

استكشاف دور وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تحسين الكفاءة في التحدث: دراسة لتصورات طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية الآداب والعلوم قمينس.

أ. نادية بوراوي احفيظه* ، نجوى مفتاح محمد

Email:Elorofinadia@gmail. CoM najwaalfarsy19@gmail.Co

0009-0001-9616-0134

0009-0002-2963-005X

قسم اللغة الإنجليزية ، كلية العلوم والآداب ، قمينس ، جامعة بنغازي ، ليبيا

أ.حميدة بوراوي احفيظه

hamidaahfied@gmail.com

0009-0003-9442-1729

كلية العلوم والتقنية/ قمينس ن بنغازي

تاريخ القبول 2026/8/24م

تاريخ الارسال 2026/7/25م

الملخص:

أصبحت وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي جزءًا شبه حتمي من عملية تعلم اللغة، في ظل التوسع المتزايد لشبكات الاتصال عبر الهواتف المحمولة حول العالم، مما فتح آفاقًا جديدة أمام الطلاب للتواصل، وتبادل المعلومات، وتقاسم المعرفة خارج نطاق الفصل الدراسي. وتتناول هذه الدراسة مدى فعالية منصات مثل فيسبوك، وواتساب، ويوتيوب، وتويتتر، وإنستغرام، وماسنجر في تحسين مهارات التحدث لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية الآداب والعلوم.

واعتمادًا على المنهج الوصفي، قام الباحث بجمع البيانات من خلال استبيان وُزِعَ على الطلاب، بهدف استكشاف تصوراتهم حول تأثير هذه المنصات على أدائهم في التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي تسهم بشكل

كبير في تعزيز طلاقة الطلاب وكفاءتهم اللغوية بشكل عام، حيث أظهر المشاركون اتجاهًا إيجابيًا نحو دمج هذه الوسائل في تجربتهم التعليمية.
الكلمات المفتاحية: منصات التواصل الاجتماعي، مهارات التحدث، التكنولوجيا

**Exploring the Role of Social Media in Improving Speaking Proficiency:
A Study of English Language Students' Perceptions at the Faculty of
Arts and Sciences, Gamins**

**MA: Nadia B. Ahfaidah Lecturer. English Department. Faculty of Arts
and Sciences. Gamins University of Benghazi.**

Email:Elorofinadia@gmail. Com

**MA; Nagwa M. Mohammed/ Lecturer .English Department .Faculty of
Arts**

and Sciences.Gaminis University of Benghazi

naiwaalfarsy19@gmail.Co

Abstract

Social media has become an almost inevitable part of language learning as mobile connectivity continues to expand worldwide, opening new avenues for students to communicate, share information, and exchange knowledge outside the classroom. This study investigates the effectiveness of platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and Messenger in improving the speaking skills of English language students at the Faculty of Arts and Science.

Adopting a descriptive approach, the researcher gathered data through a student questionnaire to explore learners' perceptions of how these platforms affect their spoken English. The study concludes that social media significantly contributes to building students' fluency and overall language proficiency, with participants showing a favorable attitude toward integrating social media into their learning experience.

Keywords: Social media platforms, Speaking skills, Technology

0.1.Introduction

Such advanced communication tools can be especially beneficial for students who feel too shy to participate in front of their peers. It follows that the extensive use of these technologies in higher education pedagogy further

enables digital interaction between teachers and students, supporting web-based learning, discussion groups, and similar activities.

A considerable body of research has explored the effectiveness of social media across different academic disciplines. From a linguistic standpoint, the constant flow of language on social media gives learners numerous chances to process and absorb input, as young users spend more than half their day engaging with these platforms using their language and communication skills (Al Jahromi, 2020).

With its diverse tools and purposes, social media plays a major role in shaping the quality and level of language acquisition. It equips learners with accessible, effective means of mastering both the structure and meaning of a language. Educators should therefore make full use of social media's various forms to help learners reach their desired level of proficiency.

