

**AI-DRIVEN SOCIAL MEDIA MICROLEARNING IN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE TEACHING:
A REVIEW OF EMERGING PRACTICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

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Abstract

The integration of artificial intelligence and social media technologies has significantly influenced teaching and learning practices in higher education. In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), these technologies create new opportunities for innovative pedagogical approaches such as microlearning. This review article examines existing research on AI-driven social media microlearning and its potential for developing communicative competence among university students learning English as a foreign language. The paper analyzes previous studies on the use of social media in language education, the pedagogical value of microlearning, and the emerging role of artificial intelligence tools in ELT. The findings of the review indicate that short, technology-mediated learning activities delivered through social media platforms can increase learner engagement, support authentic communication practice, and promote learner autonomy. Furthermore, artificial intelligence tools can provide personalized feedback and additional opportunities for language practice. The article highlights the pedagogical potential of integrating AI technologies with social media-based microlearning in university ELT classrooms and provides recommendations for educators seeking to incorporate these digital tools into language teaching practices.

Keywords

English language teaching, social media, microlearning, artificial intelligence, communicative competence, higher education.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of digital technologies has transformed educational environments worldwide. Higher education institutions increasingly integrate digital tools and online platforms into teaching practices in order to enhance student engagement and support innovative learning approaches (Selwyn, 2016). In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), the use of technology has expanded

beyond traditional learning management systems to include social media platforms, mobile applications, and artificial intelligence tools.

Social media has become an important part of students' daily lives and communication practices. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok allow users to share short multimedia content and interact with global audiences. These characteristics make social media a potentially valuable educational tool, particularly for language learning where interaction and communication play a central role (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Previous studies indicate that social media environments can support collaborative learning, increase student motivation, and provide opportunities for authentic language practice (Manca & Ranieri, 2016).

One pedagogical approach that has gained increasing attention in digital learning environments is microlearning. Microlearning refers to delivering educational content in small, focused units that can be easily accessed and completed within short periods of time (Hug, 2005). This approach is particularly suitable for online and mobile learning contexts where learners often engage with content in brief sessions. Research suggests that microlearning can improve knowledge retention and learner engagement because it reduces cognitive overload and allows students to focus on specific learning objectives (Buchem & Hamelmann, 2010).

At the same time, artificial intelligence (AI) technologies are rapidly emerging as powerful tools in education. AI-based systems can provide automated feedback, personalized learning experiences, and interactive language practice opportunities for students (Holmes et al., 2019). In the context of language learning, AI tools such as chatbots and automated writing evaluation systems allow learners to practice language skills independently and receive immediate feedback.

The concept of communicative competence, introduced by Hymes (1972) and further developed by Canale and Swain (1980), remains one of the fundamental goals of modern language education. Communicative competence involves not only grammatical knowledge but also the ability to use language appropriately in different social and cultural contexts. However, many university students studying English as a foreign language have limited opportunities to practice authentic communication during classroom instruction.

The integration of social media platforms, microlearning strategies, and artificial intelligence technologies may provide new opportunities for addressing this challenge. Short AI-supported learning activities delivered through social media can create flexible environments where students engage in communicative language practice beyond the traditional classroom.

Therefore, the purpose of this review article is to analyze existing research on AI-driven social media microlearning in ELT and to explore its potential for developing communicative competence among university students in higher education.

2. Social Media in English Language Teaching

Social media platforms have increasingly become an integral part of modern communication and information sharing. In recent years, educators have begun to explore the pedagogical potential of social media in higher education, particularly in language learning environments. Social media platforms allow users to interact, create content, and participate in collaborative communication, which aligns closely with the communicative goals of language education (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

In English Language Teaching (ELT), social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook provide opportunities for students to engage with authentic language materials and communicate with others in meaningful contexts. These platforms allow learners to access multimedia content including videos, discussions, and interactive posts that can support language acquisition and cultural awareness (Manca & Ranieri, 2016). Through these interactions, students can develop language skills while participating in real-world communication.

Research suggests that the use of social media in language learning can increase student motivation and engagement. Learners often perceive social media environments as more informal and less intimidating than traditional classroom settings, which encourages them to participate more actively in communication activities (Selwyn, 2016). Moreover, social media enables students to practice language skills outside the classroom, extending learning opportunities beyond scheduled lessons.

Another important advantage of social media in ELT is the opportunity for collaborative learning. Online communities allow students to interact with peers, exchange ideas, and provide feedback to one another. These interactions contribute to the development of communicative competence by encouraging students to use language for meaningful communication (Thomas et al., 2013). As a result, social media platforms can serve as valuable tools for creating interactive and learner-centered language learning environments.

3. Microlearning in Language Education

Microlearning has emerged as an innovative instructional approach in digital education. The concept refers to the delivery of learning content in small, focused units that learners can easily complete within a short period of time (Hug, 2005). This approach is particularly relevant in modern learning environments where

students often access educational materials through mobile devices and online platforms.

