of communication abilities was identified, and a variety of exercises were created to help learners enhance their speaking skills and prepare for real-life scenarios. Presentations and group discussions are used to help students develop their speaking abilities. Students have been subjected to mock interviews to familiarize themselves with real-life interview settings. These methods allow learners to be well-prepared and function effectively throughout the job interviews (Colognesi et al., 2020). Apart from that, openness may assist students in appreciating the importance of their speaking talents and providing opportunities to improve them (Sugiartha, 2021). Teachers may assist students in many ways to develop their speaking skills. Teachers, in addition to being educators, also function as facilitators, participants, motivators, and critics when necessary (Saputri, 2021). This might help students improve their speaking skills.

### 2.3 A New Educational Environment

Digital platforms have expanded in popularity year after year, and teachers and students have used them to interact (Papanikolaou, 2002). The transition from traditional to current teaching and learning methods has been slow. The utilization of modern education and understanding approaches, such as technology, has made comprehending more fun and inspired amateurs to engage in the procedure (Yenkimaleki & van Heuven, 2019). According to Yenkimaleki & van Heuven (2019), Instagram is used in the education and understanding procedure to improve amateurs' speaking talents and provocation. According to the study, students who used Instagram could enhance their speaking aptitudes. Furthermore, according to van Yenkimaleki & van Heuven (2019), interactive digital media assisted learners in developing positive language learning approaches by enhancing their topic knowledge.

In a 2018 study of language learning methodologies, memory procedures were the most often used tactics (Bishop. et al., 2022). Memory ways were shown to be the usually utilized strategies among amateurs in an analysis accomplished by Kingdon (2021) and Reddy (2021), as noted in Bishop et al. (2022). Because the investigations were done in 2014 and 2010, it's required to assess articles on vocabulary knowledge approaches from five years back to see whether the understanding methods have stayed exact or altered due to the new learning surroundings.

The writers saw a gap in the books and decided to fill it by looking at learners' most usually utilized learning approaches.

### **3. Methodology**

This systematic literature assessment used the Select Reporting Elements for Methodical Study and Meta-Analyses, or PRISMA 2020 index, with 27 items. The four steps of this evaluation were the identification phase, a screening phase, eligibility phase, and inclusion phase.

#### *3.1 Phase 1: Identification*

The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and Google Scholar evaluated and examined the papers selected for this study between 2017 and 2021. ERIC is a public website that provides an easy-to-use and searchable bibliographic and full-text compilation of literature studies and data. However, Google Scholar offers unrestricted permits to educational writings in text or metadata from various publications and fields. The keywords used to search the ERIC and Google Scholar papers were "language learning strategies" and "English speaking skills." Before starting the analyzing procedure, issues were found. Queries were made before beginning the research assessment to help focus the evaluation. It was decided to review research on student learning approaches and communication skills. The interviewee's internet access was unrestrained in any manner.

A comprehensive search was undertaken to discover papers related to this study. Only digital materials were used due to the outbreak and restrictions imposed by the government. This evaluation includes two essential processes: (a) gathering all relevant papers established on the original investigation; and (b) choose writings based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. The quality of the previous study had assessed using inclusion and exclusion standards in this study. The research contained in this study had chosen to utilize the inclusion standards after the first selection of articles. Two criteria were the research's results and their relevance to the study question. Keyword-related topics were examined for inclusion.

#### *3.2 Phase 2: Screening Phase*

ERIC and Google Scholar replications were discovered and eliminated during the screening step. The remaining publications had examined to see if they met the student's preliminary criteria.

#### *3.3 Phase 3: Eligibility Phase*

This study comprises papers that were pertinent to the research question. The main research aim is to examine the learning processes that have been utilized to increase speaking abilities; the research offered here serves to explain the theoretical framework surrounding language learning approaches Metruk (2018) and Sun et al., (2017). On the other side, this research excluded papers that were unrelated to the theoretical framework. To ensure that the research topic was effectively handled and appraised, the findings were given a lot of thought.

