


ARTICLE

## Investigating the Perceptions of EFL Instructors in Improving the Oral Proficiency of Saudi EFL Learners—A Case Study of Majmaah University

*Ammar Mohammed Ahmed Mudawy* 

*Department of English Language, College of Education, Majmaah University, Majmaah 11952, Saudi Arabia*

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore and investigate University English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors' perceptions of enhancing and improving EFL learners' oral proficiency in English classrooms in Saudi Arabia and real-life communication. The researcher used a mixed-method approach to achieve the aim of the study. The quantitative method involves the construction of a structured questionnaire based on the EFL instructors' views to enhance the students' oral proficiency and was distributed among 30 EFL teachers from Majmaah University. In the quantitative phase, in-depth interviews were conducted with a subset of 6 EFL instructors to gain deeper insights into EFL instructors' perceptions of improving EFL learners' oral proficiency. The findings of the study explored that, EFL instructors at Majmaah University agreed that oral proficiency is the most important aspect of overall language proficiency, and they used various strategies to improve the students' oral proficiency with a clear preference for role-playing, presentations, group discussions, and debates. The findings also stated some problems and challenges such as limited class time, large class sizes, and low student motivation faced by EFL instructors to improve learners' oral proficiency. The study finally, recommends including the incorporation of more communicative activities, the integration of technology, and the provision of professional development workshops. The findings of the study can give a path to provide some new strategies to overcome the problems and challenges faced by EFL instructors for enhancing EFL learners' oral proficiency.

**Keywords:** Language Proficiency; Oral Proficiency; EFL Instructors' Perceptions; Saudi EFL Learners; Language

#### \*CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Ammar Mohammed Ahmed Mudawy, Department of English Language, College of Education, Majmaah University, Majmaah 11952, Saudi Arabia;  
Email: [am.ahmed@mu.edu.sa](mailto:am.ahmed@mu.edu.sa)

#### ARTICLE INFO

Received: 16 October 2024 | Revised: 15 November 2024 | Accepted: 15 November 2024 | Published Online: 8 December 2024  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v6i6.7340>

#### CITATION

Ahmed Mudawy, A.M., 2024. Investigating the Perceptions of EFL Instructors in Improving the Oral Proficiency of Saudi EFL Learners—A Case Study of Majmaah University. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. 6(6): 429–438. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v6i6.7340>

#### COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2024 by the author(s). Published by Bilingual Publishing Co. This is an open access article under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>).

## 1. Introduction

Oral proficiency is an important component of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, significantly affecting learners' ability to communicate effectively in all settings, academic, professional, and social. Enhancing the oral proficiency of EFL learners has become a key educational objective in Saudi Arabia, as the country increasingly views English as a vital skill for global engagement and economic development<sup>[1-3]</sup>. EFL instructors play a crucial role in improving the oral proficiency of Saudi EFL learners, as highlighted in various studies. Research indicates that EFL students often face anxiety when communicating in English, impacting their oral skills<sup>[4]</sup>. Teachers' perceptions of instructional strategies, including lesson planning and classroom management, significantly influence students' language learning outcomes<sup>[5]</sup>. Moreover, integrating AI tools in the research writing process can improve efficiency and quality, benefiting educators and learners<sup>[6]</sup>. Furthermore, the positive attitudes of EFL instructors towards English as an International Language (EIL) can enhance teaching practices and students' confidence in speaking skills<sup>[5]</sup>. However, obstacles such as time constraints and a lack of training in action research hinder EFL teachers from fully implementing innovative approaches to improve oral proficiency among Saudi EFL learners<sup>[7]</sup>. Majmaah University, a prominent institution in Saudi Arabia, has also recognized this need and is actively seeking ways to improve the oral proficiency of its EFL students. This study aims to investigate the perceptions of EFL instructors at Majmaah University regarding their role in improving students' oral proficiency. It also seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how to enhance oral proficiency within the Saudi EFL context by exploring the strategies they employ, the challenges they face, and their overall effectiveness in fostering oral language skills. The insights gained from this study will inform instructional practices at Majmaah University and contribute to broader discussions on EFL education in similar contexts. In summary, this study sheds light on the need in Saudi EFL education by exploring the perceptions and practices of EFL instructors in enhancing oral proficiency. The insights gained

from this research will have practical implications for instructors, policymakers, and learners, contributing to improving the English language learning process in Saudi Arabia.