1.1 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in exploring English Department students' perceptions of using social networking sites (Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, YouTube, etc.) as tools for developing their speaking proficiency at Gamins Faculty. By examining learners' own viewpoints, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how social media can be effectively integrated into EFL speaking instruction.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to identify the effects of social media on English language students' speaking proficiency and to determine how its use enhances their overall performance. It further seeks to explore learners' attitudes toward using social media as a tool for developing EFL speaking skills. To this end, the researcher administered a questionnaire designed to address the inquiries outlined below.

1.3 Study Questions

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What role does social media play in improving EFL learners' speaking proficiency?
 2. What are students' perceptions of using social media to enhance their speaking skills?
- ### **2.0. Literature Review**

Recent technological breakthroughs have significantly simplified daily life, allowing people to access and obtain a wide range of resources with a single click—something unimaginable just decades ago. Within education, the adoption of web-based applications and social networking platforms has fostered a more comfortable learning environment, one that encourages students to become more independent and self-directed learners.

These technological developments have given rise to conducive learning environments, introducing various dimensions of technology that have become essential motivators in everyday life. Education specialists have spared no effort in harnessing these technological tools within their teaching practice. The potential for applying social media tools in university teaching and learning is well within reach (Heinze & Reinhardt, 2011, as cited in Wankel, 2011). Along similar lines, Sarachan and Reinson (2011) anticipate that social media, when integrated in a successful and sustainable manner, will define the future landscape of pedagogy (as cited in Wankel, 2011). The widespread use of smartphones, laptops, and tablets paired with thriving social media applications has arguably placed rich linguistic input at users' fingertips, contributing to the production of comprehensible second-language (L2) output (Pikhart & Botezat, 2021; Al Jahromi, 2020). Indeed, modern technological innovation has made once-impossible tasks routine, granting instant access to countless resources. The integration of social networking sites and web-based applications into education has similarly transformed learning into a more accessible and comfortable process, empowering learners toward greater autonomy and self-direction. English language learning worldwide has benefited considerably from this technological shift, as such networking platforms connect people harmoniously around shared perspectives (Nasri, Biria & Kamiri, 2018).

2.1. The Significance of Speaking Competence

Among the various dimensions of human communication, spoken language occupies a central position, functioning as the primary means through which individuals articulate thoughts, convey attitudes, and engage with the perspectives of others. In the absence of speech, meaningful communicative exchange cannot occur. It is precisely for this reason that speaking occupies such a prominent place in language pedagogy, particularly for learners of

English as a foreign or second language, for whom oral competence functions as an indispensable communicative tool. Within the broader framework of the four core language skills, speaking is frequently identified as the most demanding and, arguably, the most consequential, a fact that has sustained ongoing scholarly and pedagogical attention to its development. The inherent difficulty of speaking stems largely from its spontaneous, real-time nature: unlike writing, oral production affords learners little opportunity for revision or reflection before utterance. This constraint places considerable demands on learners' command of grammatical structure and lexical range, and its absence frequently results in significant communicative difficulty for foreign language learners attempting to construct accurate spoken sentences. Chaney (1998) captures this complexity in defining speaking as a process involving the expression and negotiation of meaning through both verbal and non-verbal means across diverse situational contexts.

This centrality of speaking is further underscored by Brown and Yule (1983), who observe that oral performance constitutes the primary basis upon which learners are evaluated in genuine communicative encounters. Indeed, first impressions in social and professional interaction are frequently formed on the basis of an individual's fluency and coherence in speech, underscoring learners' responsibility to cultivate this skill in preparation for communication beyond the classroom. Historically, however, speaking instruction has occupied a subordinate position within language pedagogy, with instructional practice often reduced to repetitive drilling and the rote memorization of scripted exchanges. Contemporary pedagogical perspectives, by contrast, increasingly emphasize the cultivation of authentic communicative competence, recognizing that only such competence equips learners to function effectively in real-world communicative situations. Hughes (2002) contends that fluency is realized when learners are able to express themselves clearly enough to be understood without hesitation, noting that a failure to do so risks disengaging the listener. Thornbury (2005), while similarly foregrounding the centrality of continuous speech to fluency, acknowledges the natural necessity of pausing for breath during speech production. Within speaking instruction more broadly, oral fluency

is generally regarded as a shared pedagogical objective among teachers; nevertheless, accuracy continues to receive particular emphasis in instructional practice, precisely because learners themselves tend to prioritize fluency over accuracy. This imbalance carries consequences, as a lack of accuracy tends to produce erroneous utterances that impede listener comprehension.

