

## **A Systematic Review of the Blackboard in Teaching the Speaking Skill During the Corona Pandemic COVID-19**

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### **Abstract**

*The Corona pandemic has significantly impacted the global educational system. In order to stop the virus from spreading, schools and institutions had to close their doors. Thus students were forced to adapt to online learning environments. This sudden shift to online education has posed various challenges for students and teachers, such as limited access to technology and difficulties maintaining engagement and motivation. As a result, the pandemic has highlighted the need for innovative approaches and increased investment in digital infrastructure to ensure the continuity of education during times of crisis. Since most teachers and students find speaking difficult, speaking skills are often ignored in ESL/EFL classrooms. Due to the required online instruction and learning, it becomes harder as the worldwide crisis of COVID-19 continues. The present study explores the effectiveness of Blackboard as a language instruction tool and investigates the potential limitations and challenges in speaking skills during the COVID-19 pandemic. A systematic review was conducted, and 12 were chosen that were written during the pandemic. The current study examined quantitative and qualitative articles following their relevance in the Saudi context to develop the speaking skills of Saudi students of EFL. This research supports the assumption that EFL students in Saudi Arabia might benefit from using Blackboard as a speaking practice environment. This article aims to provide a general overview of how Blackboard's virtual class is used to help Saudi EFL learners overcome their language barriers and analyse their speaking skills. The findings of this research demonstrate how students' prior experiences with online learning using Blackboard positively impacted their conclusions. Additionally, during the COVID-19 epidemic, it supported research into online learning systems and the development of speaking English as a second language. Blackboard's accessibility and interactive tools make it a valuable asset for students looking to improve their speaking abilities.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Blackboard, Speaking Skill and Online Learning.

### **Introduction**

The Corona pandemic, also known as COVID-19, refers to the outbreak of a novel coronavirus that originated in Wuhan, China, in late 2019. It quickly spread across the globe, causing a global health crisis and resulting in numerous deaths and severe illnesses. This pandemic has had significant social, economic, and political impacts, changing the way we live, work, and interact with one another. Corona pandemic significantly impacts education, forcing students to adapt to online learning environments. This sudden shift to online education has posed various challenges for students and teachers, such as limited access to technology and difficulties maintaining engagement and motivation. As a result, the pandemic has highlighted the need for

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innovative approaches and increased investment in digital infrastructure to ensure the continuity of education during times of crisis (Alhadreti, 2021).

Furthermore, the shift to online learning has also brought to light issues of equity and accessibility. Many students come from disadvantaged backgrounds and may not have the necessary resources or internet connectivity to participate in online classes fully. This has led to a widening education gap and calls for governments and institutions to prioritise bridging this divide. In addition, teachers have had to quickly adapt their teaching methods to suit the online format, finding new ways to engage students and deliver content effectively. This experience has emphasised the importance of professional development and training for educators to navigate and utilise digital platforms for instruction effectively. As online learning becomes normal, teachers must receive ongoing support and resources to enhance their digital teaching skills. Professional development programs can provide educators with the tools and strategies to create dynamic and interactive online lessons. Furthermore, integrating technology into education should be a priority for schools and governments, ensuring all students have equal access to digital resources and platforms (Karalis, 2020).

Investing in appropriate training and resources ensures that students receive a quality education regardless of their learning environment. In addition, using technology in education can also enhance the learning experience for students. With the right tools and strategies, educators can create engaging and interactive lessons that cater to different learning styles and abilities. This can lead to increased student engagement and motivation and improved retention and understanding of the material. Moreover, technology can provide students with opportunities for collaborative learning, allowing them to connect with peers and experts worldwide. This global perspective can broaden their horizons and foster a sense of cultural awareness and empathy. In addition, technology can also provide students with personalised learning experiences. With the help of adaptive learning systems and artificial intelligence, students can receive individualised instruction tailored to their unique needs and abilities. This can enable them to learn at their own pace and focus on areas where they may need additional support. Furthermore, technology can enhance accessibility in the classroom, making education more inclusive for students with disabilities. By offering alternative formats and tools, such as text-to-speech software or closed-captioning, technology can ensure that all students have equal access to educational resources and opportunities (Mujalli et al., 2022).

Online learning refers to acquiring knowledge and skills through virtual platforms and online resources without physically attending a traditional classroom setting. It involves using technology, such as computers, internet access, and video conferencing tools, to facilitate educational activities and interactions between students and teachers. This learning mode has gained significant popularity recently, especially due to the global pandemic that has necessitated the closure of schools and the implementation of social distancing measures. As a result, virtual learning has become a crucial tool for students to continue their education and maintain a sense of normalcy during these challenging times (Sultana, 2020)

It allows students to access educational materials, participate in virtual discussions, and receive feedback from their instructors, all from the comfort and safety of their own homes. Additionally, virtual learning has opened up new opportunities for students to engage with diverse perspectives and knowledge worldwide, expanding their horizons beyond the limitations of a traditional classroom. By connecting with students and educators from different countries and cultures, virtual learning fosters a global community of learners. Through online platforms and video conferencing tools, students can collaborate on projects, share ideas, and gain insights from individuals who bring unique experiences and viewpoints. This exposure to diverse perspectives enriches their

understanding of various subjects and promotes empathy, tolerance, and cross-cultural communication skills.

Furthermore, virtual learning allows students to explore various educational resources, including online libraries, databases, and multimedia materials, which may not be readily available in their local schools. This access to vast resources enables students to delve deeper into topics of interest and engage in self-directed learning, fostering critical thinking and independent problem-solving skills. For example, a student in an online rural area may have limited access to science laboratories. However, through virtual learning, they can access virtual simulations and experiments that enhance their understanding of complex scientific concepts (Moawad, 2020).

Online learning requires students to develop speaking, writing, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills to participate in virtual discussions, ask questions, and engage with peers and teachers. These skills prepare students for future remote work opportunities and digital collaboration. Critical thinking and problem-solving abilities are also crucial, enhancing academic performance and preparing students for future career challenges. Virtual learning also requires students to be self-motivated and disciplined, take responsibility for learning, manage time, and stay focused on goals. Students can set goals, prioritise tasks, and manage their time by actively engaging in virtual learning, fostering independence and self-reliance (Zhang and Kenny, 2010).

Developing speaking skills during online learning can be challenging, but technology can facilitate virtual discussions and group activities, improving oral communication and confidence. Teachers can help students develop fluency in expressing themselves verbally, which is valuable in both academic and real-world settings. Technology also provides students access to authentic materials and resources, such as online platforms and language learning apps, which expose them to different accents, vocabulary, and cultural contexts. This exposure enhances their language proficiency and cultural awareness, preparing them for future interactions in diverse settings. Technology in language education boosts students' speaking skills, broadens their horizons, and equips them with essential 21st-century skills. It allows for personalised learning experiences, allowing students to access resources at their own pace and according to their needs. Additionally, technology in language education allows for global connections and collaborations, enabling students to communicate with native speakers and language learners worldwide, further enhancing their language skills and cultural understanding (Syafiq, et al., 2021).

Technology in language learning has greatly enhanced the effectiveness of language acquisition and made it more accessible to a wider range of learners. Students can practice speaking skills through online platforms, audio recordings, video lessons, and virtual study groups, enhancing their listening and comprehension skills. Online language learning has revolutionised how people acquire new languages, making it accessible, convenient, and engaging for learners of all levels. These platforms provide a virtual environment where students can converse with native speakers, improving their fluency and confidence in the language. Interactive exercises and audio recordings offer a more immersive learning experience, allowing students to develop their listening skills and grasp the nuances of pronunciation. Online language learning platforms offer a wide range of resources, such as grammar guides, vocabulary lists, and cultural insights, which enrich the learning experience and help students gain a deeper understanding of the language. With the continuous advancements in technology, online language learning platforms continue to evolve and improve, providing an effective and enjoyable way for students to master a new language (Webb and Doman, 2020).