#### *3.4 Phase 4: Exclusion Phase*

Exclusion standards were removed for papers unrelated to the limiters and keywords. The limits included English and full-text availability. Unrelated publications and articles were excluded since they focused on other learning aptitudes such as listening, reading, and composing rather than communicating abilities. There were 33 ERIC hits and 314 Google Scholar outcomes for this search. After the articles were verified, 70 studies were duplicated. A total of 277 pieces were reviewed, with 88 (dissertations, chapters, study articles, and proceedings) being deleted owing to their absence of relevance. After that, the suitability of 189 full-text articles was assessed. Out of 189 pieces, 149 were rejected for various grounds, including allusions to other learning abilities and foreign language speaking ability. After that, the remaining 40 full-length papers were assessed to discover which ones were linked to language knowledge approaches and English- communication ability. Figure 1 depicts the entire selection process.

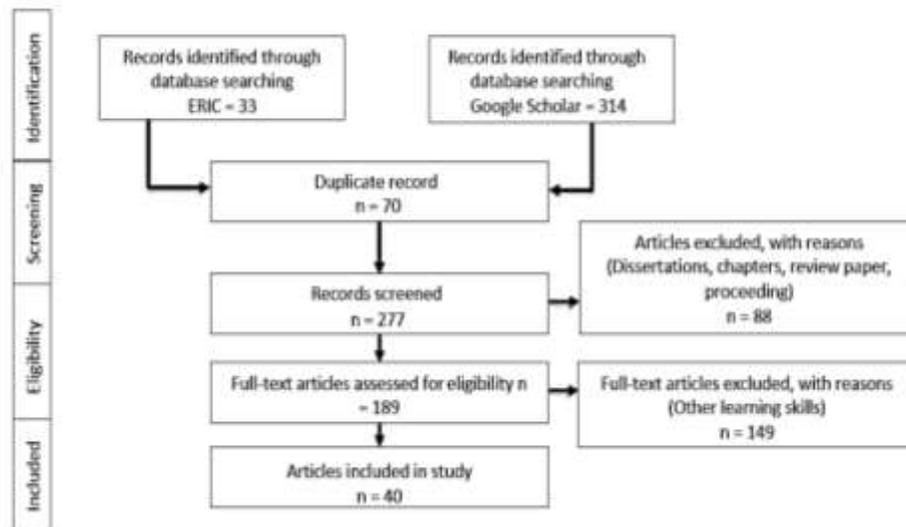


Figure 1. The Methodology of Research Paper Selection

While synthesizing the data from the study, the techniques utilized for speaking abilities were evaluated. The paper search criteria were used to find a study that concentrated on improving speaking abilities. From the search results, 40 papers were chosen for further investigation. The articles discussed language learning approaches, with the bulk of them demonstrating that students employed a variety of methods.

**4. Results**

After the four stages, 40 articles were found linked to "language learning strategies" and "English speaking skills." The most often used language learning techniques were meta-cognitive procedures, followed by cognitive methods. The findings also showed that compensating strategies were used first, followed by social approaches. The least popular techniques were memory and emotional methods. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Learning Approaches of Students

No. of Writers	Study Design	Learning Techniques						
		MS	Direct			Indirect		
			CS	CPS	MCS	AS	SS	
1. Abe, 2020	QL		√		√			
2. Afri et al., 2021	QN		√		√	√		
3. Aguilera-Hermida, 2020	MM	√	√	√	√		√	
4. Akkara et al., 2020	QL		√	√				
5. Alek et al., 2020	MM		√		√		√	
6. Alek et al., 2020	QL	√	√	√	√		√	
7. Amiryousefi, 2019	MM	√			√		√	
8. Andas, 2021	QN		√	√	√	√		
9. Anggraeni, 2021	MM			√	√			
10. Anwar, 2021	MM					√	√	
11. Ashida & Otaki, 2021	QN				√			
12. Atabekova et al., 2021	QN				√			
13. Barrot, 2021	QN		√	√	√			
14. Bishop et al., 2021	QN				√			
15. Camelia et al., 2021	QN		√	√				
16. Colognesi et al., 2020	MM	√	√	√				
17. Devia & Doraisamy, 2021	MM				√		√	
18. Divora & Diloza, 2020	QN			√	√		√	
19. Djurayeva, 2021	QN						√	
20. Fatsah et al., 2020	MM			√	√			
21. Garcia, et al., 2021			√	√		√		
22. Hamouda, 2020	QL				√			

