

**EFL LEARNERS' OBSTACLES AND STRATEGIES  
IN IMPROVING SPEAKING PERFORMANCE**

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## ABSTRACT

The distinction of EFL (English as Foreign Language) learning is commonly neglected or sometimes blurred with ESL (English as Second Language) learning. Deliberate attention is not drawn enough on EFL learners and these learners become the minority group in the world of English learning who has to strive and conform to the standard of the majority, namely, the ESL learners. This paper intends to shed light on EFL learners' perceptions towards their English learning in terms of speaking performance; particularly the aspects of fluency and accuracy. It explores the obstacles encountered and the strategies adopted individually by the learners within the scope of four linguistic aspects (phonology, grammar, syntax and vocabulary). The finding groups the data which share mutual attributes into themes, shown in complete list and tables. Most participants favour utterance fluency (Segalowitz, 2010) in their own views. Most themed obstacles are influence from other languages (phonology), various tenses (grammar), grammar pattern (syntax), insufficient word capacity (vocabulary) and bad memory (vocabulary). Most themed strategies are imitation (phonology), planning and speed reduction (grammar), revision on reading and writing (syntax), elaboration (vocabulary) and application (vocabulary).