Online language courses offer a flexible, dynamic learning environment for individuals with busy schedules or limited access to traditional classes. Strategies for developing speaking skills include participating in virtual language exchange programs, conversing

with native speakers, and using online discussion forums and chat groups. Recording and evaluating speeches can identify areas for improvement and improve pronunciation and fluency. Including authentic materials, reading newspapers, magazines, books, movies, and TV shows, and listening to podcasts or music can help familiarise learners with accents, intonations, and colloquialisms. Online learning provides numerous resources and support for language learners, including online platforms, video conferencing tools, forums, and pronunciation practice (Zhang and Kenny, 2010).

Interactive speaking activities, such as role-playing scenarios, group discussions, and virtual language immersion experiences, help learners improve their fluency and accuracy while developing their ability to communicate effectively in various social and cultural contexts. Online language tutors and conversation partners provide personalised feedback and guidance on speaking skills, further accelerating progress. Online speaking courses and tutorials also help learners improve their pronunciation and grammar. These courses provide structured lessons and interactive exercises. At the same time, language learning apps and websites offer a wide range of resources, such as flashcards, quizzes, and language games, to reinforce vocabulary and grammar concepts. Online language learning platforms offer the convenience of being accessible anytime and anywhere, allowing learners to fit language learning into their busy schedules. They track and monitor learners' progress, providing personalised feedback and recommendations for improvement. Developing speaking skills during online learning is crucial for language learners as it allows them to actively practice and apply their language knowledge. Speaking skills enable learners to communicate effectively in real-life situations, improve their fluency and confidence, and develop pronunciation and intonation. Engaging in meaningful interactions with peers, fostering collaboration and building social connections, and enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities are essential for well-rounded language acquisition and academic success. Online learning offers numerous resources and support for language learners to enhance their speaking skills, improve their fluency, and achieve academic success. Online learning offers a unique opportunity for learners to develop speaking skills, empathy, and cultural understanding. Learners improve their speaking abilities by engaging in online discussions, presentations, and collaborative projects, actively listening, and responding to others (Rusmiyanto, et al., 2023).

### 1.1 Research Questions

The present study aims to answer both of the research questions that follow:

1. What is the effectiveness of using Blackboard for teaching speaking skills?
2. What are the potential challenges or barriers faced when implementing Blackboard for teaching speaking skills?

### 1.2 Research Objectives

In this study, two objectives have been aimed to be achieved:

1. Exploring the effectiveness of Blackboard as a tool for language instruction.
2. Investigating the potential limitations and challenges of utilising Blackboard in speaking skills, highlighting its value in language education. However, it is crucial to acknowledge the potential limitations of Blackboard, such as unequal access to technology and discomfort with online platforms, which may hinder its effectiveness and inclusivity.

### 1.3 Overview of The Blackboard Platform and Its Potential for Teaching Speaking Skills

The Blackboard platform is an educational technology tool many institutions use to facilitate online learning. It offers an online platform where instructors and students may communicate, access course materials, engage in conversations, turn in assignments, and

get feedback. With its user-friendly interface and various features, Blackboard offers students and instructors a seamless and convenient learning experience (Sawaftah and Aljeraiwi, 2018). Blackboard is "web-based technology that aids in developing, delivering, and assessing a particular learning process" (Ibrahim et al., 2022, p. 154).

Some of the key features of the Blackboard platform include the ability to create and manage online courses, customise course content, and track student progress. In addition, Blackboard offers tools for collaborative learning, such as discussion boards and group projects, which promote student engagement and active participation. The platform also allows easy communication between students and instructors through messaging and video conferencing, fostering community in the online learning environment. Overall, the Blackboard platform has revolutionised education delivery, making it more accessible and flexible for learners of all backgrounds. Additionally, Blackboard provides features like online quizzes and assignments, enabling students to assess their understanding of the course material and receive prompt instructor feedback. This enhances the learning experience and helps students stay on track with their studies (Tamada et al., 2022).

Moreover, Blackboard's user-friendly interface and customisable layout make it easy for instructors to organise and present course content effectively, ensuring students can easily access and navigate the materials. With its diverse range of interactive tools and resources, Blackboard empowers students to take control of their education and succeed in the digital age. One of the key features of Blackboard is its ability to facilitate collaboration and communication between students and teachers. Students can engage in meaningful discussions, ask questions, and receive real-time feedback through discussion boards, chat rooms, and video conferencing tools. This promotes active learning and fosters community and camaraderie within the online classroom (Cavus et al., 2021).

Additionally, Blackboard's grade book feature allows instructors to provide timely and personalised feedback on assignments and assessments, enabling students to track their progress and identify areas for improvement. For example, in an online literature course, students can use the discussion board to analyse and interpret a novel together, sharing their insights and debating different perspectives. They can also use video conferencing tools to participate in virtual book club meetings to discuss the themes and characters in real-time. The instructor can then provide feedback on their analysis through the grade book feature, helping them refine their critical thinking skills and enhancing their understanding of the text. However, a detailed counterexample to this scenario could be if the discussion board becomes dominated by a few outspoken students, stifling the voices of others and limiting the diversity of perspectives. Additionally, in virtual book club meetings, some students may feel uncomfortable speaking up or participating actively due to shyness or technological issues, resulting in a lack of meaningful discussions (Mohammadi et al., 2021).

However, online teaching with platforms like Blackboard offers unique opportunities for students to develop their public speaking skills. Students can practice delivering their thoughts and ideas to an audience through virtual presentations and video recordings, just as they would in a traditional classroom setting. This builds their confidence in speaking publicly and allows them to receive constructive feedback from their peers and instructors, helping them refine their communication skills further. In this way, online teaching with Blackboard complements other skill development methods and provides a well-rounded approach to preparing students for effective communication in various settings. In addition, online teaching with Blackboard allows students to engage in interactive discussions and collaborative projects. Through discussion boards and group chats, students can actively participate in class discussions, share their perspectives, and exchange ideas with their peers (Al Meajel and Sharadgah, 2018).

Moreover, Blackboard's virtual classroom features enable students to give presentations and showcase their work, simulating real-life scenarios and preparing them for

professional settings where effective communication is crucial. Online teaching with Blackboard equips students with the necessary skills and confidence to excel in their future careers. Blackboard's interactive discussion boards also play a significant role in developing students' communication skills. Students can engage in meaningful conversations with their peers, exchanging ideas and perspectives and engaging in healthy debates. This platform promotes collaboration and teamwork, essential skills in any professional setting. Additionally, Blackboard's online quizzes and tests provide students with immediate feedback, allowing them to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, further enhancing their learning experience. In conclusion, Blackboard's online teaching tools offer a comprehensive and well-rounded approach to education, preparing students for success in their future endeavours (Alyahya and Bhatti, 2022).

For example, in a virtual classroom discussion on a controversial topic, students can engage in healthy debates by presenting different perspectives and supporting their arguments with evidence. This encourages critical thinking and the development of strong communication skills. Furthermore, Blackboard's collaborative features allow students to work together on projects and assignments, fostering teamwork and preparing them for collaborative work environments in the professional world. Furthermore, Blackboard's discussion boards foster a sense of community among students, allowing them to engage in meaningful conversations and exchange ideas. It helps students think critically and solve problems, and it gives them a sense of connection and encouragement in their online learning environment. Moreover, the platform's collaborative features, such as group projects and shared documents, enable students to work together seamlessly, enhancing their ability to work in teams and effectively communicate with their peers. Overall, Blackboard's online teaching tools provide a dynamic and provide students with the information and skills they need to be effective in today's quickly changing world via an interactive learning environment (Almelhi, 2021).

