

TED talk and YouTube for English education: An autoethnographic study

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ABSTRACT

Through a personal exploration using autoethnographic methodology, this study delves into the researcher's experiences as both a student and a teacher, analyzing the benefits and limitations of integrating these social media tools into English education. Data collected through reflective journaling on the usage of these platforms reveals key themes regarding engagement, distractions, and overall academic performance. Ultimately, this study seeks to answer how these platforms have enhanced verbal skills and whether such experiences can be synthesized into lessons or activities to further assist other learners in their educational journeys. The findings point to both positive and negative impacts on teaching and learning development in ELT, with the positive impacts being processed into practical strategies for supporting teaching and learning.



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1. Introduction

The emergence of Web 2.0 tools for language learning witnesses a notable shift towards virtual platforms as promising environments for English language acquisition (Barrot, 2022). Despite such support, many complex elements in the language, including pose significant challenges for many students including grammar, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and the four skills (Choirunnisa & Sari, 2018; Hamouda, 2013).

In catering for such complexity, platforms such as YouTube and TED Talks have gained significant traction among both educators and students due to their flexibility, interactivity, and extensive resources. TED Talks and YouTube cater to diverse learning styles by presenting content in various formats—ranging from engaging videos to interactive discussions—which not only simplifies complex concepts but also makes language learning more accessible and enjoyable. This multifaceted approach enables learners to access lessons anytime, interact with peers and educators, and practice their language skills in a familiar environment.

The use of social media for learning English presents both positive and negative impacts on the academic context (Mei and Aziz, 2022). Given these complexities, it is crucial to explore the benefits and limitations of integrating TED Talks and YouTube into English teaching. The article shares the researcher's personal experiences both as a student and as a teacher with an analysis of how these platforms have influenced the author's English development journey.

2. Literature Review

Both YouTube and TED Talks are considered forms of social media, although they serve slightly different purposes and functionalities within that category. YouTube is primarily a video-sharing platform where users can upload, share, and view videos. It allows for interaction through comments, likes, and subscriptions, making it a highly interactive and community-driven platform. YouTube hosts a vast array of content, including educational videos, entertainment, vlogs, and more.

TED Talks are a series of informative presentations on various topics delivered by experts in their fields. While TED itself is an organization that curates and produces these talks, the platform encourages sharing and discussion around the ideas presented, which aligns with social media principles. TED Talks often spark conversations and can be shared across different social media platforms, thereby fostering community engagement around the ideas discussed. Both platforms leverage user-generated content and allow for interaction, making them integral parts of the social media landscape, particularly in the context of educational and informative content.

3. Method

3.1. Approach

This study employs an autoethnographic methodology to explore the influence of social media on education from a personal perspective. Autoethnography allows researchers to reflect on their individual experiences while simultaneously contextualizing these experiences within broader social and cultural frameworks. This method enables a deeper exploration of how social media shapes educational experiences and its impact on learning.

3.2. Data Collection

Data for the study was collected through the researcher's reflective journaling. Actively engaging with at least six social media platforms in Vietnam, including Zalo, Viber, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and TED Talks, the researcher selected the last two for this study due to the maximum benefits that they bring compared to many others. On average, the researcher spends about two hours daily on social media, using YouTube to refresh knowledge on topics of interest and to acquire new information and using TED Talks to improve skills such as attentive listening, public speaking, and critical thinking.

The researcher maintained a reflective journal recording her thoughts, feelings, and observations related to the use of YouTube and TED Talks as well as their effects on her development in teaching and learning. The number of videos are not taken into account. Instead, the journal entries provided a comprehensive account of daily interactions with these tools, with focuses on the researcher's academic experiences, distractions and challenges. The data were thematically analyzed. Key themes emerged regarding the benefits and challenges of social media in an educational context.

3.3. Method of Analysis

The analysis process follows three specific steps. First, the researcher generated initial codes that encapsulated significant elements of the data, focusing on aspects such as engagement, distraction, communication, and academic performance. Second, these codes were then grouped into broader themes, reflecting common patterns that emerged from the researcher's personal experiences and critical reflections. Third, a reflective lens was applied to ensure that the analysis acknowledged the researcher's positionality, enhancing the authenticity of the findings and interpretations.