Accuracy itself may be understood as comprising three distinct dimensions: grammatical, lexical, and phonological accuracy. Grammatical accuracy concerns the appropriate application of grammatical structures, including control over the length and complexity of utterances (Hughes, 2002; Thornbury, 2005). Lexical accuracy, in turn, is achieved through the selection of precise and contextually appropriate vocabulary; learners frequently struggle in this respect, often misapplying synonyms whose meanings vary depending on context.

2.2. Components of Speaking Performance

Speaking ability represents one of the most vital yet challenging skills for language learners to acquire. Deficiencies in this area can significantly hinder students' communicative capacity, with consequent repercussions for both their academic progress and social integration. Understanding the constituent elements of speaking performance is therefore essential to any discussion of its development. As Burns (2019) observes, effective speech requires speakers to mobilize their linguistic knowledge and abilities instantaneously, under the pressures of real-time interaction. This immediacy renders speaking one of the most demanding language skills to cultivate, a difficulty further compounded, as Leong and Ahmadi (2017) note, by the challenges many learners face in achieving fluent linguistic expression. Speaking may thus be characterized as inherently dynamic and multifaceted, requiring a distinct set of specialized abilities for successful mastery.

The complexity of speaking is further reflected in its componential structure. According to Harmer (2007), oral proficiency comprises five interrelated components, each of which must be adequately developed for speaking performance to be considered proficient:

1.Comprehension: Effective communication is inherently interactive, requiring both the production of speech and an appropriate response to it. Given that oral exchange necessarily involves both a sender and a recipient of the message, comprehension constitutes a foundational element in assessing a speaker's overall understanding during interaction.

2.Grammar: Grammar provides the structural foundation upon which sentences are constructed. Richards and Schmidt define it as a description of a language's structure and the rules governing how units such as words and phrases combine to form sentences. Mastering grammatical structure in speech poses a particular challenge for learners, given the structural divergence that often exists between the source and target languages.

3.Vocabulary: Vocabulary refers to speakers' knowledge of words and their meanings, encompassing the appropriate lexical choices required for effective communication. In this sense, vocabulary constitutes the proper diction through which speakers convey their intended thoughts and meanings.

4.Pronunciation: Pronunciation concerns the extent to which spoken sounds are articulated in a manner comprehensible to listeners. Richards and Schmidt define pronunciation in terms of how specific sounds are produced. Sound pronunciation requires attention to several factors, including learners' habitual speech patterns—repeated practice with particular words tends to improve their pronunciation—as well as the influence of learners' native language, which can shape, and at times hinder, their pronunciation of the target language.

5.Fluency: Fluency refers to the capacity to speak, read, or write with ease, smoothness, and expressiveness, enabling speakers to comprehend and respond clearly and concisely while maintaining coherence of meaning and context. As speaking serves fundamentally as a tool for conveying thought and ensuring mutual understanding, the cultivation of strong communicative skills remains essential for learners seeking to convey information, knowledge, and personal objectives effectively.

A diverse array of social media platforms is widely employed in English language learning, offering learners real-time interaction, visual support, and access to broader language-learning communities, with substantial

numbers of users participating in such groups on a regular basis. Broadly speaking, social networking sites provide users with a private virtual space in which each individual can construct a personal public profile and maintain a network of connections to other users' profiles (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Among the numerous platforms in use worldwide, several merit particular attention within the context of language learning.