### 1.1. Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the perceptions of EFL instructors at Majmaah University regarding the importance of oral proficiency for EFL Learners?
- 2- What specific practices do EFL instructors at Majmaah University use to improve oral proficiency for EFL Learners?
- 3- How do EFL instructors at Majmaah University assess the oral proficiency of EFL Learners?
- 4- What challenges do EFL instructors face, and what recommendations do they have for improving the oral proficiency of EFL Learners at Majmaah University?

## 2. Literature Review

Oral proficiency in language learning refers to the ability to effectively communicate verbally in a target language, encompassing aspects such as pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary usage, and grammatical accuracy<sup>[8]</sup>. It plays a crucial role in language acquisition and development.

Oral proficiency is a fundamental aspect of effective language learning, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. This part of the study examines and explores the existing knowledge and methods used to improve the speaking skills of (EFL) Saudi students, with a particular emphasis on the viewpoints of instructors at Majmaah University. This study compiles research data, including tactics, obstacles, assessment practices, and recommendations given by (EFL) educators.

According to Broughton et al. (2003)<sup>[9]</sup>, oral proficiency is essential for academic success, professional, and real-life communication. They insist that effective communication skills are important in bridging cultural and linguistic gaps. In the Saudi context, achieving a high level of oral proficiency is crucial for students' academic and professional fu-

tures<sup>[10, 11]</sup> argued that prompting oral skills enhances learners' confidence, allowing them to engage more actively in presentations, discussions, and real-life interactions.

Multiple studies emphasize the difficulties encountered by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Saudi Arabia. According to Al-Seghayer (2001)<sup>[12]</sup>, conventional teaching techniques that place a strong emphasis on grammar and memorization tend to overlook the development of speaking abilities. Al-Qahtani (2015)<sup>[10]</sup> confirms that pupils encounter difficulties in fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary utilization. In addition, cultural influences, such as a preference for written communication and the fear of making errors, further impede the opportunity for spoken practice<sup>[13]</sup>.

The literature widely describes numerous efficient techniques to improve oral proficiency. Nunan (2003)<sup>[14]</sup> believes that interactive exercises, including role-plays, debates, and group discussions, are crucial in enhancing speaking proficiency. The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method, as developed by Richards and Rodgers (2001)<sup>[15]</sup>, emphasizes the significance of authentic communication activities. Furthermore, studies have demonstrated that using technology, such as language learning applications and online platforms, can offer genuine opportunities for speaking practice and enhance student involvement<sup>[16]</sup>.

Assessing speaking is essential for the growth and evaluation of oral proficiency. Brown (2004)<sup>[17]</sup> advocates the value of employing different evaluation tools, such as speeches, interviews, and discussion groups, to assess speaking thoroughly. In addition, formative assessment such as constructive criticism and self-assessment, increases learners' responsibility and autonomy for their learning process<sup>[18]</sup>. Analyzing instructors' views of these evaluation techniques at Majmaah University will give an understanding of their efficacy as well as areas for improvement.

Teaching methods employed by instructors are strongly influenced by their perceptions. Research carried out by Hedge (2000)<sup>[19]</sup> and Richards (2001)<sup>[15]</sup> shows that instructors who think speaking is an essential skill are more likely to incorporate conversations into their instructional strategies. However, Al-Hoorie (2014)<sup>[13]</sup> found that many EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia lack adequate training in current pedagogical approaches and often rely on traditional approaches. Analyzing the perspectives of instructors at Majmaah Uni-

versity can provide helpful insights into the difficulties they face, their beliefs, and the innovative methods they utilize to enhance oral proficiency.

The literature offers various recommendations for improving speaking skills. Al-Seghayer (2001)<sup>[12]</sup> emphasized the use of interactive teaching approaches that prompt real-world speaking opportunities. According to Richards (2008)<sup>[20]</sup>, the professional development given to teachers provides them with an opportunity to improve their instructional tools. Additionally, creating a supportive classroom environment, reducing learner anxiety, and encouraging risk-taking in speaking activities can build learners' confidence<sup>[21]</sup>.

Tawfeeq (2024)<sup>[22]</sup> asserted that the inclusion of real-world listening materials EFL courses may improve students' excitement, drive, and competence in spoken language. Other strategies such as communication seminars, peer-assisted learning, and training in cultural sensitivity can further enhance speaking abilities<sup>[23]</sup>. Furthermore, the incorporation of self-conversation recordings and task-based language instruction (TBLT) is proven to significantly enhance students' oral fluency and accuracy, as proven by research conducted by Islam (2022)<sup>[24]</sup>, Yun and Luen (2024)<sup>[25]</sup>.