4. Research Questions

- 1) How has the researcher's experience with YouTube and TED Talks enhanced verbal skills?
- 2) Can such experiences be processed into lessons or activities to support the learning of others?

5. Research Gap

5.1. Innovative Use of Social Media

Social media represents a valuable resource that can diversify teaching and learning approaches (Alazemi et al., 2023). Huang et al. (2023) argue that social media enhances the educational experience by fostering new modes of communication between educators and students. Despite such values, social media addiction can result in negative emotions, diminished interest in social activities, and reduced motivation to learn, all of which may adversely impact academic success (Huang, 2014).

According to Xu, J. (2023), the evolution of education can be broadly categorized into three stages: the traditional experiential-imitative educational system, the computer-assisted educational system, and the big data-driven educational system. The traditional model, which relies on established teaching tools and focuses primarily on learning outcomes, tends to overlook opportunities for student exploration and innovation. Along this line, research by Chen et al. (2023) found that social media can provide learners with a low-stress environment ideal for developing speaking skills and fostering a sense of community beyond geographical and linguistic bounds. This can happen through tasks like creating and sharing videos on relevant platforms and participating in video discussions. Extending classroom discussions to social media allows students to demonstrate their knowledge without the immediate pressure of traditional assessments, thereby increasing engagement.

From a positive psychology perspective, Alazemi et al. (2023) found that incorporating social media into education enhances writing skills and student engagement. Its inherent communication capabilities foster stronger relationships between students and educators, facilitating informal and friendly interactions, as well as efficient information exchanges. Social media, however, is a double-edged sword, having both strengths and weaknesses.

In strengths, Alazemi et al. (2023) and Xu, J. (2023) emphasize that social media can help overcome traditional barriers of time and place in learning. Furthermore, social media can enhance independent learning, providing access to an abundance of information and resources, which can motivate students to engage more actively in their studies. Effective use of social media in education allows teachers to connect directly with students, thereby broadening the educational experience beyond traditional classrooms.

Conversely, in weaknesses, some research indicates that while social media can support professional learning among educators, its impact is often limited to individuals within the same department. As noted by Nicholas et al. (2024), social media has not significantly fostered collaboration or understanding across different organizational sectors. Most discussions have become tools for immediate technical solutions rather than platforms for cross-departmental collaboration. The following sections will look at the pros and cons of social media in some details.

5.2. Research on YouTube and TED Talk in education

López-Carril et al. (2020) investigate the integration of TED Talks as a pedagogical resource within sport management education, leveraging platforms such as YouTube and LinkedIn. Their study argues that TED Talks can foster critical thinking and engagement by providing a rich source of contemporary insights relevant to students. The authors present practical strategies for educators seeking to incorporate these multimedia resources into their teaching, aiming to develop professional competencies and encourage lifelong learning among students. While their work contributes significantly to the discourse on digital resources in education, it also highlights a notable research gap concerning the empirical exploration of TED Talks within sport management curricula. They emphasize the necessity for further studies to analyze how such resources influence learning outcomes, student engagement, and skill development in this specific educational context.

In comparison, Brook (2011) provides a broader examination of YouTube's potential for language learning and teaching. His review underlines the platform's advantages, including access to authentic language use, diverse accents, and interactive learning opportunities. Brook stresses that integrating YouTube into language curricula can elevate student motivation and engagement; however, his analysis primarily focuses on the features of the platform rather than providing effective methodologies for its practical implementation in educational settings. He identifies similar research gaps, such as the need for comprehensive studies on the effectiveness of specific channels and videos in language acquisition, and the exploration of cultural understanding through YouTube content.

Both studies underscore a pressing need for empirical research that investigates the effectiveness and implementation challenges of multimedia resources like TED Talks and YouTube in education. While López-Carril et al. (2020) specifically address the context of sport management, and Brook focuses on language education, there is a shared recognition of the potential for innovation in teaching practices through technology. Additionally, both articles call for further research to fill existing gaps, emphasizing that understanding specific features and their pedagogical impact remains crucial for educators aiming to enhance learning experiences in their respective fields.