2.3.Types of Social Networking Sites

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Facebook

Facebook affords students the opportunity to practice English outside the formal classroom setting, thereby fostering interaction and collaborative learning. Its use has been associated with reduced learner stress and greater confidence in English performance, while also positioning students at the center of classroom activity and alleviating instructional burden on teachers. As a platform designed to connect and facilitate cooperation among users, Facebook supports both open and closed group formation, enabling students to share ideas and communicate with one another.

WhatsApp

WhatsApp, a widely adopted communication application installed on the majority of learners' smartphones, enables interaction among users at any time and in any location, whether through group or individual exchanges. As a tool for information exchange and discussion, it enhances learners' opportunities to acquire vocabulary relevant to the development of speaking proficiency.

YouTube

YouTube hosts a vast repository of video content, a considerable portion of which holds significant pedagogical value. Hereinto (2015) notes that the relatively limited length of YouTube videos renders them well-suited to the time constraints of classroom instruction, positioning the platform as a viable instructional medium.

Telegram

A number of studies have documented the pedagogical benefits of similar platforms such as Instagram, through which English learners are able to share ideas and opinions via their personal accounts (Phillip, 2013; Kelly, 2015; Hanieh & Shahla, 2016).

Podcasts

Podcasts consist of online audio and video files offering a range of academic learning materials that users may download and access at their convenience. Rosell-Aguilar and Fernando (2015, p. 38) liken podcasts to a public library, delivering resources directly to users' devices without cost or registration requirements. Learners may select topics of interest and access relevant knowledge as needed. As Rosell-Aguilar and Fernando (2015, p. 32) further observe, the podcast format is notably convenient and user-friendly qualities that contribute to its accessibility and its capacity to motivate learners.

Instagram

Instagram serves as a valuable resource for enhancing students' language skills, offering a convenient communicative platform beyond the confines of the traditional classroom. It enables students to generate ideas and participate in engaging learning experiences, while affording teachers opportunities to design interactive English-language activities, thereby establishing itself as an effective and innovative tool for foreign language instruction.

In summary, these social networking platforms enable users to establish connections through personal profiles, extend invitations to other users, and communicate via messaging and other digital means, with profiles typically incorporating photographs, videos, audio files, and related content.

3. Methodology of the Study

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate its central inquiries. Participants comprised both male and female students enrolled in

the Faculty of Arts and Science at Gamins, University of Benghazi, ranging in age from 19 to 23 years, with a total sample size of 35 students drawn from the Department of English. Data collection was conducted by means of a survey instrument, a method Dana Lynn Driscoll (2011) describes as a means of gathering information regarding individuals' beliefs or behaviors. Given that the study sought to examine students' perceptions of using social networking sites to develop their English speaking skills, the questionnaire was designed specifically around this focal content.

3.1 Participants

The study sample consisted of 35 students drawn from various academic levels within the Department of English, Faculty of Science and Arts, Gamins comprising 30 female and 5 male students all of whom were enrolled in listening and speaking courses delivered through traditional instructional methods. As the study aimed to explore learners' perceptions regarding the role of social networking sites in developing their English speaking proficiency, the questionnaire items were accordingly structured to align with this central focus.

Table 1: Information about the Participants of the Study

Gender of Participants	Number of Participants	Percent
Male	5	14%
Female	30	86%
Total	35	100%

3.2 Analysis and Results of the Collected Data

The questionnaire served as the primary instrument for data collection in this study, designed to elicit information regarding students' perceptions of, and inclination toward, using social media as a means of improving their speaking abilities.

Table 2: The Results of the Survey

Exploring the Role of Social Media in Improving Speaking Proficiency: A Study of English Language Students' Perceptions at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Gamins

