

DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA INTERACTION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19139604>

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Abstract: *The growing use of digital technologies has significantly influenced language teaching and learning in higher education. Social media platforms have emerged as valuable tools for facilitating communication and interaction among learners. In English Language Teaching (ELT), social media environments provide opportunities for authentic language practice, collaboration, and learner engagement. This review article explores the role of social media interaction in developing speaking skills among students learning English as a foreign language. The paper analyzes existing research on the use of social media platforms in language education and examines how interactive online environments can support the development of oral communication skills. The review highlights the pedagogical potential of social media for promoting learner participation, increasing motivation, and providing additional opportunities for communicative practice. The findings suggest that integrating social media interaction into ELT classrooms can contribute to improving speaking proficiency and communicative competence. The article also discusses practical implications for educators who aim to incorporate social media-based activities into language teaching.*

Keywords: *English language teaching, speaking skills, social media interaction, communicative competence, higher education, digital learning.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of speaking skills is one of the central objectives of English Language Teaching. Effective communication in a second language requires learners to develop not only grammatical knowledge but also the ability to express ideas fluently and interact appropriately in different communicative situations. Speaking skills are therefore closely connected with the concept of communicative competence, which emphasizes the ability to use language meaningfully in real-life contexts (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980).

Despite the importance of speaking skills, many students learning English as a foreign language have limited opportunities to practice oral communication during traditional classroom instruction. Classroom time constraints, large class sizes, and learner anxiety may reduce the amount of speaking practice available to students. As a result, educators increasingly explore alternative approaches that can provide additional opportunities for communication beyond the classroom environment (Richards, 2015).

The rapid development of digital technologies has created new possibilities for supporting language learning. In recent years, social media platforms have become widely used tools for communication, information sharing, and collaboration. These platforms allow users to interact with others through text, audio, and video, creating dynamic environments for communication and knowledge exchange (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

In the context of language learning, social media platforms offer opportunities for authentic interaction and collaborative learning. Students can participate in discussions, share ideas, and communicate with peers in informal and interactive settings. Such environments may help reduce communication anxiety and encourage learners to participate more actively in speaking activities (Manca & Ranieri, 2016).

The integration of social media into ELT classrooms has therefore attracted increasing attention from researchers and educators. Social media interaction may support the development of speaking skills by providing learners with opportunities to engage in meaningful communication, practice pronunciation, and improve fluency. In addition, digital communication environments enable students to interact with others beyond the classroom, which can enhance exposure to the target language.

The purpose of this review article is to examine the role of social media interaction in developing speaking skills in English Language Teaching. The paper analyzes existing research on social media use in language learning and explores how interactive digital environments can support oral communication development among students in higher education.

2. Speaking Skills in English Language Teaching

Speaking is widely recognized as one of the most important language skills in second language acquisition. It enables learners to express ideas, share opinions, and participate in social interaction. According to Richards (2015), speaking competence involves the ability to produce language fluently and accurately while responding appropriately in communicative situations.

The development of speaking skills requires both linguistic knowledge and communicative practice. Learners must acquire vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation while also developing the ability to organize ideas and respond spontaneously during interaction. For many language learners, speaking is considered one of the most challenging skills because it requires real-time language processing and immediate responses.

Communicative language teaching emphasizes the importance of interaction in developing speaking ability. Language learners need opportunities to practice speaking through discussions, role-plays, collaborative tasks, and other communicative activities. Such activities allow learners to use language for meaningful purposes and gradually improve their fluency and confidence (Canale & Swain, 1980).

However, traditional classroom environments may not always provide sufficient opportunities for communicative practice. Limited class time and teacher-centered

instruction can reduce student participation in speaking activities. Therefore, educators increasingly explore alternative learning environments that allow students to practice communication more frequently.

3. Social Media in Language Learning

Social media platforms have become an important part of modern communication and daily life. These platforms allow users to create content, share information, and interact with others in online communities. Because of their interactive nature, social media environments have attracted growing interest in educational contexts (Selwyn, 2016).