6. The Advantages of Learning English Through Social Media

6.1. Rich Learning Resources

Social media applications serve four primary functions: entertainment, interaction, knowledge sharing, and education. Platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and WhatsApp have become integral to students' daily lives (Mei & Aziz, 2022). They provide a vast array of educational resources tailored to learners at all levels, from beginners to advanced students preparing for effective academic performance.

6.2. Breaking the Limits of Time and Space

Alshammari et al. (2015) highlight that social media can break down the constraints of time and space, fostering a learner-centered environment. In IELTS preparation, for example, social media quickly emerged as a valuable supplement, allowing flexibility to engage with educational content.

As such, social media is an effective tool for supporting self-directed learning. It promotes collaboration and rapid resource sharing among users, helping students gather learning materials to complete tasks and homework through their preferred online channels (Li, 2017). This functionality is particularly beneficial for those who require quick access to educational resources, fostering a collaborative approach to learning even when traditional classroom settings are unavailable.

Furthermore, social media platforms provide the flexibility for users to tailor their learning experiences to suit their individual needs, enabling students to "learn at their own pace and according to their own needs" (Han, 2022, p. 7). The researcher found it particularly beneficial to be able to replay, pause, or slow down videos when tackling challenging concepts or practicing new vocabulary. This capability allowed intensive absorption of learning materials—something that can be difficult in a traditional classroom setting where time is often limited and the pace can be fast.

Additionally, short videos make it possible to make effective use of fragmented time. With social media, learning can occur anytime and anywhere. For instance, while waiting for the bus, students can watch a brief video on IELTS speaking tips or listen to a native speaker discussing idiomatic expressions. This accessibility allows for seamless language learning, as these short bursts of knowledge throughout the day helped the researcher retain information more effectively and mitigated the learning fatigue that often accompanies long, intensive study sessions.

7. The Disadvantages of Learning English Through Social Media

7.1. Lack of Immediate Feedback

Despite the wealth of resources available, one significant limitation compared to traditional face-to-face classes was the lack of immediate feedback. In contrast to in-person classroom settings, the feedback loop on social media often feels one-directional. Learners typically consume information from influencers or teachers without the opportunity for direct interaction or personalized guidance, especially in pre-recorded video formats or during live streams. While real-time communication is possible in live classes, these often cater to large audiences, making it challenging to address individual concerns in a comprehensive manner. Although learners can leave comments or participate in live discussions, such interactions may feel impersonal and delayed due to the high volume of participants vying for attention.

Furthermore, the absence of tailored guidance can be particularly challenging for beginners who may struggle with self-correction. In a physical classroom, teachers can assess their students' progress and provide individualized support. However, the social media landscape can foster feelings of

isolation, as learners might feel lost amidst the overwhelming array of influencers and content without sufficient direction.

7.2. Distraction

Another drawback of using social media for language learning is the potential for distraction. Many students find themselves spending excessive time on entertainment, which can reduce study time and ultimately affect academic performance. The prevalence of advertisements and the enticing nature of non-educational content can easily divert attention (Alshammari et al., 2015). Social media is primarily designed for entertainment and social interaction, making it easy for students to be captivated by content unrelated to their studies.

One common challenge experienced by many students while learning English is the influx of irrelevant content—such as funny pet videos, movie trailers, and cooking tutorials—that may not match everyone's personal interests. Such entertaining distractions may appear when students need to focus on study, making it difficult to resist the urge to click on them. Most social media platforms employ algorithms to keep users engaged by promoting content based on their viewing preferences, creating a feedback loop that continually lures students away from their academic goals and into a realm of endless entertainment.

Additionally, the fast-paced nature of social media can lead to procrastination, as students often convince themselves to watch "just one more video" instead of focusing on their studies. This cycle not only wastes valuable learning time but can also heighten stress as deadlines approach.

7.3. Lack of Accuracy

Another critical disadvantage of learning English through social media is the potential lack of accuracy in the information presented. While platforms like Wikipedia are common reference points, they often lack reliability because their contributors may not have formal expertise in their fields (Liu, 2010). Unfortunately, this issue extends to various English learning resources on social media.

Numerous self-proclaimed "English learning bloggers" on platforms such as Bilibili, TikTok, and RED who lack professional qualifications or relevant study abroad experience. This is particularly concerning for beginners who rely on these influencers for foundational knowledge, as they may inadvertently absorb misinformation. Errors in grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation can lead to the development of bad habits that become difficult to correct later.