NO	Statements	SA %	A %	SD %	D %	N %
1	Students can use social media platforms anytime and anywhere	15 42.8%	10 28.57%	2 5.7%	4 11.4%	4 11.4%
2	It is easy to communicate with your classmates through social media	17 48.57%	15 42.8%	2 5.7%	1 2.8%	- -
3	Social media is an effective tool to improve students' pronunciation	13 37.1%	15 42.8%	2 5.7%	3 8.57%	2 5.7%
4	Students are interested in learning by using Social media tools	14 40%	17 48.57%	- -	1 2.8%	3 8.58%
5	The use of social media platforms offered varied ways to learn vocabulary for speaking fluently	21 60%	10 28.57%	2 5.7%	1 2.8%	1 2.8%
6	Students often use social media sites when practicing speaking.	8 22.8%	21 60%	- -	5 14.2%	1 2.8%
7	Using social media help students to reduce their speaking anxiety	10 28.57%	18 51.4%	- -	3 8.57%	4 11.4%
8	Social media helped students to be more comfortable expressing themselves in front of public	14 40%	9 25.7%	1 2.8%	7 20%	4 11.4%
9	Students' speaking ability improved after using social media platforms by communication with natives	15 42%	14 40%	2 5.7%	- -	4 11.4%
10	Social media provides various sources for enhancing speaking ability.	17 48.57%	12 34.2%	- -	5 14.2%	1 2.8%
11	Learning through social media reinforces self-independent learning	15 42%	14 40%	2 5.7%	3 8.57%	1 2.8%
12	Using a Social media as a learning tool facilitated me to overcome my speaking difficulties	15 42%	15 42%	- -	1 2.8%	4 11.4%
13	Students have to utilize social media platforms to improve their competence in general	14 40%	16 45.7%	- -	4 11.4%	1 2.8%
14	Using social media platforms enable students to participate fully in classroom discussion	6 17.1%	20 57.1%	- -	3 8.57%	6 17.1%
15	Using social media platform like Facebook, Whats App enable students to take part in group discussion with their classmates	11 31.4%	16 45.7%	2 5.7%	3 8.57%	3 8.57%

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16	Students feel more confident speaking English when they have an individual presentation	14 40%	17 48.57%	1 2.8%	2 5.7%	1 2.8%
17	Social media promote the students' creativity, interaction and use of the language	6 17.1%	21 60%	- -	- -	8 22.8%
18	Students benefit from watching YouTube videos in improving their speaking and pronunciation	20 57.1%	10 28.57%	- -	2 5.7%	3 8.57%
19	Students are interested in using social media in increasing their oral communication outside the limits of the classroom	13 37.1%	16 45.7%	- -	3 8.57%	3 8.57%
20	Social media affect student' academic performance positively	11 %31.4	16 45.7%	- -	3 8.57%	5 14.2%

Keys: SA = strongly agree, A= agree, SD =Strongly disagree, D= disagree. N = neutral,

3.3.Analysis and Results of the Collected Data

The results obtained from the twenty-item questionnaire reveal an overwhelmingly positive orientation among students toward the use of social media in developing their English speaking skills. When responses of “strongly agree” and “agree” are combined, the majority of items recorded agreement rates exceeding 70%, indicating a broad consensus among participants regarding the value of social media as a language-learning tool. The results can be logically organized around several key thematic dimensions.

1-The results indicate that (42.8%) of the participants strongly agreed and (29%) agreed that the possibility of using the social media platforms whenever they were with easy accessibility .This demonstrates that students perceptive social media as highly accessible and flexible for learning purposes .

2-A total of (49%) of the respondents strongly agreed and (42.8%) agreed that it is easy to communicate with classmates through social media, This finding highlights the importance role of communication and collaboration among students.

3-The findings show that 37% of students strongly agreed and 42% agreed that social media is an effective tool for improving pronunciation .This reflects students positive perceptions regarding the contribution of social media to developing speaking accuracy .

4-The majority of students (88.57%)expressed positive attitudes toward learning through social media tools, with (40%) strongly agreeing and (48.57%) agreeing. This result suggests a high level of acceptance of social media in educational settings.

5-The results reveal that (60%) of students strongly agreed and (28.57%) agreed that social media platforms provide various ways to learn vocabulary for fluent speaking. this emphasizes the significance of social media in vocabulary development.

6-A large proportion of participants (82.8%) reported that they often use social media sites when practicing speaking. This indicates that social media has become an integral part of students` language -learning practices.