In language education, social media platforms can support learning by providing access to authentic language materials and communication opportunities. Students can participate in discussions, watch educational videos, and interact with speakers of the target language. Such interactions can enhance language exposure and support the development of language skills.

Research indicates that social media environments can increase learner motivation and engagement. Students often perceive social media platforms as familiar and enjoyable communication spaces. As a result, learners may feel more comfortable expressing their ideas and participating in conversations in online environments (Manca & Ranieri, 2016).

Another advantage of social media in language learning is the opportunity for collaborative interaction. Learners can exchange ideas, comment on posts, and provide feedback to their peers. These interactions support communicative learning by encouraging students to use language in meaningful and interactive ways (Thomas et al., 2013).

4. Social Media Interaction for Developing Speaking Skills

Social media interaction offers several opportunities for improving speaking skills in English Language Teaching. Many platforms allow users to share audio or video messages, participate in live discussions, and respond to multimedia content. These features enable students to practice speaking in diverse and engaging ways.

For example, video-based platforms allow learners to record short speaking responses, present ideas, or participate in discussion activities. Recording and sharing spoken messages can help learners improve pronunciation, fluency, and confidence in speaking. Students also benefit from listening to the speech of others and comparing their own performance.

Social media environments can also support peer interaction and collaborative communication. When learners participate in online discussions or respond to video posts, they engage in communicative exchanges that require them to formulate ideas and express opinions. These interactions contribute to the development of communicative competence.

Furthermore, social media interaction can reduce anxiety associated with speaking in traditional classroom settings. Online environments often allow students to prepare their

responses and participate at their own pace. This flexibility can encourage shy or less confident learners to engage more actively in speaking activities.

Overall, the use of social media interaction in ELT provides additional opportunities for communicative practice beyond the classroom. By integrating digital communication tools into language instruction, educators can support the development of speaking skills in more interactive and learner-centered ways.

5. Pedagogical Implications for English Language Teaching

The integration of social media interaction into English Language Teaching provides several practical opportunities for enhancing speaking instruction in higher education. Social media platforms can be used as supplementary learning environments where students practice speaking outside traditional classroom settings.

One important implication is the use of video-based speaking tasks. Teachers can encourage students to record short video responses to discussion questions or present brief oral summaries of course topics. These activities allow learners to practice pronunciation, fluency, and organization of ideas while receiving feedback from peers and instructors.

Another useful strategy is the implementation of online discussion activities. Social media groups or discussion spaces can be used to facilitate conversations related to course topics. Students may respond to questions, comment on peers' posts, or participate in collaborative discussions. Such interaction encourages learners to formulate ideas and express opinions in English, which contributes to the development of communicative competence.

Social media platforms can also support peer feedback and collaborative learning. When students watch and respond to each other's spoken contributions, they become more aware of pronunciation, vocabulary use, and communication strategies. Peer interaction not only increases speaking practice but also promotes learner autonomy and responsibility for learning.

Furthermore, teachers should carefully guide students in the effective and responsible use of social media for educational purposes. Clear instructions, well-designed tasks, and supportive feedback are essential to ensure that social media activities contribute to meaningful learning rather than distraction.

Overall, the thoughtful integration of social media interaction into ELT classrooms can create more engaging learning environments and provide students with additional opportunities to develop speaking skills through authentic communication.

6. CONCLUSION

The development of speaking skills remains one of the most important goals of English Language Teaching. As digital technologies continue to evolve, educators have new opportunities to support language learning through interactive online environments. Social media platforms provide dynamic communication spaces where learners can interact, exchange ideas, and practice language skills in authentic contexts.

This review has explored the role of social media interaction in developing speaking skills among students learning English as a foreign language. The analysis indicates that social media environments can promote learner engagement, increase participation in communicative activities, and provide additional opportunities for speaking practice beyond the classroom.

Integrating social media interaction into ELT instruction can therefore contribute to improving speaking proficiency and communicative competence. By designing interactive tasks and encouraging online communication, educators can create more engaging and flexible learning environments that support students' language development.

Future research may further explore effective strategies for integrating social media activities into language teaching and examine their impact on learners' speaking performance in different educational contexts.

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