

## Peer feedback as a strategy to enhance speaking Proficiency in EFL learners within virtual learning environments

### Retroalimentación entre pares como estrategia para mejorar la competencia oral en estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera en entornos de aprendizaje virtual

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#### Abstract

This study investigates optimal peer feedback measures to enhance English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' oral competence in virtual environments. A literature review was conducted using the SALSA and PRISMA methods to analyze relevant studies systematically. The analysis categorizes feedback into four types: Mobile or Digital-Based Feedback, Traditional Peer Feedback, Teacher-Supervised Peer Feedback, and Feedback Targeting Self-Efficacy/Anxiety. Key findings reveal that mobile and digital tools provide immediate, flexible, and asynchronous feedback, effectively addressing the challenges of online learning. Traditional feedback methods, when adapted with clear rubrics, ensure focused evaluations. Teacher supervision enhances the reliability of peer assessments by offering guidance and reducing biases. Additionally, addressing emotional barriers such as anxiety is essential; incorporating anonymity and asynchronous tools fosters a supportive atmosphere that encourages learner participation. The study suggests future research directions, including exploring the long-term impacts of various feedback types, the influence of cultural differences on feedback interpretation, and the potential for integrating artificial intelligence to enhance feedback quality.

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## Resumen

Este estudio investiga las medidas óptimas de retroalimentación entre iguales para mejorar la competencia oral de los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) en entornos virtuales. Se realizó una revisión bibliográfica utilizando los métodos SALSA y PRISMA para analizar sistemáticamente los estudios pertinentes. El análisis clasifica la retroalimentación en cuatro tipos: Feedback basado en dispositivos móviles o digitales, Feedback tradicional entre iguales, Retroalimentación entre iguales supervisada por el profesor y Retroalimentación dirigido a la autoeficacia/ansiedad. Las principales conclusiones revelan que las herramientas móviles y digitales proporcionan una retroalimentación inmediata, flexible y asíncrona, abordando eficazmente los retos del aprendizaje en línea. Los métodos tradicionales de retroalimentación, cuando se adaptan con rúbricas claras, garantizan evaluaciones específicas. La supervisión del profesor mejora la fiabilidad de las evaluaciones de los compañeros al ofrecer orientación y reducir los sesgos. Además, es esencial hacer frente a barreras emocionales como la ansiedad; la incorporación del anonimato y de herramientas asíncronas fomenta una atmósfera de apoyo que favorece la participación del alumno. El estudio sugiere futuras líneas de investigación, incluyendo la exploración de los impactos a largo plazo de los diversos tipos de retroalimentación, la influencia de las diferencias culturales en la interpretación de la retroalimentación, y el potencial de la integración de la inteligencia artificial para mejorar la calidad de la retroalimentación.

**Keywords:** EFL, Online learning, Peer feedback, Speaking,

**Palabras Clave:** EFL, educación online, retroalimentación contrastada, hablar

## Introduction

The importance of learning a foreign language, particularly English, has become increasingly recognized in today's globalized society. As Moeller and Catalano (2015) asserted, "Learning another language provides access to a perspective other than one's own, and promotes an interdisciplinary perspective while gaining intercultural understandings" (p. 327). This underscores the pivotal role of language acquisition in fostering cognitive flexibility and

facilitating cross-cultural interactions which are essential across various fields.

Among the languages learned worldwide, English stands out as a dominant global language, especially in academic and professional contexts. Its role extends beyond mere communication; it serves as a critical tool for engaging in international discourse. Studies, such as those conducted by Amano et al. (2016), revealed how language barriers significantly hinder global scientific communication, illustrating the pressing need for scholars and researchers to master English in order to effectively share ideas and knowledge.

As the significance of English as a global language becomes more pronounced, the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has gained considerable traction in educational systems worldwide. Surkamp and Viebrock (2018) emphasize that teaching EFL involves not just language acquisition but also fostering intercultural competence and preparing learners to navigate diverse linguistic landscapes. This broader educational goal aligns with the need to equip students with the skills necessary for effective global communication.

In this evolving landscape, the emotional and psychological dimensions of learning English play a crucial role in learners' success. Huang (2021) noted that the emotional climate of the classroom, along with learners' attitudes towards English, can significantly influence language achievement. Consequently, creating a supportive and positive learning environment is essential for motivating students and enhancing their engagement with the language.