7-The findings show that (80%) of students agreed or strongly agreed that social media helps reduce speaking anxiety. This suggests that social media provides a supportive environment for language practice.

8-Approximately (65.7%) of respondents agreed that social media helped them feel more comfortable expressing themselves in front of others. This results indicates that social media contributes to increase learners` confidence.

9-The results demonstrate that (82%) of students believed that their speaking ability improved through communication with native speakers on social media platforms. This highlights the value of authentic communication opportunities.

10-A total of (82.7%) of participants agreed that social media provides various resources for enhancing speaking ability. The finding reflects the richness and diversity of educational content available online.

11-The majority of students (82%) agreed that learning through social media reinforces self-directed learning. This suggests that social media encourages learner autonomy and independent learning.

12-The results indicate that (84%) of respondents agreed that social media facilitated overcoming their speaking difficulties. This demonstrates the effectiveness of social media as supplementary learning tool.

13-About (85.7%) of participants agreed that students should utilize social media platforms to improve their overall competence. this reflects strong support for integrating social media into language learning.

14-The findings show that (74.2%) of students believed that social media enables them to participate more actively in classroom discussions. This indicates that social media enhances students' engagements and interaction.

15-A total of (77.1%) of respondents agreed that platforms such a Facebook and WhatsApp enable them to participate in group discussions with classmates. This highlights the collaborative nature of social medial earning.

16-The results reveal that (88.57%) of students felt more confident speaking English during individual presentations after using social media, this finding demonstrates the positive effect of social media on self -confidence.

17-Approximately (77.1%) of participants agreed that social media promotes creativity, interaction, and language use. This suggests that social media supports active and meaningful language practice.

18-The majority of students (85.67%) agreed that watching YouTube videos helps improve their speaking and pronunciation. This emphasizes the educational value of multimedia resources.

19- The findings indicate that (82,8 %) of respondents were interested in using social media to improve oral communication beyond the classroom environment. This demonstrates the role of social media in extending learning opportunities.

20-A total of (77.1%) of students agreed that social media positively affects their academic performance. This finding supports the view that social media can serve as an effective educational aid.

4.Conclusion

In conclusion, the statistical analysis of the questionnaire results reveals a highly positive perception among students regarding the use of social media

for developing English speaking skills .The majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with most of the statements ,indicating that social media platforms are considered accessible ,effective ,and motivating learning tools.

Students reported that social media enhances vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, confidence, classroom participation, autonomous learning. And communication with both peers and native speakers. Furthermore, social media was found to reduce speaking anxiety and provide authentic opportunities for language practice. Therefore, the findings strongly support the integration of social media platforms into English language learning as a valuable means of improving students` speaking proficiency and overall academic performance. clearly demonstrate that students have positive perceptions of social media and recognize its effectiveness in improving English speaking skills. Social media platforms support communication, reduce anxiety, enhance confidence, promote learner autonomy, and provide authentic opportunities for language practice. Therefore, integrating social media into language learning can significantly contribute to the development of students` speaking abilities.

5.Recommendations

This study is an attempt to investigate the role of social media in enhancing and improving EFL students` speaking abilities. Through the results obtained from the questionnaire, the majority of survey participants were in favor of using platforms of social media. Social media has proven to be one of the platforms that can be utilized as a learning aid due to its positive influence. Considering the number of students who use social media as a socialization instrument, which can create an engaging and enjoyable learning environment.

The actual use of social media can be seen in developing writing skills for EFL learners, such as making students more creative while speaking and expressing their thoughts.

Social media has become a daily habit among students and the integration of online conversations in English class should provide an atmosphere of enjoyment as well as keep the student in the right path towards improving his/her own skills. Students on their part are familiar with the influence of

Social media. They use them for various purposes ranging from education to communication and entertainment. Significantly, if these purposes were achieved in the target language (English) the students' proficiency in speaking would witness a remarkable progress. most students welcomed the thought and claimed its effectiveness in learning, they believe that connecting to native speakers is the best method

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