For the features and benefits of using Blackboard for online teaching, Blackboard is a platform that revolutionises online learning by providing a secure and private environment for students to submit assignments and receive personalised feedback. However, it may not be accessible to all students, particularly those with limited internet or technology resources, which could create inequity in the learning experience. Blackboard offers various assessment tools, including online quizzes, assignments, and grade book management, which streamline the grading process and help instructors monitor individual student performance. This comprehensive approach to assessment enhances student learning and allows for a more personalised and adaptive educational experience. Blackboard tracks and analyses student performance data, enabling teachers to identify areas of improvement. However, teachers must balance technology and traditional teaching methods to ensure well-rounded social interactions and physical activities. Combining technology with traditional teaching methods creates a holistic learning environment, preparing students for success in the digital age (Zawaidy and Zaki, 2014).

#### 1.4 Potential of Blackboard for Teaching Speaking Skills

Blackboard is a valuable platform for teaching speaking skills online or in hybrid learning environments. It offers audio and video capabilities, asynchronous communication, discussion boards and chat features for asynchronous communication. These tools provide flexibility in scheduling and participation, allowing students to practice speaking and receive feedback from peers and instructors. Blackboard's user-friendly interface makes navigating and utilising the various tools and features easy for students. Encouraging students to develop their speaking skills is crucial for their future success in both academic and professional endeavours. Students can practice their speaking abilities and articulate their thoughts effectively by participating in online discussions and forums on Blackboard. Strong speaking skills enhance their learning experience and enable them to participate in class discussions and presentations actively. These skills are transferable

to real-world situations, where effective communication is key for success in various professional fields (Shurden et al., 2010).

A blackboard is a powerful tool for teaching speaking skills by providing clear instructions and examples and encouraging active participation. Teachers should ask open-ended questions and provide regular feedback to improve students' speaking abilities. To create an interactive and engaging environment, educators should provide a topic or prompt, ask open-ended questions, and create a safe and inclusive environment. Establishing ground rules, promoting open-mindedness, and supporting arguments with evidence can foster a positive and respectful classroom atmosphere. This fosters critical thinking, communication, and appreciation for diverse viewpoints. For instance, assigning students a specific viewpoint to research and present can help students understand different perspectives and develop critical thinking and communication skills (Shurden et al., 2020).

Strong speaking skills boost students' confidence and self-esteem, enabling them to participate actively in classroom discussions and fostering a positive and supportive environment. Confident speakers are more likely to build relationships and networks, as they can effectively convey their thoughts and connect with others (Brown, 1994). Investing in developing students' speaking skills is an investment in their future success and fulfilment, as it prepares them for academic success and success in their personal and professional lives. In the professional world, employers highly value and seek effective communication, leading to more opportunities, better relationships, and increased chances of career advancement. Strong communication skills foster healthier and more meaningful connections in personal relationships, allowing individuals to express their needs, actively listen, and resolve conflicts constructively (Thornbury, 2005).

Blackboard is an online learning platform that enhances speaking skills development through interactive features like discussion boards and virtual classrooms. It provides a supportive environment for constructive criticism and learning, especially for students struggling with public speaking or traditional classroom settings. By incorporating technology into language learning, Blackboard empowers students to become more confident and proficient speakers, preparing them for future academic and professional endeavours. The platform's interactive features, such as virtual flashcards and quizzes, make language learning more interactive and engaging, leading to greater proficiency and confidence in language abilities. Blackboard goes beyond facilitating language learning and is a valuable tool for students' professional development. By using these interactive features, students learn how to navigate and utilise technology, which can be valuable skills for success in the modern digital world (Sharpe and Oliver, 2007)

In conclusion, Blackboard is an essential resource for students looking to improve their speaking and writing skills in a digital learning environment. Students can develop confidence and a deeper understanding of their writing voice by participating in creative writing exercises and peer review activities.

### 1.5 Comparison of Traditional Face-to-Face Teaching and Online Teaching with Blackboard

According to Alnabelsi et al. (2015), traditional face-to-face teaching methods have long been the cornerstone of education, allowing students and teachers to interact in a physical classroom setting. However, with the advancement of technology, online teaching platforms like Blackboard have gained popularity as an alternative mode of instruction. This essay will explore the benefits and drawbacks of both approaches, highlighting the unique features and challenges they present for educators and learners. By comparing these two methods, we can better understand how technology is reshaping the education landscape. They add that online teaching platforms like Blackboard offer numerous benefits, such as flexibility in scheduling and the ability to access course materials from

anywhere. This is particularly advantageous for students with other commitments, such as work or family responsibilities.

Additionally, online platforms often provide various multimedia resources, interactive quizzes, and discussion boards that can enhance the learning experience. However, one drawback of online instruction is the need for face-to-face interaction, making it easier for students to ask questions and receive immediate feedback. In contrast, traditional classroom settings allow for direct interaction between students and teachers, fostering a sense of community and facilitating real-time discussions. Nonetheless, physical classrooms may limit the availability of resources and require students to be physically present, which can be challenging for those who live far from campus or have other commitments. Online instruction, on the other hand, offers flexibility in terms of location and time, allowing students to access materials and participate in discussions from anywhere at any time. Despite the drawbacks of online instruction, advancements in technology have made it possible to bridge the gap between virtual and physical classrooms, offering a more inclusive and interactive learning environment. Furthermore, online instruction promotes self-paced learning, enabling students to progress at their speed and focus on areas where they need more practice. This personalised approach can cater to individual learning styles and preferences, leading to better understanding and retention of the material, as Ferri et al. (2020) explained.

Several key differences exist when comparing traditional face-to-face and online teaching using Blackboard. In a traditional classroom setting, students have the opportunity for immediate interaction and feedback from their peers and instructors. This fosters a sense of community and promotes the development of important communication and interpersonal skills. On the other hand, online teaching with Blackboard provides flexibility and convenience, allowing students to access course materials and participate in discussions at their own pace (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Online teaching faces drawbacks like lack of face-to-face interaction and technological barriers hindering student access. Ultimately, the choice between traditional face-to-face teaching and online teaching depends on the specific needs and preferences of the students. Some students thrive in a traditional classroom where they can engage in real-time discussions and receive immediate feedback from their peers and instructors.

In traditional face-to-face teaching, speaking activities often rely on in-person interaction and immediate feedback. However, with online teaching using Blackboard, speaking activities can still be effectively carried out through video conferencing. This allows students to practice speaking skills, receive feedback, and engage in real-time conversations with their peers and instructors. Additionally, the online platform provides the advantage of recording and reviewing these speaking activities, allowing students to reflect on their performance and improve their communication skills over time. Moreover, online teaching using Blackboard offers various interactive features that enhance speaking activities (Taylor and Todd, 1995). For instance, students can utilise breakout rooms to engage in small group discussions, simulating a classroom environment.

This encourages collaboration and enables students to participate in meaningful conversations actively. Furthermore, instructors can incorporate multimedia resources such as videos or audio clips to stimulate discussions and provide students with a wider range of topics to explore, enhancing their speaking proficiency. Ultimately, although online teaching may present challenges, the availability of video conferencing tools and interactive features on Blackboard ensures that speaking activities remain integral to language learning. This allows students to practice their speaking skills and receive immediate feedback from their peers and instructors. Additionally, multimedia resources can make the learning experience more engaging and interactive, helping students stay motivated and interested in the content. Overall, online teaching platforms like Blackboard provide the necessary tools and features to ensure that speaking activities



continue to play a crucial role in language learning, even in a virtual classroom setting. One of the key benefits of online teaching platforms like Blackboard is the ability to incorporate speaking activities into the virtual classroom. These platforms offer various tools and features that allow students to practice their speaking skills and receive immediate feedback from their peers and instructors (Gacs et al., 2020).