Among the various language skills, speaking is often regarded as the most vital component of language acquisition. Rao (2019) supported this notion by stating that the speaking skill is the most important skill that allows learners to acquire a foreign or second language given that effective speaking skills not only facilitate meaningful communication but also enable active participation in both academic and real-world settings. Thus, it becomes imperative for EFL instruction to prioritize speaking activities that allow learners to practice and refine their abilities. In this context, virtual learning environments (VLEs) have emerged as valuable tools for enhancing speaking proficiency among EFL learners in recent years. Dung (2020) highlights that VLEs provide unique opportunities for learners to engage in speaking activities at their own pace, facilitating frequent practice and interaction with peers from around the globe. This flexibility not only accommodates diverse learning styles but also encourages students to take ownership of their learning experiences.

Moreover, Herrera (2017) emphasizes that VLEs enable differentiated instruction, allowing educators to tailor curricula to meet the varied needs of individual learners. Within these environments, incorporating peer feedback can serve as an excellent strategy to further enhance speaking skills. Therefore, by providing constructive insights and fostering a collaborative learning atmosphere, peer feedback allows learners to reflect on their performance and make meaningful improvements.

For this reason, leveraging peer feedback stands out as a promising approach to improving speaking proficiency as EFL instruction increasingly integrates VLEs. This combination of technology and collaborative learning not only enhances learners' communicative abilities but also prepares them for successful interactions in a global context. By embracing the potential of virtual education and the value of peer feedback, educators can significantly enrich the EFL learning experience, ultimately equipping students with the skills necessary to thrive in an interconnected world.

### **Materials and methods**

This study investigates the role of peer feedback in enhancing speaking proficiency within virtual English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments. The primary research question was: What are the optimal measures in peer feedback for successfully developing EFL learners' oral competence in virtual learning contexts?

To conduct this research, the SALSA methodology (Search, Appraisal, Synthesis, Analysis) was employed for a systematic review of relevant literature. SALSA offers a comprehensive framework known for its structured approach to evaluating the impact of peer feedback on EFL learners' speaking proficiency (García et al., 2020). This methodology adheres to rigorous standards required for systematic reviews, ensuring the quality and reliability of the findings.

Thus, the application of the SALSA method in this study follows the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework. PRISMA enhances transparency and rigor by providing structured guidelines for reporting systematic reviews, which is essential for maintaining the integrity of the research process (Luengo et al., 2016). The adaptation of PRISMA to the SALSA framework ensures an organized flow of information throughout the review process, facilitating a detailed evaluation of the literature concerning peer

feedback and its impact on speaking proficiency.

The search phase involved a comprehensive review of several academic databases, including JSTOR, Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ERIC, and Scielo. Keywords such as "English as a Foreign Language," "speaking proficiency," "peer feedback," "oral competence," and "learning" were utilized to ensure a broad yet focused search. Filters were applied to limit results to studies published between 2016 and 2024, concentrating on research specifically related to English as a foreign language. This systematic approach ensured the identification of relevant sources that address the effects of peer feedback on speaking proficiency in virtual EFL settings.

The appraisal phase involved evaluating the methodological quality of the collected studies. Inclusion criteria encompassed both quantitative and qualitative studies that offered practical applications, such as articles, reviews, and theses focusing on English language learners using peer feedback to enhance speaking proficiency. Exclusion criteria eliminated studies published outside the specified period, those with incomplete data, non-applied studies, and opinion pieces. Methodological rigor was maintained by adhering to established standards for each study type, ensuring that the findings were credible and applicable.

A thematic synthesis was employed to categorize the studies based on key themes identified within each. This qualitative approach facilitated the grouping of findings, making it easier to understand the common threads among the studies (Mengist et al., 2020). By organizing studies thematically, the synthesis provided a structured framework for analyzing how peer feedback influences speaking proficiency in EFL learners within virtual settings. This thematic organization is crucial for identifying effective strategies that can be implemented in EFL instruction.

The analysis phase involved a qualitative transformative analysis, critically examining the synthesized themes within the study's theoretical framework (Mengist et al., 2020). This phase adapted categories from previous research to the context of virtual learning, enabling a deeper exploration of how peer feedback can be optimized in online environments. Through this transformative analysis, the study aims to identify the most effective methods for implementing peer feedback, addressing various challenges, and ultimately answering the research question. This approach aligns with the findings of previous studies that highlight the importance of peer feedback in fostering language development and enhancing learner engagement in virtual

settings.

Thus, the methodology employed in this study offers a comprehensive and structured approach to analyzing the impact of peer feedback on speaking proficiency in virtual EFL contexts. By systematically evaluating relevant studies and synthesizing key themes, this research seeks to provide actionable insights that enhance language learning outcomes. The integration of peer feedback within virtual learning environments not only supports the development of speaking skills but also fosters a collaborative learning atmosphere that is essential for effective language acquisition.