23. Hava, 2019	QN				√		
24. Heideman & Laurry, 2021	QL		√		√	√	
25. Heron, 2021	QL		√		√		
26. Hong et al., 2021	QN				√		
27. Ivanova et al., 2020	QL		√				
28. Kumar Basak, et al., 2018	QN				√		
29. Lahpai, 2019	MM		√		√		
30. Leong et al., 2017	QN		√		√		
31. Li et al., 2022	QL	√	√	√			√
32. Liping, 2021	QL		√		√	√	√
33. Masuram & Sripada, 2020	QL				√		√
34. Masuram & Sripada, 2020	QN				√		
35. Metruk, 2018	MM		√		√		√
36. Mohamed Ragab, et al., 2021	QL				√		
37. Moorehouse & Kohnke, 2021	QN				√		
38. Nair & Yunus, 2021	QL	√	√				
39. Namaziandost, et al., 2019	QL					√	
40. Namaziandost, et al., 2020	QL	√			√	√	

CS= Cognitive Strategies, MCS= Meta-cognitive Strategies, SS= Social Strategies, MS= Memory Strategies, CPS= Compensation Strategies, AS= Affective Strategies, QN= Quantitative, QL= Qualitative, MM= Mixed method

Figure 2 represents the fraction of the numerous popular language-learning choices for communication talents established from 2017 to 2021. The most often used methods, according to the pie chart, are meta-cognitive techniques (31%), cognitive techniques (22%), compensatory techniques (17%), social techniques (14%), and emotional and memory techniques (14%). (both 8 percent). This revealed that most learners utilize metacognitive tactics to improve their speaking talents, although dynamic and memory techniques are employed less frequently.

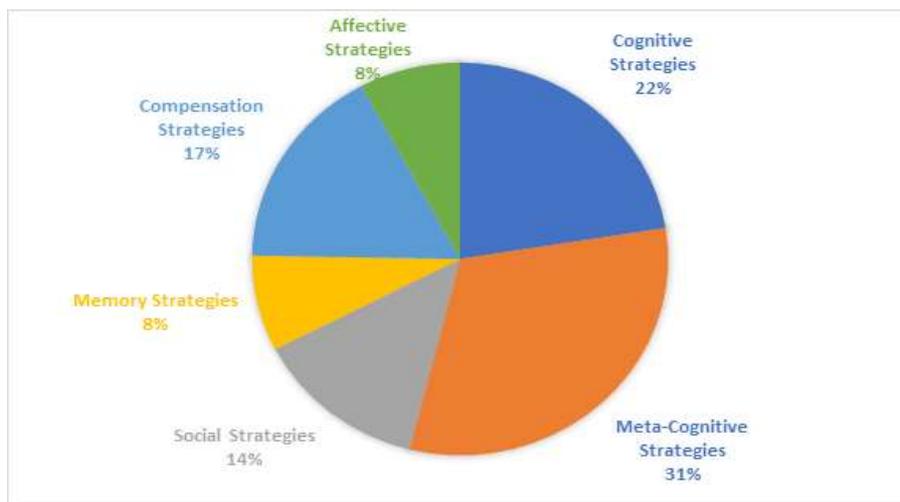


Figure 2. The proportion of people who employ the most common language learning techniques

### 5. Findings

The most often used language learning approaches in building speaking abilities were described in this part using meta-cognitive techniques, cognitive techniques, compensatory techniques, social techniques, memory techniques, and emotional techniques.