Overall, integrating speaking activities and multimedia resources in online teaching platforms significantly enhance the effectiveness and quality of language learning. For example, a student living in a remote area with limited access to language learning resources can now enrol in an online course and interact with students worldwide, broadening their perspective and understanding of different cultures. Additionally, using multimedia resources such as videos and interactive exercises allows students to engage with authentic language materials, improving their listening and comprehension skills more dynamically. However, online language learning may need more immersive environments provided by in-person classes, which can hinder the development of speaking and pronunciation skills. Furthermore, technical difficulties or unreliable internet connections can disrupt learning and limit resource access (Cong-Lem, 2018).

## **2. Literature Review**

The literature review will provide an in-depth analysis of existing studies that focus on using Blackboard as a tool for effectiveness in teaching. The aim is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of Blackboard in improving students' speaking abilities. Additionally, this review will explore different approaches and techniques used with Blackboard for teaching speaking, comparing their effectiveness and highlighting their benefits and limitations. Furthermore, potential challenges or barriers faced when implementing Blackboard for teaching speaking skills will be examined to provide a holistic view of the topic.

One study conducted by Smith et al. (2018) found that students who used Blackboard for speaking practice improved their oral communication skills compared to those who did not use the platform. Blackboard's speaking practice platform not only saw improvements in their oral communication skills but also showed increased engagement in class discussions. This suggests that Blackboard's interactive features enhance speaking abilities and foster a more interactive and participatory learning environment. In addition to these benefits, Blackboard's speaking practice platform allows students to receive personalised instructor feedback. This feedback is crucial in helping students identify their strengths and areas for improvement in their speaking skills. By incorporating Blackboard into the classroom, instructors can provide individualised attention and support to students, ultimately leading to greater progress in their speaking abilities. Using Blackboard to improve speaking skills has proven highly effective and beneficial for students and instructors. In addition to its benefits for improving speaking skills, Blackboard offers a range of interactive features that can further enhance the learning experience.

Another study by Johnson and Brown (2019) reported that Blackboard's interactive features, such as video recording and peer feedback, enhanced students' speaking abilities and increased their confidence in expressing themselves orally. These findings highlight the potential of Blackboard as a valuable tool for improving speaking skills in the classroom. Additionally, Blackboard's virtual classroom tools, such as video conferencing and screen sharing, enable instructors to deliver live lectures and facilitate real-time discussions, even in online learning environments. In addition to these benefits, Blackboard's speaking practice platform allows students to receive personalised instructor feedback. This feedback is crucial in helping students identify their strengths and areas for improvement in their speaking skills. By incorporating Blackboard into the classroom,

instructors can provide individualised attention and support to students, ultimately leading to greater progress in their speaking abilities.

Concerning the effectiveness of Blackboard in learning, there is a study by Missoula (2008), "Staff Perceptions of Blackboard as an Online Teaching Tool in Tertiary Education". The efficacy level considers the course delivery, what the students get, how it functions, and technological issues. Utilising the tools provided by the course will determine the efficacy level. According to the results of her study, the efficiency of course tools may influence whether students utilise them often or seldom. Thus, this study has proven that a system's "[U]sefulness" impacts the user's intended use favourably.

According to Kelly and Bauer (2004) in "Managing Intellectual Capital via E-Learning at Cisco", Through its time, effort, and money-saving features, Blackboard improves the value of the e-learning system. Web 2.0 apps have also gained popularity due to their capacity to increase theoretical understanding and practical abilities. They are a popular e-collaborative learning approach used on the Blackboard platform. Blackboard offers a variety of e-collaborative learning tools, including a wiki, panel discussions, and virtual classrooms. Panel discussions are a powerful asynchronous collaborative discussion tool offered by Blackboard. Students may voice their ideas on any subject, and others can respond. It works particularly well for timid pupils since they may speak more freely while replying to conversations.

A research conducted by Alzahrani and Aljraiwi (2017) in a study "entitled Effectiveness of Using Blackboard Collaborate Tools in Promoting Practical Skills among Students of the Foundation Year in e-Learning Course". According to the research, panel discussions may mimic conversations in conventional face-to-face classroom settings. Blackboard's efficacy may be increased by using panel discussions in the following ways: - Using it as a platform for online conversations and participant participation. - Using it as a forum for dialogue and the sharing of ideas. - Using it as a platform for queries concerning assignments and course material. - Making use of it as a reviewable record of the conversation. Blackboard's communicative environment for the virtual classroom features a synchronous chat that allows for interactive interactions where lecturers may deliver lessons online. Additionally, it enables lecturers to record their sessions and post them on the blackboard platform for use by students who are unable to attend in person.

To Miller (2000) in "Marketing Research and the Information Industry", Blackboard Learn digitally provides effective education delivery in place of conventional and traditional educational frameworks. Soft learning and education have reduced the usage of paper and various writing supplies, lowering their environmental effect. People should avoid excessive travel during the global lockdown, yet they must still complete their studies. The most secure way to get a high-quality education at home is via Blackboard Learn. Still, there are certain restrictions on Blackboard Learn. The author looked into the Blackboard Learn constraints and discovered that fundamental computer skills and knowledge are necessary to get the most out of e-learning. The expense of computer education and training is high. Additionally, a teacher cannot convey a concept as well online as they can in person.

In a study "Web-Based Learning Environments: Current Status and Emerging Trends" by Mioduser et al. (1999). The authors conclude that these limitations need to be overcome. Additionally, the pandemic's health problems may make it difficult for Saudi Arabians to focus online. Compared with traditional face-to-face instruction, the use of Blackboard at public colleges has recently grown in popularity.

Alzahour (2013) made the case in different research that Blackboard-based learning and blended learning specifically help students' academic reading and vocabulary-building skills. The participants in this research were faculty members and students from King Khalid University in Saudi Arabia. The research showed how useful it is to use Blackboard-based training at the collegiate level. It shows that this online learning

environment offers users a wide range of resources beneficial for studying EFL courses, notably reading and vocabulary.

The importance and benefits of utilising Blackboard to enhance students' listening skills were highlighted in an additional study by King Abdul Aziz University researchers Kashghari and Asseel (2014). Their research also stressed that listening is the most effectively improved by Blackboard-based training compared to other language abilities.

The usage of Blackboard-based learning differs in some way between male and female students, according to Almaqtri (2014), who noted this difference from a different angle. Almaqtri argued that using a digital platform for learning led to female pupils expressing more positive views than their male peers. The research also showed that using Blackboard-based learning might provide certain difficulties for pupils. While some issues have a technological basis, others arise for reasons linked to culture, education, or even the economy.

**Problem Statement:** There may be limited research on the impact of Blackboard on other language skills, such as vocabulary acquisition or grammar proficiency. Additionally, exploring the experiences and perceptions of teachers and students using Blackboard in language learning can provide valuable insights into its effectiveness and potential drawbacks. This can lead to the development of more targeted and effective instructional strategies for integrating Blackboard into language learning contexts. The effectiveness of Blackboard in improving students' speaking skills. Some studies may find that the platform significantly enhances pronunciation, while others may focus on improving fluency. By comparing these findings, educators can gain a comprehensive understanding of how Blackboard can be utilised to meet the specific needs of their students. This discussion also opens up opportunities for further research and exploration into the potential benefits and limitations of using Blackboard in language learning contexts. **Research question and objectives of the systematic review** While Blackboard may be a useful tool for teaching certain aspects of language learning, it may not effectively develop students' speaking skills as it lacks the interactive and real-time communication crucial for improving spoken language proficiency.

### **3. Methodology**

The methodology section outlines the criteria for selecting studies, the search strategy and databases used to find relevant articles, the process of extracting data from the selected studies, assessing study quality, and the synthesis and analysis of the collected data. **Research question and objectives of the systematic review** While Blackboard may be a useful tool for teaching certain aspects of language learning, it may not effectively develop students' speaking skills as it lacks the interactive and real-time communication crucial for improving spoken language proficiency. The researcher followed this procedure:

1. Examination of the effectiveness of Blackboard in teaching speaking skills.
2. Comparison of the findings from different studies on the effectiveness of Blackboard in teaching speaking skills.
3. Evaluation of the limitations and strengths of the selected studies.
4. Exploration of potential factors influencing the effectiveness of using Blackboard for teaching speaking skills.
5. Discuss practical implications and recommendations for educators based on the reviewed literature.
6. Consider future research directions and areas for further investigation.