## Results

This study encompasses key concepts essential for understanding the dynamics of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, particularly in the context of speaking proficiency and the role of feedback. Central to this framework are the definitions and interrelations of EFL, speaking, feedback, and peer feedback, with a specific focus on how these elements converge to enhance speaking skills in virtual learning environments. This section explores the foundations of these concepts, beginning with an overview of foreign language learning and English as a Foreign Language, then discussing the significance of feedback—especially peer feedback—in fostering speaking proficiency. By understanding these concepts, a clearer picture emerges of how learners can develop their language abilities, particularly in speaking, and the critical role that constructive feedback plays in this process.

First, foreign language learning refers to acquiring a language that is not spoken as a native or primary language in the learner's environment (Onishchuk et al., 2022). In the case of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), learners study English in regions where it is not the dominant language, often aiming to achieve proficiency in communication in academic, professional, or international contexts. Quimosing (2022) explains that EFL learners face the dual task of mastering both linguistic and cultural aspects of the language, presenting both opportunities for growth and challenges to overcome. These challenges include limited immersion in English-speaking environments can hinder the development of fluent speaking skills. Nonetheless, the benefits of learning English as a foreign language—such as expanded global communication, access to international job markets, and the ability to engage in cross-cultural interactions—make it

an essential skill for learners worldwide (Quimosing, 2022).

Another key concept relates to Virtual Learning Environments for EFL Students, which Dung (2020) defined as “instruction in a learning environment where teacher and student are separated by time or space, or both. The course contents are conveyed through IT applications, multimedia resources, the Internet, videoconferencing, etc.” (p. 45). In the context of EFL, VLEs provide a unique space for language learners to engage with course materials, instructors, and peers online. These environments enable EFL learners to access a wide range of resources and tools to enhance their language skills, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

The flexibility of VLEs is particularly beneficial for EFL students, allowing them to participate in asynchronous and synchronous learning formats according to their schedules and learning needs (Dung, 2020). As noted by Vega et al. (2017), many EFL learners appreciate the ability to manage their time effectively and access course materials 24/7, which is especially helpful for those balancing work and study. However, challenges such as limited direct interaction with instructors and peers can hinder the development of certain skills, particularly speaking.

Integrating more interactive resources—such as pronunciation tools and voice recognition software—can help bridge this gap and ensure comprehensive language development. Despite these challenges, VLEs remain an effective and flexible option for EFL learners, offering opportunities for both autonomous learning and real-time interaction (Herrera, 2017; Vega et al., 2017).

Furthermore, Speaking is one of the four fundamental language skills and plays a crucial role in the process of learning a foreign language, particularly in EFL. According to Rao (2019), speaking is classified as an active or productive skill, requiring learners to produce language rather than simply receive it. Speaking occurs in three contexts: interactive, partially interactive, and non-interactive. In interactive speaking, learners engage directly with others in real-time exchanges. Partially interactive situations involve limited interaction, such as giving a speech, where feedback may come later. Non-interactive speaking happens when learners rehearse a speech alone (Rao, 2019). Each situation presents unique benefits and challenges in acquiring speaking proficiency.

In virtual environments, speaking maintains its significance but comes with distinct advantages

and challenges. Studies by Hamouda (2020) indicate that virtual classes can enhance speaking proficiency by offering flexibility and increased opportunities for communication with instructors. The strengths of virtual speaking practice include extended access to resources, flexible class schedules, and the ability to engage in real-time interactions or asynchronous speaking exercises. However, challenges arise in maintaining the immediate feedback and personal interaction typical of face-to-face communication. Additionally, technological barriers, such as network issues or inadequate tools for real-time speaking practice, can hinder progress. Despite these challenges, with the right resources and structure, virtual environments can be highly effective in developing speaking skills in EFL learners (Hamouda, 2020).

For instance, feedback is an essential instructional tool designed to guide learners in improving their performance by offering constructive insights. Wisniewski et al. (2020) define feedback as an exchange that aims to provide learners with specific information about their performance, allowing them to reflect and make adjustments for future success. Within educational settings, feedback can come from various sources, including instructors, self-assessments, and peers.

Peer feedback, in particular, fosters a collaborative learning environment where learners of equal status critique one another, emphasizing mutual learning. This method can be especially effective in developing skills, particularly in virtual learning environments, where learners can engage asynchronously or synchronously, enhancing participation in ways that fit their learning pace.