In the researcher's observation, many students sometimes follow a blogger who claimed to provide "perfect IELTS speaking skills." After watching his videos, the researcher realized that the speaker's grammar and pronunciation were not up to desirable standard. Additionally, many advertisements from various organizations showcasing exaggerated success stories of high-scoring students. While these organizations promoted their methods as effective, the researcher later discovered that some of the "successful candidates" were misrepresented or selectively chosen to attract customers. The misinformation can create unrealistic expectations and a false sense of security among learners.

Such discrepancies can be particularly disheartening, especially when learners realize that those success stories indeed fail to reflect their own experiences. The scores that cannot meet learners' expectations may lead to feelings of frustration and inadequacy. This highlights the essential need for learners to approach social media content with skepticism, seeking credible and well-sourced information to ensure a more accurate and effective learning experience. To guard off such misled attractions, it is crucial for English language learners to develop our discernment skills, analyze the information we encounter, and use it wisely (Liu, 2010).

8. Personal Reflection on the Use of Social Media as a Student

The challenge of social media in the researcher's experience was a state of overuse. During her junior high school years, the researcher became overly reliant on social media to the point of addiction, which led to a noticeable decline in her academic performance. This prompted intervention from both her teachers and parents. Reflective data for this study revealed that several of the researcher's acquaintances also found certain audiovisual materials used by instructors to be distracting. As Nema et al. (2023) indicate, existing research shows that multimedia in the classroom can disrupt student engagement and hinder instructor assessment.

Distraction manifests during many homework sessions as well. The researcher recalled a specific instance when she received an alert on her mobile phone while completing a challenging assignment. Curiosity caused her to check the notification, which turned out to be a video shared by a friend. Engaging with the video led to a chain reaction of watching subsequent videos, and before the researcher knew it, an hour had passed. This severely disrupted her study schedule, forcing her to extend her bedtime to finish the homework. Many students have reported similar experiences. It is clear that if such distractions persist, they will negatively impact our academic performance. Thus, it is crucial that students allocate their time wisely and set specific time slots for social media usage, ensuring it does not interfere with their studies and lives. In exploring solutions, some students mentioned studying at the school library without their phones, leaving them in their dorm rooms, and waiting until they returned to check their devices. Others reported using the 'Do Not Disturb' mode on their phones to prevent distractions from social media during study time.

One particularly effective strategy the researcher discovered is using an app called Forest, which gamifies the user's focus. Upon completing a challenge, players can 'harvest' virtual trees that signify their efforts. Success earns them rewards like gold coins that can be used to purchase additional virtual trees, or they can opt to plant real trees, thereby linking productivity to environmental sustainability. This dual benefit helps maintain focus while contributing positively to the world. While the researcher occasionally succumb to the lure of social media even within the app, achieving goals in Forest often leads to a sense of accomplishment. Watching virtual saplings grow into thriving trees symbolizes the cultivation of positive learning habits and an improvement in the researcher's academic performance. This approach allows educators to monitor students' concentration levels effectively, proving more beneficial than merely warning students about the potential distractions of their mobile devices.

9. Personal Reflection on YouTube and TED Talks as a Teacher

9.1. YouTube

As an educator in primary school English, the researcher has witnessed firsthand how social media has revolutionized teaching methodologies. In the past, many Vietnamese teachers tended to rely on traditional textbooks and lecture-based approaches, which sometimes restrict student engagement. However, the emergence of platforms such YouTube and TED Talks have opened up inspiring possibilities, allowing teachers to adopt a more interactive and dynamic teaching style.

In her teaching experiences, the researcher has designed class projects that employ social media to enhance student engagement and participation. Such activities not only broadened the learning channels available to students but also transformed them from recipients of information into active learners who produce videos and share their findings with a wider audience. It has been incredibly rewarding to watch her students develop their digital literacy and critical thinking skills through this process, achieving a deeper and more meaningful learning experience.