In language learning contexts, microlearning can involve short instructional videos, brief vocabulary activities, quick speaking prompts, or short interactive tasks. These activities allow learners to concentrate on specific language elements without experiencing cognitive overload. According to Buchem and Hamelmann (2010), microlearning can enhance knowledge retention and learner engagement by presenting information in manageable segments.

The growing popularity of short-form digital content has further increased the relevance of microlearning in education. Platforms that support short videos and interactive posts align well with the principles of microlearning, as they allow educators to deliver concise and targeted language instruction. Students can repeatedly access these materials, which helps reinforce learning and supports independent study.

In ELT classrooms, microlearning can be used to supplement traditional teaching methods by providing additional opportunities for practice and reinforcement. Short learning tasks can focus on pronunciation practice, vocabulary development, or communicative speaking exercises. These activities enable students to practice language skills more frequently and in diverse contexts, which contributes to the development of communicative competence (Richards, 2015).

4. Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching

Artificial intelligence has become one of the most influential technological developments in modern education. AI-based systems have the ability to analyze learner performance, provide personalized feedback, and support adaptive learning environments. In recent years, AI technologies have increasingly been integrated into language learning tools and educational platforms (Holmes et al., 2019).

In the field of ELT, artificial intelligence can support language learning in several ways. AI-powered applications can assist learners with pronunciation practice, grammar correction, vocabulary learning, and conversational practice. For example, AI chatbots allow students to simulate real-life conversations in English, enabling them to practice communication in a low-pressure environment.

One of the key advantages of AI in language education is the ability to provide immediate feedback. Instant feedback helps learners identify errors and improve their language use more efficiently than delayed teacher feedback. This feature is particularly valuable for independent learning and self-directed practice (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019).

Furthermore, AI technologies can support personalized learning experiences. By analyzing learner data, AI systems can recommend learning materials that match the learner's proficiency level and learning needs. Such personalized approaches can increase learning efficiency and support the development of language skills at an individual pace.

Despite these advantages, researchers also emphasize the importance of maintaining a balanced approach when integrating AI technologies into education. AI tools should be viewed as supportive resources rather than replacements for teachers. Effective language learning still requires meaningful interaction, guidance, and feedback from educators (Holmes et al., 2019).

5. AI-Driven Social Media Microlearning for Communicative Competence

The integration of social media, microlearning strategies, and artificial intelligence technologies has the potential to create innovative learning environments in ELT classrooms. When combined, these elements can support the development of communicative competence by providing flexible, interactive, and technology-supported learning opportunities.

AI-driven social media microlearning involves delivering short learning activities through social media platforms while using artificial intelligence tools to support language practice and feedback. For example, students may engage with short instructional videos, respond to speaking prompts, or participate in online discussions through social media platforms. AI-based tools can then provide automated feedback or suggestions to help learners improve their language use.

Such learning environments can increase student participation and engagement. Because social media platforms are familiar to most students, learners often feel more comfortable interacting and expressing themselves in these digital spaces. As a result, students may become more willing to participate in communication activities and practice speaking skills.

Moreover, microlearning tasks delivered through social media allow students to practice language skills in small but frequent learning sessions. These short learning interactions help reinforce language knowledge and improve fluency over time. According to Richards (2015), frequent communicative practice is essential for developing communicative competence in language learners.

AI tools further enhance this process by offering immediate feedback and personalized learning support. For example, AI-assisted language tools can analyze learner responses and suggest corrections or improvements. This type of feedback allows students to learn from their mistakes and gradually improve their communication skills.

Overall, the combination of artificial intelligence, social media platforms, and microlearning strategies offers a promising approach for enhancing communicative competence in university ELT classrooms. By integrating these technologies into language instruction, educators can create more engaging and flexible learning environments that support the needs of modern learners.

6. Conclusion

The rapid development of digital technologies has significantly influenced teaching and learning practices in higher education. Social media platforms, microlearning strategies, and artificial intelligence tools are increasingly shaping the ways students access information, communicate, and develop language skills. These technological developments create new opportunities for innovation in English Language Teaching.

This review has examined the pedagogical potential of integrating social media, microlearning, and artificial intelligence in university ELT classrooms. The analysis indicates that social media platforms can support interactive learning environments that encourage communication and collaboration among students. Microlearning approaches allow educators to present learning content in short and focused formats that are easily accessible and suitable for modern digital learning contexts.

Artificial intelligence tools further enhance these learning environments by providing opportunities for personalized practice, automated feedback, and flexible language learning support. When combined with social media platforms and microlearning strategies, AI technologies can contribute to more engaging and student-centered learning experiences.

The integration of AI-driven social media microlearning therefore represents a promising approach for developing communicative competence among university students learning English as a foreign language. By incorporating these digital tools into language teaching practices, educators can create more flexible and interactive learning environments that respond to the needs of modern learners.

Future research may explore practical strategies for implementing AI-supported microlearning activities in different educational contexts and examine their long-term impact on language learning outcomes.

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