In online contexts, peer feedback allows flexible interaction. Vattøy (2024) outlines that feedback can be delivered in various forms, such as synchronous (real-time discussions) or asynchronous (written feedback), both offering advantages in online learning environments. However, effective peer feedback must align with specific learning objectives, ensuring it is actionable and helpful. In online settings, establishing a structure that promotes productive feedback exchanges is crucial, addressing not just content but also the manner of communication, which is essential in virtual education.

Thus, the introduction of peer feedback into online environments plays a vital role in improving student engagement and discourse. As Popta et al. (2017) highlight, feedback in online courses enhances student activity, creating more meaningful exchanges. However, challenges arise in these virtual settings. One significant limitation is the physical distance between students and



instructors, which can obstruct continuous support during feedback exchanges, as noted by Dunlap (2005). For that reason, when considering speaking proficiency in EFL learners, peer feedback offers a valuable tool for enhancing oral communication. Theoretical approaches suggest that learners can develop speaking skills through collaborative reflection, enabling self-correction and progress monitoring. In that context, peer feedback in virtual EFL settings requires careful design to ensure that learners benefit from both linguistic and communicative improvements.

### **Literature review**

Firstly, Wu and Miller (2020) conducted an action case study that explored the use of mobile-assisted peer feedback to enhance the English performance of second language (L2) learners. The study was framed within the Learning-Oriented Assessment (LOA) model, focusing on Business School students in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course at a university in Hong Kong. A mixed-methods approach was employed, utilizing a combination of questionnaires, focus group discussions, and teacher journals. The study involved 25 students, who used a mobile app designed to facilitate peer feedback during oral performance assessments. Results indicated that students appreciated the immediate and anonymous feedback provided by the app but noted challenges such as limited screen size and rubric restrictions. Additionally, the use of peer feedback helped students assume more active roles in the learning process.

Similarly, Renita & Irawan (2024) conducted a study from July to August 2023 at SMAN 1 Gamping, involving participants from classes X B and X C, selected through simple random sampling. Using a quasi-experimental design, the researchers aimed to assess the impact of peer feedback on students' speaking skills. Class X B served as the control group, engaging in traditional peer feedback, while class X C used Instagram Reels for the same purpose. Post-test scores improved in both groups, with the control class increasing from an average of 73.69 to 77.89 and the experimental class from 72.97 to 74.81.

On the other hand, Chekol (2020) conducted a quasi-experimental study with 33 students from one intact group of grade 11 at Injibara Secondary School, Ethiopia, initially comprising 39 students. The participants were selected from one of nine sections using simple random sampling to investigate the influence of peer feedback on speaking achievement. The research spanned six

weeks, utilizing pre-tests, post-tests, questionnaires, and interviews to gather data. Results indicated a statistically significant improvement in students' overall speaking skills, particularly in grammar, fluency, and vocabulary, as shown by paired samples T-test ( $t(32) = -8.154, p < 0.05$ ). While grammar and fluency benefited the most from peer feedback, improvements in vocabulary were also noted despite fewer comments in this area. However, feedback on pronunciation was limited, with 66.6% of students doubting the quality of their peers' comments on this aspect. Students initially resisted the peer feedback process but later developed a positive attitude after training and participation, emphasizing its role in fostering autonomous learning and reducing fear during oral presentations.

In addition, an action research project was conducted by Mora (2024) with 16 seventh-grade students in a private school in Guayaquil, Ecuador, to explore the impact of peer assessment on speaking skills. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study employed pretests, post-tests, rubrics, checklists, and a survey to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The pretest involved a conversation graded by peers and the teacher, followed by a project on circus tricks, with progress assessed through checklists and a final post-test. Results showed significant improvements in students' speaking skills, particularly in vocabulary and grammar, with peer assessment fostering self-confidence and active participation. Statistical analysis confirmed the positive effect of peer assessment, with 77% of students considering it beneficial for their speaking development.

Moreover, Gamlo (2019) conducted a study at the English Language Institute of King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia, focusing on female EFL students in their preparatory year. The study aimed to explore students' preferences and perceptions regarding corrective feedback (CF) during oral activities. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods, data were collected through questionnaires and interviews with 60 pre-intermediate students. Findings revealed that the majority of students preferred immediate CF for grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary errors, and most trusted their teachers over peers for providing feedback. Students also believed that immediate CF helped reinforce correct language usage, improving their speaking skills and overall performance. However, a few students preferred CF at the end of class to avoid interruptions during speaking activities.