In summary, this literature review highlights the important role of instructors in improving Saudi EFL learners' oral proficiency with several noticeable difficulties, implementing creative pedagogical methods, effective evaluation techniques, and supportive educational policies can significantly improve students' oral communication abilities. Further investigation into the experiences of university instructors will help establish a basis for focused interventions and policy recommendations to foster oral proficiency in this context.

## 3. Methods

### 3.1. Research Design

The study applied a mixed method approach specifically an explanatory sequential design to manage and analyze the inherent constraints of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Quantitative data were collected through a structured survey distributed to 30 ELF instructors (30 males and 10 females) at a Saudi state university during the academic year 1445AH. This quantitative method aimed to gather insights into instructors' perceptions of enhancing

EFL learners' oral proficiency. Following the quantitative, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of 6 participants from the same group. This qualitative phase aimed to present deeper insights into the quantitative results, to allow a more comprehensive analysis of the challenges, assessment methods, and strategies employed by EFL instructors. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while the qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis to identify emerging themes related to instructors' experiences and perceptions.

### 3.2. Participants

The quantitative phase of this study included a substantial sample of 30 participants (20 males and 10 females). The researcher utilized a survey to gain a thorough comprehension of EFL instructors' perspectives and experiences on enhancing the oral proficiency of Saudi EFL learners. This larger sample served as the purposive sample for qualitative data, containing 6 interview participants. The inclusion criteria required participants to (i) have taught listening and speaking courses for students for at least three terms. Participants must also (ii) be willing to participate in recorded interviews with the researcher, and (iii) ensure an equal representation of both male and female participants. This study was conducted in full compliance with ethical guidelines and received approval from the Directory of Scientific Research Ethics at Majmaah University. All participants were fully informed about the nature and purpose of the study participating in the interviews and the questionnaire.

### 3.3. Instruments

A five-point Likert Scale gradient was prepared and employed in the survey instrument for its enhanced impartiality, alignment with research objectives, and participant friendliness. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items and was promptly uploaded to Google Forms, with the link distributed to all EFL instructors at the Department of English Language, College of Education, Majmaah University. A ten-day response period was allotted to all EFL instructors at this university to respond to the survey. Experts' comments prompted modifications to improve the survey's content and language, ensuring its reliability and validity. Descriptive statistics were applied to analyze the responses, with four

constructs featuring four questionnaire items each. Given the five-point Likert scale used, numerical values were assigned to responses for statistical operations. Furthermore, the qualitative data was collected through face-to-face interviews conducted over five days, recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for emerging themes using the directed analysis approach of interpretation. This process started with the creation of an initial coding framework based on the themes and the study questions. Then the interviews were transcribed verbatim, ensuring that the participants' exact words were captured. The analysis was then synthesized to present an overall picture of the instructors' perspectives on enhancing oral proficiency among Saudi EFL learners.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Questionnaire Results

This section presents, analyzes, and discusses the questionnaire results. The following tables show the responses, which reflect the participants' points of view on the questions about the perceptions of EFL faculty instructors in improving the Oral Proficiency of EFL Learners. Each table presents one axis of the questionnaire. The abbreviations used in the tables are as follows: **F** (frequency), **%** (percentage), **SA** (Strongly Agree), **A** (Agree), **N** (Neutral), **D** (Disagree), and **SD** (Strongly Disagree). These were used to measure the participants' agreement or disagreement with various statements and questions regarding their perceptions of oral proficiency and the strategies they use to enhance it.

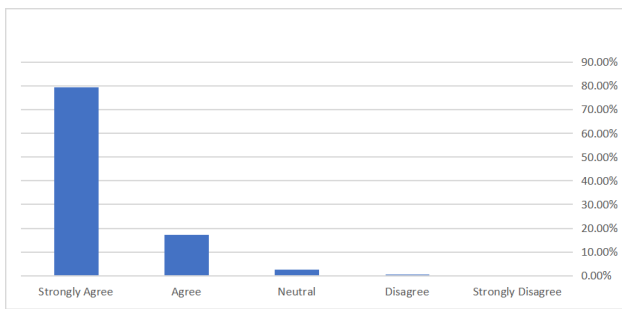
As shown in **Table 1** and **Figure 1**, the results reveal that the majority of respondents, with an average percentage of 78.66%, strongly agree or agree that oral proficiency is the most important aspect of overall language proficiency. They believe that oral exams are an essential tool for assessing students' speaking skills, and they also agree that class participation is a key indicator of excellent oral proficiency. On the other hand, there is a considerable percentage of 66.7% who disagree and strongly disagree when talking about the satisfaction of the current oral proficiency of the students.