One of the most significant impacts of social media on teaching has been the researcher's ability to create a more interactive classroom environment. For instance, it was found that using video platforms like YouTube can effectively capture students' attention and motivate them to participate in lessons. When introducing topics, the researcher incorporates short, engaging cartoon videos that convey educational content through storytelling. This approach not only makes complex topics relatable but also fosters a sense of curiosity and excitement among students. Integrating a Think-Pair-Share model after watching these videos turns students into active participants, encouraging them to discuss ideas, ask questions, and engage critically with what they have learned.

In her reflections, the researcher has come to appreciate the vast array of visual and auditory resources available through platforms such as YouTube. These resources cater to various learning styles and enable students to grasp concepts more easily. The researcher recalls a specific lesson with her conversation class where she introduced the order of the months using a catchy cartoon video. The combination of music and visuals not only helped students remember the sequence but also made the learning experience enjoyable. Observing how students lighting up with understanding reinforced the researcher's trust in the effectiveness of a multi-sensory approach to education.

Using YouTube has transformed the researcher's teaching resources, allowing her to access a repository of educational content that extends beyond the limitations of textbooks. She finds the ability to adapt videos to suit students' interests invaluable. By utilizing platforms such as YouTube Kids,

she is able to curate age-appropriate content that enhances her teaching across various subjects. This flexibility not only enriches the learning experience but also ensures that the material aligns with the curriculum and meets the specific needs of students.

During such practice, the researcher has noticed a significant shift in their engagement levels as they share their multimedia projects and receive feedback from peers. One memorable project involved having students document and share their observations of the moon over a month. By posting their photos on our Google Classroom forum, they explored the lunar phases hands-on, fostering collaboration and creativity. This experience highlighted how social media can transform ordinary lessons into engaging, collaborative, and meaningful learning opportunities.

In her experience as a teacher, the integration of social media into the classroom has reshaped the researcher's teaching practices and enriched her students' learning experiences. By embracing these tools, she has moved towards a more interactive, personalized, and relevant approach to education. Social media has not only provided valuable resources but has also transformed students into active participants in their learning, fostering a culture of communication, collaboration, and creativity.

9.2. TED Talk

TED Talks serve as an effective resource for both students and teachers in the teaching and learning process. In Vietnam, where English language proficiency is increasingly essential for academic and professional success, TED Talks have emerged as a valuable tool for enhancing learners' listening and speaking skills. This is largely due to their authentic language presentation, diversity, and accessibility (Park & Cha, 2013). As globalization continues to shape Vietnam's economy and culture, the ability to communicate effectively in English has become more critical than ever (Bui, 2013). Consequently, educational institutions across the country are placing a strong emphasis on English language learning, elevating its status within the curriculum (Hoang, 2020). Resources like TED Talks have become important supplementary tools for modernizing the classroom experience.

TED, which stands for Technology, Entertainment, and Design, is a non-profit organization that offers free presentations available on the Internet (Nursafira, 2020). The platform features recordings of global conferences that cover a wide range of topics, from business and science to education and entertainment. Since becoming publicly accessible in 2006, TED presentations have garnered significant engagement, resulting in more than 1,800 talks and a database of 35,000 transcripts available in over 30 languages—a number that continues to grow (Taibi et al., 2010). The talks showcase speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds and cultures, offering a unique platform for authentic language input and cultural exploration (Li, 2024). Furthermore, the short duration of each video—typically no more than 18 minutes—makes them easily digestible and encourages lively classroom discussions around relevant ideas and educational experiences (Ahluwalia, 2018). This exposure provides students with practical understanding of English, enriching their knowledge beyond traditional textbooks (Johnson, 2018).

10. The Influence of YouTube and TED Talks on Enhancing Verbal Skills

10.1. YouTube and TED Talks as a Model for Pronunciation and Intonation

The researcher recalls, as a student in the past, how her English speaking used to resemble a robotic delivery. She struggled to articulate words yet they lacked the natural rise and fall in tone that characterizes fluent speech. Consequently, she was unable to convey her emotions effectively during conversations. This issue is not unique to her. Many learners in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts share similar challenges, particularly when both teachers and students are non-native speakers (Nurhidayat & Syarifah, 2019). To address this, the researcher decided to modify her learning approach by exposing herself to authentic materials through YouTube and TED Talks. Employing techniques such as mimicking and shadowing while watching these videos has significantly improved her pronunciation and intonation.