Au & Bardakçi (2020) conducted a quasi-experimental study aimed at comparing the

effectiveness of peer feedback and teacher feedback in enhancing speaking proficiency and self-efficacy among English learners. The study involved 48 participants enrolled in an English preparatory program at a university. These participants were divided into two groups: Group A, which received peer feedback using the TOEFL Independent Speaking Rubric, and Group B, which received immediate teacher feedback using the same rubric. The study spanned 24 weeks across three academic modules (A1 Elementary, A2 Pre-Intermediate, and B1 Intermediate). Data were collected through pre-tests, post-tests, and a speaking self-efficacy scale. The results indicated that both groups showed improvement in speaking performance over time, though Group A, which received peer feedback, demonstrated a slightly higher increase in self-efficacy compared to Group B.

Besides, The study conducted by López et al. (2022) explored the effectiveness of peer correction as a strategy to improve speaking skills among teenage EFL learners. The research was carried out at the Department of Languages in an educational institute located in northern Mexico. The study involved a group of eight participants, aged 11 to 15, who were enrolled in an A1-level English course. The main objective was to investigate whether peer-correction techniques could enhance students' oral proficiency and to identify both the advantages and challenges of implementing such strategies in the classroom. Data collection methods included classroom observations and a focus group, both conducted virtually due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The findings indicated that peer correction, when combined with teacher supervision, had a positive impact on learners' speaking skills. Learners felt more comfortable receiving feedback from peers, and the strategy helped reduce anxiety about being judged.

The study by Addin et al. (2023), explored the impact of peer feedback on reducing speaking anxiety in EFL students at SMP Negeri 3 Klari. Using a qualitative narrative inquiry approach, the researchers selected 4 of 39 students through purposive sampling based on their dialogue performance and previous peer feedback experience. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and observations. The intervention involved group activities over two sessions, where students practiced peer feedback on comparative and superlative degree materials. This process included identifying issues with fluency, pronunciation, and intonation, followed by providing constructive suggestions, which helped reduce speaking anxiety by fostering a sense of responsibility and active participation. Thematic analysis revealed that students initially

experienced anxiety, displaying symptoms such as nervousness and confusion. However, peer feedback proved beneficial in enhancing communication skills, encouraging collaboration, and helping students manage their anxiety.

In addition, Triassanti et al. (2023) conducted a qualitative study on the implementation of peer feedback and students' perceptions of its effectiveness in improving their speaking performance. The research was carried out in the Research Proposal class at Universitas PGRI Ronggolawe Tuban, involving 20 English Education students with varying abilities. These students participated in a 16-week online course where peer feedback was integrated into their learning process. Feedback was primarily based on video presentations shared in a Telegram group and discussed via Zoom. Following the presentations, students provided anonymous feedback through an online poll using Quizizz, based on a rubric for speaking performance, helping students improve their speaking skills. The study found that 88% of students had positive perceptions of peer feedback, agreeing it enhanced learning and skill improvement.

Similarly, Cendani & Purnamaningwulan (2023) aimed to explore the challenges faced by students during peer feedback implementation in a Micro Teaching class within the English Language Study Program at Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta. The study employed a qualitative case study method, targeting 23 students from the 2021/2022 academic year who had completed their final teaching practicum. Data was collected via questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, focusing on four key challenges: hesitation in providing scores, shifts in power relations, time constraints, and perceived differences in feedback quality between peers and lecturers.

Similarly, Dután (2020) conducted a study to investigate the impact of peer feedback facilitated by WhatsApp on improving speaking skills in EFL students at a private bilingual high school in Cuenca, Ecuador. The action research followed a mixed-methods design, involving 36 ninth-grade students, aged 13-14, over five weeks with 30 hours of English instruction. Results showed a significant improvement in speaking accuracy, with an increase of 8.843 points, and in grammatical accuracy and vocabulary, with a mean increase of 8.81 points. Pronunciation was identified as a challenge, though peer feedback helped students reduce anxiety and improve their speaking skills.

Finally, Alcivar and dos Santos (2023) conducted an action research study to evaluate the

effectiveness of peer feedback on improving oral production among 8th-grade students in a private school in Samborondón, Ecuador. The participants included 15 students, aged 12-13, from an affluent area near Guayaquil, with English proficiency levels ranging from A2 to B1 according to the CEFR. Using pretests and posttests, students' oral production was assessed based on four criteria: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and content. A paired sample t-test revealed statistically significant improvements in grammar ( $p = 0.001$ ) and vocabulary ( $p < 0.001$ ) after receiving peer feedback, although no significant difference was found in overall oral production. Thus, the results are presented providing a qualitative thematic synthesis of the 11 literature materials found. Each category identified from the reviewed literature is analyzed through a transformative lens, adapting the findings to make them applicable and practical in online environments, particularly for enhancing speaking proficiency in EFL learners.