#### 5.1 Meta-cognitive Techniques for Improving Speaking Ability

According to the data, in 28 of the 40 studies obtained during the search, language learners utilized meta-cognitive methods the most often for speaking skills (Li et al., 2022; Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Namaziandost et al., 2019). The

results matched those of prior studies conducted between 2011 and 2014, revealing that meta-cognitive approaches were often utilized (Dawadi, 2017). This showed that the strategies most often have remained relatively unchanged over the previous three years. Students who employed meta-cognitive approaches could keep track of their progress, showing that they were hands-on learners (Saed et al., 2021). Learners may prepare, manage, and set learning objectives (Kumar Basak et al., 2018). When students adopt meta-cognitive strategies, they become more self-reliant. Learners are familiar with the learning methods used while in the middle of the learning procedure. They could organize and prepare their learning methods and self-evaluate their interpretation (Namaziandost et al., 2019). Good language learners are produced by independent learners. They may be able to help low achievers improve their results by identifying them.

### *5.2 Cognitive Strategies for Improving Speaking Ability*

In the research, cognitive techniques were shown to be the second most often employed approach (Serena & Ilankumaran, 2018). Cognitive strategies were recognized as the most usually used approaches for improving communication skills in 20 of 40 studies. Learners that engage cognitive approaches as a learning strategy imitate other students. According to learners, this strategy is also connected to language output restrictions (Amiryousefi, 2019). Introvert students are more likely to be impacted than extrovert students since they are less engaged. Amateurs also understand the importance of communication abilities in applying what they've retained (Alek et al., 2020). Apart from that, students repeat sounds to enhance their accents while learning speaking talents (Djurayeva, 2021). Students used cognitive ways to rehearse, acquire, and transmit messages and develop sentence structures through taking notes (Fatsah et al., 2020). While rehearsing, amateurs imitate, rehearse with sounds, and rehearse in a realistic way (Afri, 2021). Through cognitive strategies, learners may also enhance their vocabulary (Uztosun, 2021).

### *5.3 Compensatory Techniques for Learning to Speak*

The use of compensating strategies was also stressed in the investigations (Mohamed Ragab et al., 2021). Compensation methods were mentioned as the most often used approach in gaining speaking talents in 15 of the 40 papers. Compensating procedures were the second most common way, with learners using them mainly when they needed to develop words, according to another study (Andas, 2021). Students might use compensation tactics to help them improve their speaking fluency. Compensation strategies are a different way to help students overcome language acquisition difficulties. When students are lost for words, they express their meaning using gestures, mime, or synonyms. The research demonstrated that students were familiar with their language restrictions when they employed compensatory techniques in speaking.

### *5.4 Social Techniques for Improving Speaking Abilities*

With the increased employed of technology in language learning, the tendency to employ social approaches to improve speaking abilities emerged. Social techniques were the most frequently employed methods for speaking abilities in 12 of the 40 papers (Masuram & Sripada, (2020); Saputri, 2021). On the other side, many investigations have recognized social methods as one of the least preferred ways language students' use, especially when students are asked to interact with others to fix their speech (Namaziandost et al., 2020). When practicing speaking skills, students pursue clarification from somebody they entrust when using social approaches (Hava, 2019). Students who use social methods are more straightforward since they are looking for methods to enhance their English (Hava, 2019). Roleplaying, for example, maybe a fantastic way to rehearse language in the classroom.

### *5.5 Memory Approaches for Improving Communication Skills*

In this study, memory approaches were one of the least used tactics (Li et al., 2022). Memory techniques were among the least used methods since they are tied to a learner's level of proficiency (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). However, according to Leong & Ahmadi (2018), these strategies are more frequently adopted by third-semester learners at a more elevated education institution. Visual connections and pictures were reported to be used by students to boost their speaking abilities (Heron et al., 2021). Students who employ these techniques keep essential information they hear and read while learning an untried language. The least successful approaches for developing speaking ability, in general, were memory methods (Ashida & Otaki, 2021). In memory approaches, students create mental processes, utilize imagery and music, review, and employ action (Alek et al., 2020). Students combine sounds and pictures in their brains to generate a graphical representation of the latest word when using these techniques. Consequently, memory techniques for speaking skills were mentioned as the most often used approaches in just a few publications.

### *5.6 Affective Techniques for Improving Speaking Abilities*

Affective strategies were also underappreciated as the most typical language learning method (Sreena & Ilankumaran, 2021).

