

The effects of social media on students' confidence in speaking English

O'rinboyeva Sevinch Qadam qizi

Uzbekistan World Language University

Faculty of Foreign Language and Literature 3rd year Student

Tel: +998508891800

Email: orinboyevasevinchoy718@gmail.com

Xamidova Madinabonu Abduboriy qizi

Scientific supervisor, Head teacher at Uzbekistan State World Languages university

Abstract: In the modern digital era, social media has become deeply integrated into students' academic, social, and linguistic development. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Telegram, YouTube, and Facebook are widely used not only for entertainment but also for communication and informal learning. This article investigates the effects of social media on students' confidence in speaking English. Using a qualitative approach, the study analyzes both positive and negative impacts of social media usage on oral communication skills. The findings suggest that social media can significantly enhance speaking confidence by providing exposure to authentic language and opportunities for communication. However, excessive reliance on online interaction may reduce real-life speaking practice and increase communication anxiety in face-to-face situations. The study concludes that a balanced and purposeful use of social media is essential for improving students' speaking confidence.

Аннотация: В современную цифровую эпоху социальные сети стали неотъемлемой частью академической, социальной и языковой жизни студентов. Платформы, такие как Instagram, TikTok, Telegram, YouTube и Facebook, широко используются не только для развлечений, но и для общения и неформального обучения. В данной статье исследуется влияние социальных сетей на уверенность студентов в устной речи на английском языке. Используя качественный подход, в исследовании анализируются как положительные, так и отрицательные аспекты использования социальных сетей. Результаты показывают, что социальные сети могут значительно повысить уверенность в говорении благодаря доступу к аутентичному языку и возможностям общения. Однако чрезмерное использование онлайн-коммуникации может снижать практику живого общения и усиливать тревожность при личных разговорах. В заключение подчеркивается, что сбалансированное использование социальных сетей является важным фактором для развития уверенности в устной речи.

Introduction

In recent years, rapid technological development has transformed the way students learn and communicate. Social media platforms have become one of the most influential tools in this transformation. According to Anderson and Jiang (2018), a large majority of teenagers actively use social media on a daily basis, which directly affects their communication habits and language learning processes.

English has become a global language, and speaking skills are considered one of the most important components of language proficiency. Speaking confidence refers to the ability of learners to express their thoughts clearly, fluently, and without fear or hesitation. However, many students experience difficulties in speaking English due to psychological

barriers such as anxiety, lack of vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, and low self-confidence (McCroskey, 1977).

Social media may play an important role in shaping these challenges. On one side, it provides learners with opportunities to practice English in a relaxed environment. On the other side, it may reduce real-life communication practice and create dependency on written or short-form communication. Therefore, this study aims to explore the effects of social media on students' confidence in speaking English by analyzing both its advantages and disadvantages in detail.

Methods

This study is based on a qualitative research design. The purpose of this method is to analyze and interpret the impact of social media on students' speaking confidence through existing literature and observational understanding of student behavior.

The data for this research was collected from academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and educational reports related to second language acquisition, communication anxiety, and digital learning environments. Key theoretical frameworks include Ellis (2008), Lightbown and Spada (2013), and Vygotsky (1978), all of which emphasize the importance of interaction in language learning.

The analysis is divided into two main categories:

Positive effects of social media on speaking confidence

Negative effects of social media on speaking confidence

This classification allows for a balanced evaluation of how digital communication influences language development.

Results

Positive Effects of Social Media

The findings indicate that social media can positively influence students' confidence in speaking English in several ways.

Firstly, social media creates a low-anxiety communication environment. Unlike face-to-face communication, online interaction allows students to take time to think before responding, which reduces fear and nervousness. This is especially helpful for shy learners who are afraid of making mistakes in public speaking situations.

Secondly, social media provides exposure to authentic English. Platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram allow students to listen to native speakers, observe natural pronunciation, and learn real-life expressions. According to Lightbown and Spada (2013), exposure to authentic input is essential for language acquisition.

Thirdly, social media enables global communication. Students can interact with people from different countries, participate in online discussions, and join language learning communities. Kabilan et al. (2010) found that such online environments can significantly enhance language practice opportunities and increase learners' motivation.

Finally, regular exposure to English content helps students gradually build familiarity with the language, which directly improves their speaking confidence over time.

Negative Effects of Social Media

Despite its advantages, social media also has several negative effects on students' speaking confidence.

One major issue is overreliance on text-based communication. Many students prefer chatting, commenting, or sending voice messages instead of engaging in real spoken conversations. This reduces their opportunities to practice actual speaking skills.

As a result, students may experience communication anxiety when required to speak in real-life situations such as classroom presentations or interviews. McCroskey (1977)

explains that lack of speaking practice increases communication apprehension, which negatively affects fluency and confidence.

Another problem is the influence of informal language. Social media communication often includes slang, abbreviations, emojis, and grammatical shortcuts. Crystal (2011) argues that internet language differs significantly from standard academic English, which may negatively affect students' formal speaking abilities.

In addition, excessive use of social media may reduce face-to-face communication. According to Vygotsky (1978), real social interaction plays a key role in cognitive and language development. Without sufficient real-life speaking practice, students may struggle to develop fluency and confidence.

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate that social media has a dual impact on students' speaking confidence. On one hand, it provides a flexible and supportive environment where learners can practice English without fear of judgment. This helps especially beginner and intermediate learners to build initial confidence.

On the other hand, excessive dependence on social media may lead to reduced real-life communication skills. While online communication is useful, it cannot fully replace face-to-face interaction, which is essential for developing fluency, pronunciation, and spontaneous speech ability.

From an educational perspective, teachers should guide students to use social media effectively. Instead of banning it, educators can integrate it into learning activities such as discussion groups, speaking challenges, and video-based assignments. This approach helps students benefit from technology while still developing real communication skills.

Therefore, a balanced approach is essential. Students should combine online communication with offline speaking practice to achieve better results in language learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, social media plays an important role in shaping students' confidence in speaking English. It provides valuable opportunities for exposure to authentic language, communication with global users, and low-anxiety practice environments. These factors can significantly improve speaking confidence.

However, overuse of social media may reduce real-life speaking practice and negatively affect communication skills. This can lead to reduced confidence in face-to-face interactions.

Therefore, it is essential for students to use social media in a balanced and purposeful way. By combining digital communication with real-life speaking activities, learners can improve both their confidence and overall English proficiency.

References:

1. Anderson, M., & Jiang, J. (2018). Teens, social media & technology. Pew Research Center.
2. Crystal, D. (2011). *Internet linguistics: A student guide*. Routledge.
3. Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
4. Kabilan, M. K., Ahmad, N., & Abidin, M. J. Z. (2010). Facebook as a learning environment. *Internet and Higher Education*, 13(4), 179–187.
5. Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2013). *How languages are learned* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
6. McCroskey, J. C. (1977). Oral communication apprehension. *Human Communication Research*, 4(1), 78–96.
7. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Harvard University Press.