The studies are grouped into four categories: mobile or digital feedback, traditional peer feedback, teacher-supervised peer feedback, and feedback aimed at boosting self-efficacy or reducing anxiety. Each study was placed in a category based on its primary feedback approach, allowing for a clearer understanding of how peer feedback methods impact language learning outcomes. Table 1 presents a detailed breakdown of the studies according to these categories.

Table 1.

Categorization of Studies Based on Peer Feedback Types

Category	Author(s)	Year	Description
Mobile or Digital-Based Feedback	Wu & Miller	2020	Use of mobile apps to provide real-time peer feedback in oral performance.
	Triassanti et al.	2023	Anonymous peer feedback through Quizizz and video presentations on Zoom.
	Dután	2020	Use of WhatsApp for peer feedback in improving speaking skills.
	Renita & Irawan	2024	Comparison between Instagram Reels and traditional peer feedback.

Traditional Peer Feedback	Chekov	2020	Peer feedback in a classroom setting to improve speaking achievement.
	Mora	2024	Peer feedback in a physical classroom using rubrics and checklists.
	Alcivar & dos Santos	2023	Peer feedback in face-to-face classes to improve grammar and vocabulary.
Teacher-Supervised Peer Feedback	López et al.	2022	Combination of peer feedback and teacher supervision for improving speaking skills in teenage learners.
	Au & Bardakçi	2020	Comparison between teacher and peer feedback using a standardized rubric.
Feedback Targeting	Addin et al.	2023	Use of peer feedback to reduce speaking anxiety among EFL learners.

Self-Efficacy/Anxiety	Cendani & Purnamaningwulan	2023	Challenges in peer feedback, focusing on confidence and power dynamics in peer assessment.
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The categorization in Table 1 highlights diverse approaches to peer feedback, emphasizing the role of technology, traditional methods, and teacher involvement in enhancing speaking skills for EFL learners. Notably, feedback methods targeting self-efficacy and anxiety reduction also show promise in improving speaking performance. This classification aids in identifying which feedback strategies may be most effective for supporting oral proficiency in EFL contexts.

Furthermore, through a rigorous investigation, detailed in the theoretical framework, the study identifies key adaptive criteria necessary for online implementation. These criteria reflect the fundamental principles of effective peer feedback in digital spaces, ensuring their relevance and applicability in virtual EFL speaking contexts. Table 2 outlines these adaptations, drawing on the results of each study to enhance their usability in online learning environments.

Table 2.

Transformative Analysis of Literature Material.

<b>Author &amp; Year</b>	<b>Adaptive Criteria 1: Clear Guidelines for Speaking Feedback</b>	<b>Adaptive Criteria 2: Anonymity and Feedback Timing</b>	<b>Adaptive Criteria 3: Technological Tools for Enhanced Interaction</b>
<b>Mobile or Digital-Based Feedback</b>			
Wu & Miller (2020)	Adapt peer feedback rubrics to include specific guidelines for evaluating pronunciation, fluency, and coherence in online oral assessments.	Ensure feedback remains anonymous to promote honest participation, and integrate real-time feedback opportunities for immediate corrective action during speaking tasks.	Use mobile apps or online platforms that allow for continuous peer interaction and easy access to feedback, but optimize for larger screens to avoid limitations like

			the small display size noted in the study.
Triassanti et al. (2023)	Develop explicit feedback rubrics focusing on fluency, pronunciation, and presentation skills to guide peers in virtual settings.	Anonymize feedback through polls or quizzes to promote honesty and constructive criticism without fear of offending classmates.	Use mobile-based apps for feedback, enabling a flexible, user-friendly environment where students can assess each other's speaking performance in real time.
Dután (2020)	Design rubrics tailored to specific speaking tasks, such as pronunciation and grammar, to guide quality feedback via online platforms.	Incorporate flexibility in feedback submission timing, recognizing students' varied schedules and technology access in remote learning environments.	Use mobile apps or messaging platforms like WhatsApp for accessible, low-barrier peer feedback, while ensuring feedback addresses speaking issues like fluency and anxiety.
Renita & Irawan (2024)	Design clear instructional materials and rubrics tailored for the specific online format (e.g., Instagram Reels) to enhance peer evaluations of speaking.	Maintain anonymity to reduce anxiety in providing critiques on speaking, but offer traditional feedback methods as a comparative option.	Integrate social media tools in a way that enhances speaking performance, ensuring learners can review and revisit peer feedback in video formats for better reflection.
Traditional Peer Feedback			