Pronunciation involves not only articulating words but also producing the correct sounds of the English language. It is argued that practicing and adjusting pronunciation in real time enable learners to refine their skills (Nurhidayat & Syarifah, 2019). Such methods enhance students' understanding of contextual language models, increasing their awareness of various components such as auditory elements, rhythmic structures, and prosodic features (Totoy Sani, 2019). As noted by Yang (2016), engaging with YouTube and TED Talks can help students improve phonetic pronunciation and

prosody competence, moving one closer to a highly intelligible pronunciation. Research by Tran and Nguyen (2024) also indicates that most students surveyed preferred to mimic the intonation and pronunciation of speakers while using phrases and vocabulary to refine their own speech.

While YouTube and TED Talks have been invaluable for improving her pronunciation, they have also exposed the researcher to a range of English accents from diverse presenters. However, this exposure comes with its own set of challenges. First, the rapid speech of some speakers can make it difficult to follow along, particularly if learners miss one or two vocabulary words (Diniya, 2023). This can hinder their ability to listen and effectively imitate the words. Secondly, with so many accents to choose from, learners may struggle to determine which accent to emulate, making it difficult to achieve consistent fluency (Diniya, 2023). To overcome these obstacles, the researcher often rely on transcripts and adjust the video playback speed when struggling to understand the words clearly.

10.2. YouTube and TED Talks as a Catalyst for Critical Thinking

While pronunciation and intonation are vital components of speaking proficiency, critical thinking also plays an essential role. Critical thinking encompasses skills developed through understanding a specific topic, evaluating evidence, and critically examining arguments (Facione, 1990; Wade, 2009). Speaking involves articulating ideas. To express ideas effectively, knowledge is required.

Since the researcher began watching selected YouTube and TED Talks, she have gained knowledge across various fields, including arts, education, and science. The enlightening content of TED Talks encourages her to think critically, a process advocated by Tran and Nguyen (2024) as being essential to learning efficiency. The slogan "Ideas worth spreading," prominently featured in the TED logo, reflects the platform's commitment to sharing knowledge through the insights of seasoned professionals (TED, 2016). As Quizhpi (2015) notes, TED is dedicated to countering negative narratives by promoting positive ideas and educating audiences on values across multiple disciplines. This framework has made TED an effective tool for enhancing oral English learning and providing fresh cultural perspectives (Quizhpi, 2015). After watching a talk, the researcher develops a habit of summarizing main points and create questions that encourage deeper exploration of the topics. Additionally, engaging in discussions with peers allows her to exchange ideas and receive constructive feedback, further boosting both critical thinking and speaking skills.

Despite the advantages of YouTube and TED Talks as resources for critical thinking, there are critiques regarding their content. For instance, some videos can be challenging for second language learners, often containing lengthy sentences, complex concepts, and less commonly used vocabulary (Brown, 2015). Additionally, many videos include cultural references that may not resonate with all viewers, potentially leading to frustration. Critics argue that TED's evolving content has become overly commercialized, diluting its original mission and making the talks less impactful (Brown, 2015). Scholars such as Hustad (2014) and Jurgensen (2012) points out that YouTube and TED presentations have become more promotional in nature, deviating from their initial objectives.

10.3. TED Talks as a Model for Pronunciation and Intonation

In addition to enhancing pronunciation, YouTube and TED Talks have introduced the researcher to various English accents from presenters with diverse backgrounds. However, learning different accents presents its own challenges. One significant obstacle is that some speakers talk at a rapid pace, making it difficult to follow along and causing learners to miss vital vocabulary (Diniya, 2023). This can impede attempts to listen attentively and imitate effectively. Furthermore, with an array of accents to choose from, learners may find it challenging to select which accent to emulate, complicating learner efforts to achieve fluency (Diniya, 2023). To tackle these challenges, the researcher utilizes transcripts and adjusts the video playback speed to better understand listening materials.