**Table 2** and **Figure 2** illustrate the strategies employed by EFL instructors at Majmaah to enhance their students' oral proficiency. The results showed that the majority of instructors use various strategies to improve their students' oral proficiency with a notable preference for role-playing

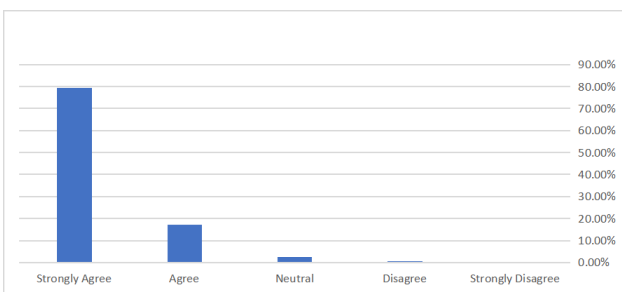
**Table 1.** Importance and EFL instructors' perceptions of oral proficiency.

No	Statement		SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	Oral proficiency is an important component of EFL learners' language proficiency.	F	23	6	0	0	1
		%	76.70%	20.00%	0	0	3.30%
2.	The present oral proficiency level of my EFL learners is satisfactory.	F	1	5	4	18	2
		%	3.30%	16.70%	13.30%	60	6.70%
3.	I usually assess my students' speaking skills using oral exams	F	7	20	2	0	1
		%	23.30%	66.70%	6.70%	0	3.30%
4.	The key indicator of oral proficiency is class participation	F	11	17	0	2	0
		%	36.70%	56.70%	0	6.70%	0
5.	I have an intense feeling of confidence in my ability to instruct oral competence.	F	13	15	2	0	0
		%	43.30%	50.00%	6.70%	0	0
Average		F	11	12.6	1.6	4	0.8
		%	36.66%	42.02%	5.34%	13.34%	2.66%

activities with a percentage of (93%) strongly agree and agree, group discussions (100%), presentations (98%), debates (99%), and language labs (93).



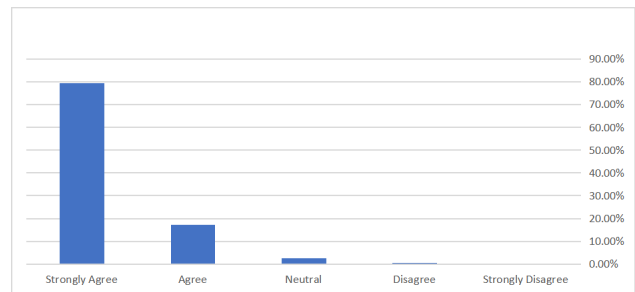
**Figure 1.** Importance and Majmaah University EFL instructors' perceptions of oral proficiency.



**Figure 2.** Strategies used by Majmaah EFL instructors for Improving Oral Proficiency.

**Table 3** and **Figure 3** present the challenges encountered by EFL instructors at Majmaah in enhancing their students' oral proficiency. It indicates the frequency and percentage of responses for each statement. The results show many challenges faced by EFL instructors at Majmaah University in improving students' oral proficiency. The most

important challenges identified are large class sizes with a 100% percentage of agreement, limited class time (84%), low student motivation (83%), and lack of resources with only 44% of agreement and 38% a considerable number of respondents as disagree.



**Figure 3.** Challenges Faced by Majmaah EFL Instructors to Improving Students' Oral Proficiency.

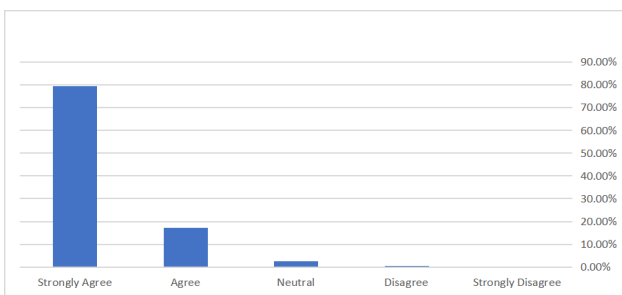
**Table 4** and **Figure 4** show the strategies recommended by EFL instructors at Majmaah to enhance students' oral proficiency. It presents the frequency and percentage of responses for each statement. The results reflect the suggestions offered by EFL instructors at Majmaah University to improve the students' oral proficiency by utilizing different strategies. To explore this, the majority of instructors (93.3%) agree that additional language labs are necessary, (99%) agree that reducing class sizes would significantly enhance oral proficiency outcomes. In addition, 93.4% of instructors agree that integrating more technology can enhance oral proficiency, also 93.3% of instructors strongly agree on the necessity of providing more speaking practice opportunities outside the classroom.