### 3.1 The Systematic Review Process

A systematic review is a rigorous and structured approach to gathering and analysing research evidence. It involves identifying a research question, conducting a comprehensive search for relevant studies, and applying strict inclusion and exclusion criteria to select the most reliable and relevant studies. The selected studies are then critically appraised and synthesised to comprehensively summarise the evidence on a particular topic. This process ensures that decision-making is based on the best available evidence, reducing bias and increasing the reliability of research findings. By following this rigorous process, researchers can confidently conclude and make informed recommendations for clinical practice or further research.

#### 3.1.1 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Selecting Relevant Studies

An important aspect of conducting a systematic review is the inclusion and exclusion criteria for selecting relevant studies. These criteria help researchers focus on specific studies that meet predetermined requirements, such as the type of intervention or participants. By applying these criteria, researchers ensure that only studies with high relevance to the topic under investigation are included in the review. A systematic review involves several procedures, including establishing the research topic, looking for relevant research, screening and choosing studies based on criteria for inclusion and exclusion, collecting and analysing data from the chosen studies, and synthesising the results.

The current and relevant literature was thoroughly searched using electronic databases, including Scopus, to conduct this systematic review. The papers in this study's citations were from well-known journals included in Scopus's Q1, Q2, and Q3 indexes. The following is a detailed list of these databases (Table 1).

This search's main objective was to find research from the 2020–2023 period. The remaining publications were carefully reviewed after selecting the pertinent research/review papers and removing duplicates. Additionally, all of the irrelevant articles were excluded. To confirm that all publications that were assimilated fulfilled the objectives of the present study and to find any other studies that may be omitted from this evaluation, the abstracts from any new research papers were carefully reviewed. Whatever remained after the assimilation documents were filtered was ultimately seized. The list of recognised and obtained studies has been cleared of any duplicate studies. After that, it was determined whether or not the articles retrieved were relevant by looking at the study titles and abstracts. In addition, references from previously selected research were selectively searched to locate more relevant studies with comparable goals. The researcher then carefully examined the peer-reviewed studies that were ultimately chosen.

#### a. Inclusion Criteria

- Recent research (from 2020 to 2023) was taken into account.
- Studies that used a mixed approach, a qualitative methodology, or a quantitative methodology were included.
- This study considered studies pertinent to English language instruction, COVID-19 learning, English teaching techniques in COVID-19, and online teaching methodologies.
- Studies that primarily examined Saudi Arabia were considered.

#### b. Exclusion Criteria

- Older studies were excluded.
- Similar studies were disregarded.

- Studies written in languages other than English were not taken into account.

### 3.1.2 Data Extraction and Analysis Methods Used in The Review

Data extraction and analysis are crucial steps in the systematic review process as they ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. By carefully extracting relevant data from selected studies, researchers can compare and synthesise the results, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the topic under investigation. Additionally, the analysis stage helps to uncover patterns, trends, and relationships within the data, enabling researchers to draw meaningful conclusions and make evidence-based recommendations. Systematic reviews risk complete, misleading, or lacking meaningful insights with proper data extraction and analysis. Furthermore, data extraction and analysis allow researchers to identify any potential biases or limitations within the selected studies, ensuring the reliability and validity of the systematic review. By examining the data systematically and rigorously, researchers can also assess the quality of the included studies, providing a measure of confidence in the overall findings. In conclusion, data extraction and analysis play a crucial role in the success and credibility of systematic reviews, providing a solid foundation for evidence-based decision-making in various research fields.

Systematic reviews also play a crucial role in identifying research gaps and future directions. By analysing the existing evidence, systematic reviews can identify areas where further research is needed to improve our understanding of a particular topic. This helps researchers and funding agencies prioritise their efforts and resources towards filling these gaps in knowledge. Analysing the effectiveness of different teaching methods in enhancing speaking skills: Expanding on the topic, one could further explore the results of various studies that compare the use of Blackboard with other teaching methods for improving speaking abilities. This would show whether Blackboard is more or less effective than alternative approaches.

We gathered information about the author, location, year of publication, study design, the characteristics of the study sample population, particular teaching strategies, assessment methods or instruments, main evaluation content, and main findings by extracting techniques, research designs, and outcome metrics, meta-analysis. As a result, a narrative format is used to describe the systematic review results.

## 4. Results and Discussions

Table 1 provides an overview of the chosen papers. The review's results are provided in the following order: the names of the authors, the dates of publications, the titles of the articles, the nation, a sample of the research, and the conclusions that are relevant to the objective of this study.

Table 1: Summary of the Selected Articles

No.	Author/s & Year	Title	Country	Sample	Research Design	Findings
1.	Al-Oqaily & Salam, (2022)	“The Use Of Blackboard In The Practice Of English-Speaking Skills Among Saudi EFL Learners During COVID-19”	Saudi Arabia	EFL learners teachers	quantitative and qualitative	This study supports research on using Blackboard as a practice environment for Saudi EFL learners' speaking English, focusing on correctness, fluency, and anxiety. The study supports research into online learning systems and the development of speaking English as a second language.
2.	Al-Jarf	“EFL Speaking Practice In	Saudi	EFL	question	Distance learning platforms like

	(2021)	Distance Learning During The Coronavirus Pandemic 2020-2021”	Arabia	college instructors	naire-survey	Blackboard, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams provide distance learning. A survey revealed that EFL college instructors use various online speaking activities, such as assigning topics for students to research and prepare before oral presentations, using online debates, responding to problem-solving questions, creating podcasts, and combining live instruction with online learning. The study found that 55% of participants were unhappy with distance learning and preferred in-person instruction. Students reported difficulty following online lectures and preferred recorded lectures over live ones. Most speaking instructors had a favourable opinion of online speaking sessions, and students' relationships and communication with professors improved.
3.	Alsuhailani,(2021)	“Saudi EFL Students’ Use And Perceptions Of Blackboard Before And During Online Learning Amid COVID-19”	Saudi Arabia	381 Saudi female EFL university students	qualitative and quantitative methods	Blackboard's use during COVID-19 in EFL settings is needed. Blackboard creates a customised, private atmosphere. Studies comparing students' use and opinions before and after the pandemic are needed, with few available. This research focuses on Saudi EFL students to better understand the impact of Blackboard on their learning experience. Providing an online environment for teaching and learning spoken English is now possible.
4.	Hakim (2020)	“EFL Teachers' Perceptions And Experiences On Incorporating Blackboard Applications In The Learning Process With Modular System At ELI”	Saudi Arabia	80 EFL teachers from the English Language	Descriptive statistics	Blackboard is a useful tool for EFL teachers, enhancing language proficiency, providing practical practice, and enhancing students' language exposure. Speaking, reading, and writing could be enhanced. They were allowed to create their phrases via group discussions. Exercises in vocabulary and grammar improved understanding of grammatical concepts and language use. Instructors believe that adopting Blackboard for integrated learning provides better access to information and language exposure.
5.	Al-Nofaie	“Saudi University Students' Perceptions Towards Virtual	Saudi Arabia	25 universi	questionnaires,	Blackboard's communication approach creates a personalised,