While TED Talks serve as excellent resources for fostering critical thinking, some critiques of their content exist. For example, certain talks can be challenging for second language learners, often containing long sentences, complex concepts, and uncommon vocabulary (Brown, 2015). Moreover, many TED Talks include cultural references that may not resonate with all viewers. Critics argue that TED's evolving content has become overly commercialized, which may dilute its original mission and reduce the impact of the talks (Brown, 2015). Hustad (2014) compares typical TED Talks to religious messaging, while Jurgensen (2012) highlights that modern TED presentations often prioritize promotional content over the initial objectives of the speakers.

Despite these criticisms, the benefits the researcher has garnered from engaging with YouTube and TED Talks are substantial. The wealth of statistical information provided by the speakers has enriched the researcher's understanding and led to improved performance in her IELTS speaking examinations. She now finds it easier to interact with foreigners and engage in meaningful discussions, having built a more substantial reservoir of ideas and enhanced analytical skills compared to her earlier experiences.

11. Applying YouTube and TED Talks for Enhancing Verbal Skills

This practical section aims to create a dynamic and interactive learning environment that leverages the strengths of social media while addressing its challenges. By actively involving students in the learning process and providing diverse resources, the researcher hopes to cultivate a more engaging and effective educational experience that resonates with their interests and strengthens their language skills.

Social media can be seamlessly integrated into educational settings with minimal conscious effort (Mann et al., 2022). As Nicholas et al. (2024) suggest, inspiring social media can significantly boost learning motivation and, observed by Alazemi et al. (2023), foster a collaborative learning environment. Integrating social media into language education can improve overall proficiency and bolster students' confidence when using the target language (Mann et al., 2022).

11.1. Activities to Improve Pronunciation and Intonation

As mentioned earlier, mimicking speakers from YouTube and TED Talks has been a valuable method for improving the researcher's pronunciation and intonation. The researcher would like to employ this technique creatively for classroom teaching and learning through an engaging activity that she calls "TED Talk Emulation."

In this activity, the teacher selects a powerful TED Talk that resonates with students, featuring impactful quotes and a clear presentation style. After choosing a talk, the teacher prepares slides highlighting key phrases and statements. The class is then divided into small groups to foster collaborative learning and peer support. The teacher presents the TED Talk in its original format, pausing at strategic moments to encourage students to follow along with the text displayed on the slides. Each group member has the opportunity to present a specific section of the talk, imitating the speaker's delivery style. This approach emphasizes the importance of speech delivery, pronunciation, and nonverbal communication—essential components of effective public speaking.

Following the mimicry exercise, students share their reflections on the themes and content of the talk. The imagery received during the presentation serves as a literary tool, stimulating students' connections to the text while conveying meanings that transcend mere words. To further engage participants, students are encouraged to focus on particular sections and expand upon them using their own words, fostering creative thinking. Throughout this process, the teacher circulates the classroom, providing guidance, encouragement, and constructive feedback, while promoting critical analysis among students.

One of the key advantages of this activity is that it allows students to evaluate their performances and identify areas for improvement by recording their presentations. By emphasizing speaking skills through this method, TED Talk Karaoke effectively immerses students in authentic content, enabling them to achieve learning outcomes that may not have been possible otherwise.

Participating in TED Talk Emulation has strong potential to enhance students' public speaking abilities. The lively atmosphere and humour involved in the activity can engage learners' minds, making it easier to focus on the phonetic elements of speech. The researcher has developed a passion for enhancing specific areas of the text and utilizing them creatively to guide student learning. Watching such recordings can help students improve their delivery, allowing them to interweave concepts and express opinions clearly and appropriately.

11.2. Activities to Stimulate Idea Generation

To foster critical thinking in speaking class, the researcher would like to propose an activity called "Roleplaying Characters." In this activity, students begin by watching a thought-provoking TED Talk that explores various innovations and historical figures. Rather than concentrating solely on discussion, the focus is on the characters presented in the talk. Each student selects a historical figure,

inventor, or entrepreneur relevant to the themes discussed in the TED Talk. This selection encourages students to delve deeper into these topics and broaden their understanding.

Once the characters are chosen, students engage in an interactive session where they embody their selected figures, brainstorming ideas and exploring the theme of the TED Talk through the lens of their characters. This role-playing approach encourages problem-solving as students consider how historical events might unfold and the actions their characters would take in that context.