**Table 2.** Strategies used by Majmaah EFL instructors for Improving Oral Proficiency.

No	Statement		SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	I frequently use role-playing activities to improve my students' oral proficiency.	F	15	13	1	1	0
		%	50.00%	43.30%	3.30%	3.30%	0
2.	Group discussions are an effective strategy to enhance oral proficiency.	F	19	11	0	0	0
		%	63.30%	36.70%	0	0	0
3.	Presentations significantly contribute to the improvement of students' speaking skills.	F	19	11	0	0	0
		%	63.30%	36.70%	0	0	0
4.	Debates are a useful tool for developing oral proficiency.	F	22	8	0	0	0
		%	73.30%	26.70%	0	0	0
5.	Language labs are beneficial for enhancing oral proficiency.	F	16	12	1	1	0
		%	53.30%	40.00%	3.30%	3.30%	0
Average		F	18.2	11	0.4	0.4	0
		%	60.64%	36.68%	1.32%	1.32%	0

**Table 3.** Challenges Faced by Majmaah EFL Instructors to Improving Students' Oral Proficiency.

No	Statement		SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	Lack of resources is a significant challenge in improving oral proficiency.	F	7	7	5	11	0
		%	23.30%	23.30%	16.70%	36.70%	0
2.	Large class sizes hinder the effective teaching of oral proficiency.	F	22	8	0	0	0
		%	73.30%	26.70%	0	0	0
3.	Limited class time is a major obstacle to enhancing students' speaking skills.	F	20	5	3	1	0
		%	66.70%	16.70%	13.30%	3.30%	0
4.	Low student motivation affects the improvement of oral proficiency.	F	25	3	1	1	0
		%	83.30%	10.00%	3.30%	3.30%	0
5.	Inadequate training of some instructors is a barrier to effectively teaching oral proficiency.	F	12	12	6	0	0
		%	40.00%	40.00%	20.00%	0	0
Average		F	17.2	7	3	2.6	0
		%	57.32%	23.54%	10.66%	8.66%	0



**Figure 4.** EFL Instructors at Majmaah University recommendations for improving students' Oral Proficiency.

## 4.2. Interview Results

The interviews conducted with six EFL instructors from Majmaah University yielded insightful reflections on improving oral proficiency. Instead of simply listing their responses, a deeper analysis reveals several core themes around the in-

structors' experiences, strategies, and challenges in fostering oral proficiency among EFL learners. These themes include the perceived importance of oral proficiency, instructional strategies, assessment methods, the challenges faced by the instructors, and recommendations made by instructors.

### 4.2.1. Perception of Oral Proficiency in EFL Learning

All of the instructors made a point of mentioning oral proficiency as part of learning a language. All of them agree about the high importance of developing the oral proficiency of EFL learners. "Speaking skills are taken to be most vital as compared to other supportive language skills such as listening, writing, and reading." This shared belief is important in the sense that it pinpoints oral proficiency as not just another complementary language skill but one serving as a driving force toward general language competence.

**Table 4.** EFL Instructors at Majmaah University recommendations for improving students' Oral Proficiency.

No	Statement		SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	More language labs are needed to improve oral proficiency.	F %	19 63.30%	9 30.00%	1 3.30%	1 3.30%	0 0
2.	Smaller class sizes would significantly enhance oral proficiency outcomes.	F %	26 86.70%	4 13.30%	0 0	0 0	0 0
3.	Professional development workshops on teaching oral proficiency are necessary.	F %	23 76.70%	6 20.00%	1 3.30%	0 0	0 0
4.	Increasing the use of technology can enhance oral proficiency.	F %	23 76.70%	5 16.70%	2 6.70%	0 0	0 0
5.	Providing more opportunities for students to practice speaking outside of class is essential.	F %	28 93.30%	2 6.70%	0 0	0 0	0 0
Average		F %	23.8 79.34%	5.2 17.34%	0.8 2.66%	0.2 0.66%	0 0

One explained more clearly that “Speaking puts the vitality into the language, in making the expression of opinions and sharing experiences possible,” implying that oral proficiency enables learners to communicate in the real sense. One instructor responded: “it is very important because the first role of language is to communicate as a natural way for language to function.” This view justifies further that oral skills are needed for the realization of communicative competence, especially in the Saudi context where English proficiency is more and more called upon professionally and socially.