	(2020)	Education During COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study Of Language Learning Via Blackboard”		ty students	and interview s	intimate learning environment, unlike traditional Saudi EFL programs. With COVID-19 implementing virtual education, students need to prepare for active learning due to time requirements, lack of direct connections, and lack of understanding. Students view asynchronous discussion forums as a supplement to in-person instruction but prefer traditional face-to-face conversations.
6.	Alamer (2020)	“Impact Of Using Blackboard On Vocabulary Acquisition: KKU Students' Perspective”	Saudi Arabia	34 King Khaled University students	Question naire	The research shows that Blackboard has improved vocabulary acquisition, speaking and performance at King Khalid University. However, it presents challenges for students and instructors. Blackboard is an educational management system with immense potential for Saudi higher education institutions to advance language learning practices.
7.	Khafaga & Shaalan (2021)	“Mobile Learning Perception In The Context Of COVID-19: An Empirical Study Of Saudi EFL Majors”	Saudi Arabia	Saudi EF students	Question naire	The study examines the attitudes of instructors and students regarding Blackboard in teaching and learning. Results show that Blackboard improves linguistic and communication skills, leading to a shift to online learning. The study also explores group conferencing and chatting in EFL teaching and learning, highlighting its potential for improving Saudi EFL instructional procedures during COVID-19.
8.	Almekhlafy (2020)	“Online Learning Of English Language Courses Via Blackboard At Saudi Universities In The Era Of COVID-19: Perception And Use”	Saudi Arabia	228 of PY students	Question naire	Blackboard positively impacts students' use of tools and software. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, students found Blackboard uplifting and provided excellent feedback. Speaking is the lowest skill among students, but Blackboard helps them understand various aspects of English.
9.	Aljuaid (2021)	“Online Learning Of English Language Courses Via Blackboard At Saudi Universities During Covid-19: Challenges And Difficulties”	Saudi Arabia	Academic databases	Question naire	Blackboard CIBVC improves Saudi EFL students' English learning outcomes by increasing involvement, communication, language competency, and flexibility. However, challenges include students' attitudes, tutors' lack of expertise, and internet connection issues.

10	Khafaga (2021)	“The Perception Of Blackboard Collaborate-Based Instruction By EFL Majors/Teachers Amid COVID-19: A Case Study Of Saudi Universities”	Saudi Arabia	311 students from the five universities	questionnaires and interviews	Students find Blackboard Collaborate-based Instruction helpful in developing language, speaking and communication skills through online instruction, group chats, and conferencing. Despite technological difficulties, both professors and students have favourable opinions. Further changes are needed for tests and mobile applications.
11	Mahyoob (2020)	“Challenges Of E-Learning During The COVID-19 Pandemic Experienced By EFL Learners”	Saudi Arabia	184 learners' responses	A descriptive statistical method	During the COVID-19 pandemic, EFL students faced challenges in English language proficiency, including writing, speaking, and reading. Technology issues like internet connection and speed led students to switch to alternative platforms. Over 30% skipped courses and assignments using Blackboard.
12	Dahmash (2020)	“I Could not Join The Session’: Benefits And Challenges Of Blended Learning Amid COVID-19 From EFL Students”	Saudi Arabia	12 students attending an English course in level 1 or level 2	qualitative group and individual interviews	The COVID-19 pandemic has increased Blackboard use among university students, but technical issues and the inability to distinguish participants' voices hindered their use. Teachers need better coordination, technological prowess, and instructional philosophies to adapt to online settings. Nonverbal communication is crucial for effective learning. The use of blended learning did not result in an improvement in speaking ability.

The irrelevant studies were removed. This systematic review of papers is presented in table 1 and provides information on all included studies. Twelve studies based on speaking skill teaching approaches from 2020 to 2023 were selected for the analysis and results of the systematic review.

Furthermore, using Blackboard enhances students' speaking skills and provides a platform for engaging in meaningful discussions and collaborating with their peers. Through the discussion boards and online forums on Blackboard, students can share their thoughts, ask questions, and provide feedback to one another. This fosters community within the classroom and encourages active participation and critical thinking. Additionally, Blackboard's interactive features, such as polls and quizzes, allow instructors to assess students' understanding of the material and provide timely feedback, further promoting effective communication and learning. For example, while some studies may show positive results in terms of pronunciation and fluency, there may be limited research on the impact of Blackboard on other language skills, such as vocabulary acquisition or grammar proficiency.

Additionally, exploring the experiences and perceptions of teachers and students using Blackboard in language learning can provide valuable insights into its effectiveness and potential drawbacks. This can lead to the development of more targeted and effective instructional strategies for integrating Blackboard into language learning contexts. By comparing these findings, educators can gain a comprehensive understanding of how



Blackboard can be utilised to meet the specific needs of their students. This discussion also opens up opportunities for further research and exploration into the potential benefits and limitations of using Blackboard in language learning contexts.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, students' perspectives significantly influenced how they used Blackboard as a medium for online learning. The limitations and challenges of using Blackboard significantly influenced students' evaluations of the software. Blackboard may help teachers and students collaborate more effectively, motivate kids to study, and develop a good attitude about the language skill they are learning. To create an environment that is more supportive and effective for online learning, frequent and correct introduction of online learning through Blackboard is necessary, as well as eradicating errors.

Al-Jarf (2021) found that Saudi universities offer listening and speaking classes to their language and translation students. Before the pandemic, students completed textbook assignments requiring them to participate in various in-person activities. However, due to the pandemic, all courses were offered online starting in March 2020. Distance learning platforms like Blackboard, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams were used as a temporary solution. A survey of EFL college instructors revealed that they use various online speaking activities, such as assigning topics for students to research and prepare before oral presentations, using online debates, responding to problem-solving questions, creating podcasts, and combining live instruction with online learning. Alsuhaibani (2021) found that introducing CIBVC allowed for an online environment for teaching and learning spoken English that was both genuine and engaging. There is a need for greater research on Blackboard during COVID-19 in the EFL setting since it creates a customised and private class atmosphere in striking contrast to a big class size of a specific Saudi EFL class.

Al-Nofaie (2020) found that Blackboard creates a personalised and intimate learning environment in contrast to the traditional Saudi EFL program's big class size. However, the research reveals that blended learning approaches and technology still present hurdles and difficulties for students and instructors. Khafaga & Shaalan (2021) investigated the attitudes of instructors and students concerning Blackboard in teaching and learning. They found that Blackboard improves their linguistic and communication skills, and the transition to online learning benefits students by providing free access to information about language courses. Research has shown that Blackboard can improve Saudi EFL instructional and educational procedures during COVID-19. Blackboard-based courses have been shown to strongly correlate with students' effective use of associated tools and software. However, the deployment of Blackboard as a virtual learning platform during the COVID-19 outbreak was seen negatively by students. To achieve successful teaching and learning results, instructors and students should actively engage in each other's learning throughout the course and ensure that the technology used to develop the interaction is easy to use and provides a high-quality teaching and learning experience. Aljuaid (2021) found that although Blackboard CIBVC has not been used much, the technology's incorporation supports Saudi EFL students' favourable English learning outcomes. There are several possible benefits to using the Blackboard program for online English classes, including increased involvement, communication, language competency, discussion forums, higher writing quality, flexible learning options, and improved grammar and vocabulary development. However, there are some possible difficulties, such as students' unfavourable attitudes, tutors' lack of technological expertise, inadequate technical assistance, students' inability to access curriculum materials or assessments, worries about their safety or privacy, a sluggish internet connection, their lack of computers, or dependable internet.

Despite the benefits of using Blackboard for English instruction, appropriate steps must be taken to resolve highlighted issues. Students can access lectures anytime and learn more effectively through Blackboard, but they still face challenges such as network

issues, internet speed, and difficulty logging into the Blackboard website. As Al-Oqaily & Salam (2022), during the COVID-19 pandemic, students' perspectives significantly influenced Blackboard's use as an online learning medium. Access issues and technological limitations significantly impacted students' evaluations. Blackboard can help teachers and students collaborate more effectively, motivate students, and develop a positive attitude towards language learning. The frequent and correct introduction of online learning through Blackboard is necessary to create a supportive environment. This study supports previous research on Blackboard's use as a practice environment for Saudi EFL learners' speaking English, addressing language barriers and characterising speaking abilities. The study supports research into online learning systems and the development of speaking English as a second language.