Once groups have settled on their characters, they collaborate on a new task. Each student develops and verbally presents an argumentative proposal, emphasizing their character's values, motivations, and potential solutions to relevant issues. This exercise requires students to interpret complex ideas and articulate their perspectives based on their characters' viewpoints. An engaging debate ensues, facilitating the exchange of ideas, even when they are controversial, as students critically analyze each other's opinions.

The objectives of this activity enable students to comprehend and apply knowledge effectively. Participating in such exercises has allowed the researcher to formulate logical arguments for possible solutions while appreciating the value of diverse perspectives. The researcher views these discussions as open forums where everyone—regardless of how radical their stance—has the right to share their thoughts. Overall, this strategy can make learning engaging and fulfilling, significantly boosting learner confidence in articulating ideas and honing skills in supporting them.

12. Contribution of This Study in The Field

The research discourse as presented in section 5 of this article has pointed out various benefits and features of social media, including TED Talk and YouTube that enhance language education. While highlighting these tools as valuable resources for language learners and teachers the recent studies tend focuses more on the “what” than the “how” of social media, that is, not providing sufficient strategies of making the tool effective for teaching and learning. The currently study compensates for this gap by sharing an in-depth reflective account of how the tools work to improve teaching and learning, with specific suggestions for making such efficiency happen.

13. Concluding Insights

This article has explored the significant role of YouTube and TED Talks in enhancing English speaking competency while highlighting their broader benefits for language learners. These tools can help learners improve pronunciation, fluency, and ability to generate ideas.

Having said that, YouTube and TED Talks also come with certain limitations. Issues such as the complexity of the language, the speed of speech, and cultural nuances can present challenges for learners, potentially leading to misunderstandings. Furthermore, the topics covered may not always resonate with all learners, which can further hinder engagement with the material.

To address these challenges, it is essential for instructors to implement various strategies to enhance language learning. Suggestions include providing vocabulary lists prior to the lecture, facilitating teacher-led discussions on cultural contexts, and offering transcripts to aid comprehension. By integrating different types of lessons alongside YouTube and TED Talks, educators can create a more well-rounded approach to language learning.

Broadly speaking, social media can be seen as a double-edged sword, offering both positive and negative aspects. When used wisely, these platforms provide access to knowledge and resources that can enhance our learning experience beyond the classroom setting, opening up a broader range of possibilities in our lives. However, it is also crucial to recognize the limitations of social media use. The phenomenon of the “information cocoon,” for instance, can restrict our exposure to diverse viewpoints, trapping us in a comfortable but narrow information bubble. Piao and Li (2023) highlight that while AI-driven recommendation algorithms attempt to manage information overload, they also contribute to the creation of echo chambers filled with homogeneous content and opinions, exacerbating social divisions and encouraging prejudice.

While technology cannot completely replace traditional education, it plays a crucial role in supporting and enhancing educational practices. By improving teaching efficiency and enriching the

learning experience, technology can significantly elevate the quality of education. In particular, the thoughtful integration of social media tools creates interactive and engaging learning environments that are essential for the success of modern education. Social media serves as an important supplementary method in English teaching; to maximize the effectiveness of these tools, future technology integration should prioritize the needs and preferences of students, focusing on resources they naturally gravitate towards rather than those mandated by educational institutions (Liu, 2010).

Utilizing social media helps English learners acquire new vocabulary that aligns with their language proficiency, making the learning process more accessible compared to traditional reading materials. Furthermore, it stimulates their interest in learning English, allowing them to engage with these tools for extended periods without losing motivation or becoming bored (Khan, 2016).

Social media also empowers students to become more independent and responsible learners by providing opportunities to continue their education outside of traditional classroom settings (Han, 2022). It enables them to interact with learning materials in a manner that best suits their personal needs and circumstances, enhancing the adaptability and accessibility of education.

Moreover, social media benefits teachers as well, giving them the ability to “transform traditional classroom activities and create a more fun and friendly learning environment” (Aloraini, 2018, p. 181). During the pandemic, social media platforms played a pivotal role in maintaining access to language learning resources when traditional in-person classes were unavailable. These platforms allowed students to continue practicing English, participating in interactive discussions, and accessing a wealth of learning materials remotely. This flexibility ensured that learners could progress at their own pace, underscoring the essential function social media serves in supplementing formal education, especially in times of crisis.

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