The oral proficiency emphasized by the teachers in the current study represents the same value given to speaking in the general literature, as in Broughton et al. (2003)<sup>[9]</sup>, to attain fluency and confidence in language use.

#### 4.2.2. Instructional Strategies for Improving Oral Proficiency

The instructors employed different interactive strategies to promote and enhance the learners' oral proficiency with a focus on communicative activities like debates, group discussions, and role-playing. Podcasts and videos as multimedia resources were also used to create informative engaging learning environments. One of the respondents clearly stated, “I always use interactive methods to improve oral skills. I provide tasks that motivate students to speak, such as videos, photos, and diagrams.” One instructor highlighted the importance of regular feedback, “Frequent pair and group discussions, role-playing activities, and simulations are the most effective methods in my classroom.”

These activities and strategies align with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasize active participation and real-life interaction in EFL learning contexts<sup>[14]</sup>. The utilization of debates and roleplay provides learners with chances to practice speaking skills in simulated real-life scenarios, for enhancing confidence and fluency. Additionally, using of multimedia encourages student engagement and reflects modern approaches to language teaching that incorporate digital tools<sup>[16]</sup>.

#### 4.2.3. Challenges in Teaching and Enhancing Oral Proficiency

The respondents present various challenges in enhancing their students' oral proficiency, the most common being time constraints, large classes, student speaking anxiety, and low student motivation. These challenges hindered their role in providing sufficient speaking opportunities for learners.

One respondent explained clearly that “Some students are shy in participating in oral discussions especially females.” One of the instructors noted that “One of the biggest challenges is overcoming learners' shyness and reluctance to speak, often due to fear of making mistakes.” Another instructor mentioned that large class sizes limited individual speaking opportunities, making it difficult to provide personalized feedback.

These challenges are consistent with the general views in EFL teaching, where overcrowded classes and time limitations hinder interactive and informative learning<sup>[26]</sup>. Additionally, cultural considerations may increase the students' hesitance to speak particularly in the Saudi context

#### 4.2.4. Assessment of Oral Proficiency

To ensure accurate evaluation through structured methods, instructors employ different approaches to assess the oral proficiency of their students, including oral exams, presentations, and class participation. They noted the difficulty of accurately evaluating speaking skills, especially in large classes, and emphasized the need for a reliable assessment framework.

One respondent said, "I carefully observe how my students speak during class discussions and presentations to assess their fluency and pronunciation." Another instructor noted, "I use detailed rubrics that align with recognized proficiency frameworks, such as the CEFR, to ensure consistency in assessment."

The use of a structured assessment framework and rubrics is important for ensuring reliability and fairness in oral proficiency evaluation<sup>[17]</sup>. However, EFL instructors showed concern about the subjective nature of oral assessments and the impact of large class sizes on their ability to provide individualized feedback. This reflects the broader challenge of balancing qualitative judgment with standardized criteria in language assessment.

#### 4.2.5. Recommendations for Improvement

EFL instructors at Majmaah University give several recommendations to enhance the oral proficiency of students based on the identified challenges and strategies. Reducing class size would allow instructors to provide more one-on-one attention, giving better chances for learners to practice speaking skills, so the university should consider small group sessions when focused especially on speaking skills. Moreover, EFL instructors reported time constraints as a major challenge for improving students' oral proficiency. Increasing the time allocated to speaking activities in the curriculum would give students more chances to practice and receive feedback. In addition, instructors highlighted incorporating technology in the classroom, such as language learning apps, online speaking platforms, and digital assessment tools, to help provide EFL learners with more engaging and interactive opportunities to practice speaking. These ideas of recommendations if implemented, would greatly improve the teaching and learning of oral proficiency at Majmaah University. Addressing class size, and integrating technology into both teaching and assessment can help instructors

to overcome the challenges they face and enhance learners' oral language skills in a meaningful way.