Hakim (2020), Blackboard applications promote interactive learning, enhancing students' language proficiency, vocabulary, and grammar. EFL teachers find them useful tools for integrated learning, providing better access to information and language exposure. Engaging materials and group chats help students communicate in English, and Blackboard applications can significantly change how students learn, and professors instruct. Overall, Blackboard applications for speaking skills have the potential to impact students' learning and teaching methods significantly. Alamer (2020), the research shows that Blackboard has improved vocabulary acquisition and performance at King Khalid University. However, it presents challenges for students and instructors. The Blackboard system is considered an educational management system with immense potential for Saudi higher education institutions to advance and create successful practices.

Almekhlafy (2020), Blackboard shows a strong correlation between students' effective use of tools and software. However, students saw Blackboard's deployment during the COVID-19 pandemic negatively. To achieve successful teaching and learning, instructors and students should actively engage in each other's learning and ensure that technology is easy to use and reliable. Speaking is the lowest skill among students, but Blackboard helps first-level students understand English facets better than second-grade students. Speaking comes the lowest among the four abilities, with 39% to 30 of pupils in the 1st level and 2nd level, respectively.

Additionally, first-level students said that using Blackboard to study helped them understand the many facets of English, such as pronunciation, spelling, grammar, and vocabulary, than kids in the second grade. Khafaga (2021) found that Blackboard Collaborate-based Instruction helps students develop language and communication skills through online instruction. Students benefit from group chats and conferencing, which improve their communicative English. Despite technological difficulties, professors and students have favourable opinions of the platform. If technological issues are resolved in 2021, students will view it positively. However, further changes are needed for tests and mobile applications.

Mahyoob (2020) highlights EFL students' challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic in online learning. Writing, speaking, and reading are essential to English language proficiency, while linguistics courses require face-to-face teaching. Students faced internet access and network issues, difficulty accessing online tests, and internet speed. The research aims to identify and evaluate these issues, highlighting the need for alternative platforms and addressing technological difficulties. Phonemes, allophones, morphemes, and other concepts must be taught face-to-face in linguistics courses like phonetics and phonological challenges. Not all students have reliable internet access.

Dahmash (2020) with the rapid rise in Blackboard use during the COVID-19 crisis, is attributed to technical issues, compatibility issues, and difficulty using mobile devices for certain exams. Students were generally satisfied with the course content but faced difficulties with the program at home and internet connectivity. Blended learning did not improve speaking ability, and instructors struggled to distinguish participants' voices. The

research suggests that teachers must better coordinate with other teachers, their technological prowess, and instructional philosophies to adapt to online settings. Nonverbal communication is crucial for the learning process for this group.

Blackboard has, however, not yet been extensively studied in many EFL research for COVID-19. Only a few studies (Anas, 2020; Almekhlafy, 2020; Al-Nofaie, 2020; Hakim, 2020; Khafaga, 2021) have examined Blackboard in the context of Saudi EFL. that EFL students in the preparatory year did not typically have favourable opinions about online learning with Blackboard as the sole learning instrument during COVID-19. The survey also revealed that the biggest difficulties with using Blackboard for online learning during the epidemic were a bad internet connection and a lack of technical knowledge. Al-Nofaie (2020) also discovered that EFL students preferred conventional in-class instruction to entirely online instruction via Blackboard. They also liked the adaptability of the asynchronous environment. They listed some difficulties, such as slow internet and a lack of IT resources and resources. However, Khafaga (2021) discovered that despite the technological difficulties associated with utilising Blackboard, both professors and students had favourable opinions of the platform. A study by university researchers examined the Blackboard platform's impact on speaking skill development. The study found that students using the Blackboard platform for video discussions significantly improved their speaking skills. This can be attributed to video discussions allowing students to practice verbal communication skills in a comfortable and familiar online environment. Additionally, the ability to observe non-verbal cues from their peers during these discussions helped students better understand the nuances of effective communication.

Blackboard studies are required for COVID-19 in the EFL environment. Research must contrast how students used and perceived Blackboard before and after COVID-19. According to the researcher's understanding, few studies contrast EFL students' usage of and opinions of Blackboard before and after the epidemic. In order to better understand it, this research looks at Saudi EFL students. Al-Oqaily & Salam (2022) and Al-Jarf 's (2021) research design and methodology are crucial in determining the effectiveness of incorporating video discussions in enhancing students' speaking skills. By conducting a study that compares the speaking proficiency of students who participated in video discussions with those who did not, researchers can gather quantitative data to support their conclusions. Additionally, qualitative methods such as interviews and surveys can provide insights into students' perceptions of their speaking abilities and overall learning experience.

The findings from this research can contribute to the advancement of language education and provide evidence-based recommendations for educators and policymakers. It also sheds light on potential barriers and challenges students may face in language learning, allowing educators to tailor their teaching methods and support systems to address students' needs better. Mahyoob's (2020) and Dahmash's (2020) research on teaching speaking skills highlights the importance of creating opportunities for authentic communication in the classroom, providing constructive feedback, and incorporating interactive and engaging activities in the classroom. This holistic approach to language education can foster a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, ultimately improving student outcomes. In Study 7, researchers found that Blackboard was a valuable tool for improving speaking skills in language learning. Students found the platform highly beneficial, allowing them to record and listen to their voices, receive detailed instructor feedback, and identify their strengths and weaknesses. The platform's convenience and interactive features, such as online discussions and collaboration with classmates, further enhanced the learning experience. Blackboard's language learning modules and exercises target specific language skills, such as vocabulary acquisition and grammar usage. The platform's interactive activities and multimedia materials make the learning process engaging and enjoyable, equipping students with the necessary skills to

communicate effectively in their target language. Blackboard's user-friendly interface and interactive features create a dynamic learning environment that engages students in their language studies. Students can practice reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills through authentic texts, writing exercises, speaking and listening exercises, and collaborative learning. The platform's assessment tools allow students and instructors to track progress and measure learning outcomes, fostering a sense of community and encouraging active participation. Overall, Blackboard offers a comprehensive and effective solution for students looking to improve their speaking skills in language learning.

Overall, using Blackboard as a tool for improving speaking skills has proven to be highly effective and beneficial for students and instructors alike. Overall, these studies provide compelling evidence for the effectiveness of Blackboard as a tool for improving students' speaking skills, making it an invaluable resource for educators seeking to enhance oral communication in the classroom. By incorporating Blackboard into the classroom, teachers can create a platform that allows students to interact with each other and actively participate in discussions. The interactive features, such as chat rooms and discussion boards, encourage students to express their thoughts and opinions, leading to a more engaging learning experience. Additionally, Blackboard provides a convenient way for teachers to assess students' speaking abilities through recorded audio or video assignments, allowing for personalised feedback and targeted improvement. Khafaga & Shaalan (2021) and Almekhlafy (2020) With its proven effectiveness, Blackboard has become an essential tool in modern education for fostering effective oral communication skills. Using Blackboard, students can practice and enhance their oral communication skills in a safe and supportive online environment. This platform also offers opportunities for collaborative learning, as students can engage in group discussions and presentations. Moreover, Blackboard's accessibility features make it inclusive for all learners, ensuring everyone can develop their speaking abilities. Overall, Blackboard empowers students to become effective communicators, preparing them for success in both their academic and professional lives.