2018; Afri et al., 2021). Because they are connected to learners' ability levels, affective strategies were the least preferred (Uztosun, 2021). Affective methods were less emphasized since emotional factors were addressed less when learning English. Learners learn more effectively when they have the support of other successful students in a positive learning surrounding. On the other hand, adults were less interested in emotional methods (Ozdemir, E., & Papi 2021). Apart from that, it was revealed that students in this current learning surroundings used the song as one of their stress-relieving approaches (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Stress might also be eased by conversing with other learners about their feelings (Saputri, 202, Yumnan, 2021, Tjabaka, 2021).

## 6. Discussion

The language learning approaches of Heideman & Laury (2021) and Pitura (2021) were used in the majority of the studies (Djurayeva, 2021). In language learning, the classification of "language learning methods" is used as a "guideline in identifying the learning approaches employed by learners" (Alek et al., 2020). When they can identify acceptable language learning strategies, students who use more language learning approaches, such as metacognitive, social, and memory techniques, are more potential to be practical language students. Consequently, students who employ a variety of language learning approaches are more likely to succeed academically (Diyora & Diloza, 2020).

The attributes of a successful language student must be examined to assist other learners to succeed (Sreena & Ilankumaran, 2018). Learners who used meta-cognitive approaches to understand a language said they were highly motivated and capable of controlling their learning (Zulkifly et al., 2021). This technique of self-directed understanding encourages learners to take an active part in their schooling and become self-dependent while also allowing them to research at their speed and on their own time (Saputri, 2021). As a result, language learning practices among researchers in the existing learning surroundings must be evaluated to understand how recent language students obtain languages using new technologies in the current environment.

The integration of technology into the learning atmosphere and the change to virtual learning surroundings have conveyed fresh perspectives on current learning approaches (Sirisrimangkorn, 2018). Learners must use technology to develop their talents and wisdom to prepare for work in this rapidly adjusting world (Ivanova et al., 2020). According to the learning techniques discovered in the study, technology and virtual learning have been included in language learning in current years. Learners, for example, have employed cognitive strategies to learn the language using Facebook (Akkara et al., 2020). Because Facebook was not a widely used tool at the time, earlier studies did not include it as a tactic. Nair and Yunus (2021) stressed the role of ICT in reducing students' stress during language learning and motivating students to rehearse the language using emotional approaches. The virtual learning atmosphere promoted learner freedom by enabling students to use meta-cognitive approaches to self-regulate their learning (Hamouda, 2020). Learning approaches have shifted in recent years due to the changing learning atmosphere.

## 7. Conclusion

This methodical evaluation focuses on understanding approaches for developing communication abilities in a present learning atmosphere. In recent years, the writers have noticed a vacuum in language learning approaches and have indicated a need to fill it. According to the study question, meta-cognitive and cognitive techniques were most constantly utilized to improve communication abilities. In comparison to previous studies, learners employed memory approaches the most. According to the report, the new learning environment has given students greater autonomy in honing their speaking abilities. Students who utilized meta-cognitive techniques were more motivated and in charge of their learning. In terms of language learning, they are more self-sufficient and independent. Learners may learn at their own pace and master a foreign language.

Early on, since the focus was on "the good language learner," there was a higher emphasis on language learning activities. It is vital to sustaining the output quality of "good language learners to produce exceptional graduates." Apart from that, students with a happy mindset are more successful and use more learning techniques. They are also driven to study and have specified language development ideals for themselves. The current study focuses on how students deal with new technology advancements. Educators may choose the most appropriate teaching strategy in virtual learning by recognizing a language student's techniques. This would not only create "great language learners," but it also aids teachers in selecting appropriate activities for the class.

## 8. Recommendations

In the future, students should concentrate their efforts on the aspects that influence the development of speaking talents in a virtual learning setting. Academics should explore the link between language learning techniques and virtual learning since most students study online. For instructors to apply proper tactics when teaching in today's

learning environment, they must also be knowledgeable of the aspects that may impact students' learning processes. If appropriate strategies are adopted, students will be well prepared with outstanding communication talents when they graduate and join the employment demand.

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