#### 4.3. Discussion

The study aims to investigate the EFL instructors at Majmaah University perceptions and strategies for enhancing their students' oral proficiency regarding the importance, strategies, assessment, challenges they face, and their recommendations for improvement. The study indicated that most EFL instructors at Majmaah University recognize oral proficiency as a crucial component of language learning in its qualitative and quantitative phases. The study also identifies many interactive strategies like role-playing, group discussions, presentations, and debates align with findings by Al Hosni (2014)<sup>[27]</sup>. Moreover, EFL instructors at Majmaah University reported many challenges such as large class sizes, limited class time, and low student motivation, similar to the barriers mentioned in previous research by Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016)<sup>[28]</sup> and Gan (2012)<sup>[26]</sup>. These common obstacles suggest that EFL instructors worldwide face similar difficulties in fostering oral proficiency despite different educational contexts. Furthermore, the findings of the questionnaire and the interview emphasize the necessity of integrating communicative activities and authentic materials into language instruction similar to studies by Littlewood (2007)<sup>[29]</sup> and Nunan (2003)<sup>[14]</sup>. Moreover, findings highlight recommendations by EFL instructors at Majmaah University including the incorporation of more communicative activities, the integration of technology, and the provision of professional development workshops. These are consistent with the pedagogical improvements suggested in earlier research by Dörnyei (2009)<sup>[30]</sup>. In short, this research not only confirms previous results but also adds to the existing discussion by providing particular suggestions for enhancing oral proficiency in the context of Saudi Arabian EFL instruction. This study emphasizes the importance of taking into account previous research and focusing on the distinct difficulties encountered by instructors at Majmaah University. It highlights the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach to improve oral abilities. To provide a helpful and successful learning environment for EFL students, it is crucial to carry out additional communicative activities, incorporate technology, and offer professional development seminars. Overall, the findings of this study have several crucial implications



for teaching practice to enhance the oral proficiency of EFL learners at Majmaah University and other similar educational contexts.

## 5. Conclusion

The study explores and investigates EFL instructors at Majmaah University perceptions and strategies to enhance EFL learners' oral proficiency. The results highlight the crucial significance of speaking skills in the process of language acquisition, in line with extensive educational research. The instructors successfully employed interactive strategies, like role-playing, group discussions, presentations, and debates, to enhance oral communication skills. However, they also faced significant challenges, such as large class sizes, limited class duration, and low student motivation, which align with worldwide patterns in language teaching. The study's recommendations, which include increasing communicative activities, integrating technology, and providing professional development workshops, offer practical solutions to address these challenges. These suggestions are supported by previous research and tailored to the specific context of Saudi Arabian EFL instruction. Majmaah University can create a supportive and engaging environment by implementing these recommendations. Overall, this study contributes to the ongoing discussion about EFL teaching and learning processes by highlighting the perspective of EFL instructors at Majmaah University. It emphasizes the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach that combines both pedagogical strategies and institutional support to overcome the challenges faced by EFL instructors in improving EFL learners' oral skills. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study, including the sample size and the focus on a single institution, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Further studies are needed to implement these recommendations and evaluate their impact on the students' oral proficiency and explore additional strategies that can be used and implemented in different contexts.

## Funding

This research was funded by the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research at Majmaah University, project number NO. R-2024-1360.

## Institutional Review Board Statement

This study was conducted following ethical guidelines and standards for research involving human participants. Prior to participation, all individuals were provided with detailed information about the study and were required to sign an informed consent form, ensuring their voluntary participation and understanding of their rights. The research protocol was reviewed and approved by [Majmaah University Ethical Approval Committee]. No animals or pathology reports were involved in this research.

## Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

## Data Availability Statement

The data is available on reasonable request to the corresponding author.

## Acknowledgments

The author extends the appreciation to the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research at Majmaah University for funding this research work through the project number NO. R-2024-1360.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

## References

- [1] Oun, A., 2024. English language in Saudi Arabia: Vision 2030 in the historical prism of a clash between cultures. *Frontiers in Communication*. 9, 1–11. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1205167>
- [2] Ismat, J., 2023. Implementation of new English language policy in Saudi context: Perceptions, challenges, and remedies. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*. 14(5), 1332–1343. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1405.22>
- [3] Dalal, A., Bahanshal, A., 2023. From EFL to ESL in the eye of Saudi Vision 2030. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*. 48(4), 1–10. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2023/v48i41079>
- [4] Bashayer, M., Alshiabani, F.N.A., 2024. The percep-