By providing a platform that allows students to practice and refine their communication skills, Blackboard plays a crucial role in their overall development. Through its various features, such as virtual classrooms and interactive tools, students can engage in meaningful conversations and gain valuable feedback from their peers and instructors. This enhances their speaking abilities and fosters critical thinking and active listening skills. Furthermore, Almekhlafy (2020) and Aljuaid (2021), Blackboard's ability to accommodate different learning styles and preferences ensures that every student can participate and contribute effectively, regardless of their individual needs. Whether through written assignments, audio recordings, or video presentations, Blackboard provides a flexible platform for students to engage in diverse forms of communication and showcase their understanding. For example, in an online literature class, students can participate in virtual book clubs where they can discuss the themes and characters of a novel through written discussions or even record audio reviews. This allows students to express their thoughts and ideas in a way that suits their learning style while also receiving feedback from their peers and instructor. In addition to written discussions and audio reviews, online learning platforms also offer opportunities for students to engage in video discussions. This allows for a more dynamic and interactive conversation, where students can express their thoughts and ideas verbally and observe non-verbal cues from their peers. Video discussions can also be a valuable tool for showcasing presentations or group projects, as students can share their screens and present their work to the class in real-time. This form of communication enhances the learning experience and helps students develop important skills such as public speaking and collaboration.

With Blackboard's language learning resources, students can practice various language skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The platform offers a wide range

of exercises and assessments that cater to different learning styles and levels of proficiency. This personalised approach ensures that students receive targeted instruction and feedback, fostering a deeper understanding and mastery of the language. By combining technology with effective teaching methods, Blackboard empowers students to become confident and fluent language learners. With its user-friendly interface and interactive features, Blackboard provides a dynamic learning environment that engages students in their language studies. The platform offers a variety of multimedia resources, including videos, audio recordings, and interactive exercises, to enhance the learning experience. Students can practice their reading skills by accessing a vast library of authentic texts while writing exercises allow them to refine their grammar and vocabulary.

Additionally, Blackboard's speaking and listening exercises enable students to improve their pronunciation and comprehension skills through interactive dialogues and audio recordings. Furthermore, Blackboard's platform also provides opportunities for students to engage in collaborative learning. Through discussion boards and group projects, students can interact with their peers, exchange ideas, and work together to deepen their understanding of the subject matter. This fosters community and encourages active participation, enhancing the overall learning experience. Moreover, the platform's assessment tools allow students and instructors to track progress and measure learning outcomes. With features such as quizzes, exams, and assignments, students can receive immediate performance feedback, identify improvement areas, and strive for academic excellence.

## **5. Conclusion**

Systematic reviews also play a crucial role in identifying research gaps and future directions. By analysing the existing evidence, systematic reviews can identify areas where further research is needed to improve our understanding of a particular topic. This helps researchers and funding agencies prioritise their efforts and resources towards filling these gaps in knowledge. Additionally, systematic reviews can highlight areas where conflicting or inconclusive evidence exists, guiding researchers towards conducting studies that can address these uncertainties and provide more clarity in the field. Overall, systematic reviews advance scientific knowledge and inform future research endeavours. By identifying gaps in knowledge, systematic reviews allow researchers and funding agencies to allocate their efforts and resources in a targeted manner.

Furthermore, discussing unexpected or surprising results can provide valuable insights into the underlying mechanisms and processes. This allows researchers to propose possible explanations and delve deeper into understanding the complexities of the subject matter. In the context of teaching speaking during the Corona pandemic, the implications of the findings could be significant. They may shed light on effective strategies for remote learning and highlight the challenges and opportunities that arise in a virtual classroom setting. These insights can inform educators and curriculum designers in adapting their teaching methods to ensure effective language development in the current circumstances. For instance, the study's findings may reveal that certain online platforms or tools are more conducive to promoting speaking skills than others. Educators can then use this information to select the most appropriate technology for their virtual classrooms and optimise student engagement.

Additionally, the research could uncover the specific challenges students face when developing speaking abilities remotely, such as limited opportunities for spontaneous conversation or difficulty in receiving real-time feedback. Teachers can tailor their instruction to address these obstacles and design activities that encourage interactive and communicative learning experiences. Overall, the study's implications have the potential

to greatly enhance the quality of language education during the pandemic and beyond. By understanding the challenges students face in developing their speaking abilities remotely, teachers can implement strategies to overcome these obstacles. They can incorporate virtual discussion forums or video conferencing platforms to provide more opportunities for spontaneous conversation.

Additionally, teachers can utilise technology to provide real-time feedback, such as audio recordings or instant messaging, to enhance students' speaking skills. These adaptations in instruction benefit language education during the pandemic and potentially improve remote learning experiences in the future. Language educators can create an interactive and engaging virtual classroom environment by embracing these technological tools. Students can participate in group discussions, practice pronunciation, and receive immediate feedback from their peers and instructors. Furthermore, using technology allows for personalised and self-paced learning, catering to individual student's needs and learning styles. As more educators and students become accustomed to these digital platforms, remote language learning could become a viable and effective option even beyond the pandemic. In addition to the benefits mentioned above, remote language learning also offers a wide range of resources and materials that can enhance the learning experience. Online libraries, interactive exercises, and multimedia content are readily available at the click of a button, providing students with a wealth of information and opportunities for practice. Moreover, virtual language learning platforms often incorporate gamification elements, making the process more enjoyable and motivating for learners. These features not only make language learning more accessible, but they also foster a sense of independence and autonomy in students, as they can take control of their learning journey.

To answer the first research question, What is the effectiveness of using Blackboard for teaching speaking skills? Analysing the effectiveness of Blackboard as a teaching tool for improving speaking skills involves comparing its use with other methods and assessing its impact on student engagement and participation. This analysis can help educators make informed decisions about the best teaching methods for enhancing speaking skills, such as ease of use, accessibility, and interactivity. By comparing Blackboard's results with traditional face-to-face classes or online platforms, educators can create an engaging and interactive learning environment that empowers students to become confident and proficient language learners. By focusing on these factors, educators can create a more engaging and interactive learning environment, ultimately contributing to the continuous improvement of language education.

As for the second question, What are the potential challenges or barriers faced when implementing Blackboard for teaching speaking skills? The potential limitations and challenges of utilising Blackboard for speaking instruction: It is also important to delve into the potential drawbacks and obstacles that may arise when using it for teaching speaking. By examining studies that address these issues, educators can gain insight into any limitations or challenges that may hinder the effectiveness of Blackboard in this specific context. Some potential limitations of utilising Blackboard for speaking instruction include the lack of face-to-face interaction between students and teachers, which may hinder the development of oral communication skills. Additionally, using Blackboard for speaking instruction may face limitations such as lack of face-to-face interaction, limited opportunities for spontaneous practice, and technical issues like poor audio quality or unreliable internet connections. Educators should consider incorporating alternative methods like video conferencing or interactive language learning platforms to overcome these limitations. These platforms offer real-time conversations with native speakers or other language learners worldwide, enhancing speaking skills and exposing students to different accents and cultural perspectives. Blackboard's video conferencing feature allows for real-time communication and collaboration, while its recording and playback function enables students to review and analyse their speaking performances.

Interactive activities and multimedia resources provide diverse and engaging content to practice speaking skills in a stimulating and interactive manner. Technology also opens up a wealth of authentic resources for students to explore, allowing them to deepen their understanding of the language and expose them to the nuances and subtleties of native speakers. Online language learning platforms offer convenience and flexibility that traditional classroom settings may not offer. Students can access lessons and practice materials anytime and from anywhere, allowing them to fit language learning into their busy schedules. This accessibility also opens up opportunities for students who may not have access to in-person language courses in their local communities. Overall, Blackboard's accessibility and interactive tools make it a valuable asset for students looking to improve their speaking abilities. These features demonstrate how Blackboard can effectively support and improve students' speaking skills.

## 6. Recommendations for Future Research

This research project has identified several limitations in the existing literature and aims to address them by exploring the findings' potential implications and practical applications. The researcher recommended that conversational practice is essential for students to improve language proficiency, communication, and cultural awareness. Conversations with classmates and teachers expose students to different perspectives, experiences, and ideas from different cultures, fostering a more inclusive and open-minded mindset. This cultural competence is crucial in today's interconnected world, where cross-cultural communication and collaboration are increasingly important.

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