Chekol (2020)	Provide detailed rubrics for online peer evaluations that emphasize grammar, fluency, and pronunciation in oral tasks.	Introduce structured feedback sessions with clear, staggered timing to address reluctance to give real-time online feedback.	Use collaborative platforms (e.g., video-conferencing) with features like screen-sharing and annotation to facilitate detailed peer feedback on speaking.
Mora (2024)	Create scaffolding rubrics for speaking skills, allowing peers to focus on specific aspects such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.	Establish clear deadlines for feedback in online environments, ensuring learners have ample time to provide thorough evaluations.	Utilize online project-based tools that allow for continuous peer observation and feedback, such as video presentations that can be paused and reviewed asynchronously.
Alcivar & dos Santos (2023)	Develop comprehensive rubrics focusing on specific speaking skills like grammar, pronunciation, and content, tailored for peer feedback on oral tasks.	Provide structured peer feedback sessions to allow students time to evaluate and offer constructive suggestions thoughtfully.	Utilize pre-recorded speaking tasks submitted via video platforms, where peers can review and assess specific aspects of spoken language in their own time.
Teacher-Supervised Peer Feedback			

López et al. (2022)	Create specific rubrics that focus on oral proficiency skills, making peer feedback a more targeted process for EFL learners.	Ensure anonymity to reduce peer pressure, allowing for more genuine, constructive critiques during online feedback sessions.	Utilize interactive virtual classrooms where students can observe peer performances and use online tools to leave structured comments in real time.
Au & Bardakçi (2020)	Implement detailed rubrics that mirror standardized assessments (e.g., TOEFL), guiding peers to evaluate specific speaking skills in a structured online context.	Time the feedback appropriately, incorporating breaks between performances and feedback sessions for more thoughtful evaluations.	Leverage self-efficacy-boosting tools such as online quizzes that simulate feedback on speaking performances.
Feedback Targeting Self-Efficacy/Anxiety			
Addin et al. (2023)	Design feedback guidelines that emphasize managing speaking anxiety through constructive, supportive peer comments.	Structure feedback sessions to minimize anxiety, offering students more time to provide thoughtful critiques rather than immediate responses.	Use video feedback tools like WhatsApp to simulate face-to-face interactions, allowing peers to exchange feedback asynchronously and develop reflective comments.

Cendani & Purnamaningwulan (2023)	Create clear feedback rubrics that reduce the discomfort of peer evaluation by guiding students through specific speaking elements to assess.	Allow flexibility in feedback timing, as rushed sessions may compromise the quality of peer evaluations in virtual spaces.	Incorporate discussion boards or video-based platforms where peers can provide feedback at their own pace, ensuring time for reflection.
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As shown, Table 2 provides a framework for adapting peer feedback methods to online learning environments specifically for enhancing speaking skills in EFL. The adaptations focus on three key areas: clear guidelines for providing feedback on speaking, maintaining anonymity and adjusting feedback timing, and utilizing technological tools that facilitate enhanced interaction and reflection in virtual settings.

### Discussion

The discussion of optimal measures in peer feedback for the successful development of EFL learners' oral competence in a virtual learning environment revolves around the adaptability and efficacy of different feedback mechanisms in such contexts. This analysis categorizes feedback into four types: Mobile or Digital-Based Feedback, Traditional Peer Feedback, Teacher-Supervised Peer Feedback, and Feedback Targeting Self-Efficacy/Anxiety. The key points of this transformative analysis are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3.

Summary of Optimal Peer Feedback Measures.

Category	Optimal Measures
Mobile/Digital-Based Feedback	Use mobile apps with real-time or asynchronous feedback; optimize platforms for detailed peer evaluations.
Traditional Peer Feedback	Implement structured rubrics and flexible timing for detailed peer evaluations in virtual settings.
Teacher-Supervised Peer Feedback	Involve teachers to supervise and guide peer feedback sessions; ensure anonymity to reduce peer pressure.

Feedback Targeting Self- efficacy/Anxiety y	Use asynchronous video tools and allow flexible timing; reduce anxiety by anonymizing feedback and encouraging reflection.
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Mobile or Digital-Based Feedback offers significant advantages by providing immediate and accessible interactions that enhance peer engagement in virtual settings. Studies by Wu and Miller (2020) and Triassanti et al. (2023) highlight the potential of mobile tools, such as applications that facilitate real-time feedback, to support learners in correcting their pronunciation, fluency, and coherence. Additionally, the anonymization of feedback through digital quizzes or polls helps reduce the fear of peer judgment, encouraging more active participation. The flexibility inherent in asynchronous learning allows learners to reflect on their performances before providing feedback, as indicated by Dután (2020). However, while these tools promote accessibility, it is crucial that they also foster detailed feedback rather than superficial responses; thus, comprehensive design in mobile applications is essential for maximizing the depth of peer interaction.