- tions of Saudi EFL students toward the effect of anxiety on their oral communication. *International Journal of English Linguistics*. 14(3), 33–41. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v14n3p33>
- [5] Ruqayyah, N., Moafa, R., 2024. Language instructors' perceptions on the utilization of English as an international language in English-speaking instruction. *World Journal of English Language*. 14(4), 240–253. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v14n4p240>
- [6] Ammar, M., Ahmed, M., 2024. Investigating EFL faculty members' perceptions of integrating artificial intelligence applications to improve the research writing process: A case study at Majmaah University. *Arab World English Journal Special Issue on ChatGPT*. 169–183.
- [7] Maram, M.A., Alwafi, M.A., 2024. Exploring EFL teachers' perceptions of action research in two public universities in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of English Language Education*. 12(4), 1–18. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijelev12i2.21886>
- [8] Eileen, W., Glisan, E., Swender, E.A., et al., 2013. Oral proficiency standards and foreign language teacher candidates: Current findings and future research directions. *Foreign Language Annals*. 46(2), 264–289. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/FLAN.12030>
- [9] Broughton, G., Brumfit, C., Flavell, R., et al., 2003. *Teaching English as a foreign language*, 2nd ed. Routledge: London, UK. p. 256.
- [10] Al-Qahtani, A.A., 2016. Why do Saudi EFL readers exhibit poor reading abilities. *English Language and Literature Studies*. 6(1), 1–15.
- [11] Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D.M., Snow, C., 2014. *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*, 4th ed. National Geographic Learning: Mason, OH, USA. pp. 145–147.
- [12] Al-Seghayer, K., 2015. Salient Key Features of Actual English Instructional Practices in Saudi Arabia. *English Language Teaching*. 8(6), 89–99.
- [13] AlFares, N.S., 2024. The Challenges of Effective English Language Teaching in Saudi Schools. *English Language Teaching*. 17(10), 96. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v17n10p96>
- [14] Nunan, D., 2003. *Practical English language teaching*, 2nd ed. McGraw-Hill: London, UK. p. 253.
- [15] Richards, J.C., 2001. *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK. p. 142.
- [16] Goh, C.C.M., Burns, A., 2012. *Teaching speaking: A holistic approach*, 2nd ed. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK. p. 295.
- [17] Brown, H.D., 2004. *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*, 2nd ed. Pearson Longman: Singapore. p. 340.
- [18] McNamara, T., 2001. *Language testing*, 2nd ed. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK. p. 140.
- [19] Hedge, T., 2000. *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*, 2nd ed. Oxford University Press: Cambridge, UK. p. 242.
- [20] Richards, J.C., 2008. *Teaching listening and speaking: From theory to practice*. Cambridge University Press: New York, NY, USA. pp. 1–37.
- [21] Kayi, H., 2006. Teaching speaking: Activities to promote speaking in a second language. *The Internet TESL Journal*. 12(11), 1–6.
- [22] Tawfeeq, H.M., 2024. Kurdish EFL Students' Attitudes towards the Use of Authentic Listening Materials in Improving their Oral Language Proficiency. *Journal of language studies*. 263–294. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25130/lang.8.4.15>
- [23] Tiwari, H.P., 2023. Speaking Proficiency of Bachelor Level First Year EFL Students. *Voice*. 36–45. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/voice.v15i2.61439>
- [24] Islam, M.Z., 2022. The Impact of Self-conversation Recording to Improve EFL Students' Fluency: A Quasi-Experimental Research. *REiLA*. 4(3), 251–261. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31849/reila.v4i3.6165>
- [25] Yun, L., Luen, L.C., 2024. Effect of drama in task-based language teaching (TBLT) on the enhancement of junior middle school students' English oral abilities. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*. 13(3), 1669–1684. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarped/v13-i3/21908>
- [26] Al Mahmud, F.S., Khan, S.S., 2023. Spoken English of Saudi Undergraduate Students: Issues and Strategies. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*. 13(9), 2271–2280.
- [27] Al Hosni, S., Ministry of Education Oman, 2014. Speaking Difficulties Encountered by Young EFL Learners. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL)*. 2(6), 22–30.
- [28] Gilakjani, A.P., Sabouri, N.B., 2016. Learners' Listening Comprehension Difficulties in English Language Learning: A Literature Review. *English language teaching*. 9(6), 123–133.
- [29] Littlewood, W., 2007. Communicative and task-based language teaching in East Asian classrooms. *Language teaching*. 40(3), 243–249.
- [30] Dörnyei, Z., 2009. Individual differences: Interplay of learner characteristics and learning environment. *Language learning*. 59, 230–248.