Traditional Peer Feedback methods, although often associated with face-to-face interactions, can be effectively adapted for virtual learning environments. Chekol (2020) emphasizes the importance of using structured rubrics to guide peer evaluations, specifically targeting critical aspects such as pronunciation, fluency, and grammar. This structured approach becomes even more vital in online settings, where maintaining focus and constructiveness in feedback is essential. Mora (2024) further stresses the significance of scaffolding peer feedback processes to encourage deep engagement, even in asynchronous or time-limited contexts. The challenge remains in ensuring that feedback sessions are well-structured without the in-person dynamics of traditional classrooms. Alcivar and dos Santos (2023) suggest that incorporating video recordings into peer feedback allows learners to review and analyze their peers' oral performances in a more organized manner, thereby enhancing the quality of feedback.

Teacher-supervised peer Feedback presents another layer of reliability, which is especially important in virtual environments where the accuracy of peer evaluations can be a concern. López et al. (2022) argue that teacher supervision is necessary to mitigate issues such as bias or superficial comments. Teachers can play a crucial role by overseeing peer feedback sessions,

ensuring that evaluations align with learning objectives and providing corrective guidance when needed. In addition, Au and Bardakçi (2020) propose that teachers can help structure the timing of feedback tasks, allowing learners to reflect more thoughtfully on their peers' speaking performances. By spacing out these tasks, learners can develop more comprehensive and constructive feedback. Interactive virtual classrooms, where teachers monitor peer evaluations, further enhance the authenticity of the feedback process.

Finally, Feedback Targeting Self-Efficacy and Anxiety addresses critical emotional factors that influence the effectiveness of peer feedback, particularly in virtual settings. Addin et al. (2023) emphasize the necessity of structuring feedback sessions to minimize anxiety, thereby fostering a supportive peer feedback environment. Asynchronous video tools, such as WhatsApp, enable learners to reflect on their feedback without the immediate pressure of real-time critiques, which can alleviate anxiety and promote a more reflective approach. Cendani and Purnamaningwulan (2023) highlight the importance of allowing flexible timing for feedback, enabling learners to engage with peer evaluations at their own pace. This flexibility not only reduces anxiety but also encourages a focus on the quality of evaluations. Additionally, the option to anonymize feedback, as suggested by Triassanti et al. (2023), further helps mitigate the fear of negative judgment, which can often hinder participation in peer feedback activities.

Therefore, addressing self-efficacy and anxiety is crucial for creating a supportive feedback environment in EFL contexts. By utilizing asynchronous tools and ensuring anonymity, peer feedback can become more effective and meaningful, ultimately enhancing EFL learners' speaking proficiency. Each feedback mechanism, when thoughtfully implemented, contributes to a richer educational experience that empowers learners to engage actively in their language development.

## Conclusions

This study addresses the research question: What are the optimal measures in peer feedback for developing EFL learners' oral competence in virtual learning environments? The findings indicate that effective peer feedback requires a combination of technological innovation, structured traditional methods, teacher supervision, and strategies to enhance learner self-efficacy.

While reducing anxiety. Each feedback category examined provides valuable insights for improving EFL learners' speaking proficiency online.

Mobile and digital-based tools facilitate immediate and flexible feedback, allowing learners to engage asynchronously, which is crucial for addressing the challenges of online learning. These tools must support detailed feedback on aspects like pronunciation and fluency to be effective. Traditional peer feedback remains relevant when adapted with clear rubrics and structured sessions, ensuring focused evaluations even in virtual contexts.

Teacher-supervised peer feedback enhances reliability by providing guidance and real-time corrections, helping to mitigate biases in peer evaluations. Addressing emotional barriers such as anxiety is also essential; anonymity in feedback processes and the use of asynchronous tools can foster a supportive environment where learners feel confident participating.

Future research should explore the long-term impacts of different peer feedback types, cultural differences in feedback interpretation, and the integration of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence to enhance feedback quality. This study emphasizes the need for a holistic approach that combines digital tools, structured methods, teacher involvement, and emotional support to create effective peer feedback systems that improve EFL learners' oral competence in virtual environments.

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