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Effectiveness of Online Learning Tools for Improving Speaking Skills in English Education

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Abstract

Especially speaking in language is very important, but the factor of speaking anxiety, vocabulary limitation and little real conversation exposure are a few struggles speaking learners usually face. Abstract purpose this paper aims to conduct a systematic literature review of 20 peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2017 and 2023 on the effectiveness of online learning tools in improving English speaking skills. The effect of tools such as YouTube videos, simulation-based platforms and speech recognition software on fluency (automaticity), pronunciation, and vocabulary were considered. The data shows that YouTube can enhance vocabulary and pronunciation, simulation-based tools improve fluency by providing realistic conversational context. Tools for Speech recognition encourage self-correction in learners and therefore add engagement to learners. Challenges however include poor technical accessibility, poor teacher training therefore constrained curricular integration for the tools to be used to their optimum level. Breaking through these barriers involves investments in digital infrastructure, teacher professional development, and equity. Research in this direction should consider long-term effects, curriculum integration and the potential such state-of-the-art technologies as artificial intelligence in personalized learning.

Keywords: Online learning tools, English speaking skills, Simulation-based platforms

1. Introduction

Effective speaking skills are the important components of language competence, working as the key to swift and fruitful communication and much professional success in an increasingly globalized world. Yet, for most learners, attainment of actual speaking proficiency in English remains a major difficulty— primarily due to factors such as anxiety, lack of vocabulary, insufficient exposure to real-life conversations, and many others. These challenges have always held back the students from proper articulation and acquiring proper skills for effective oral communication. Researchers have made attempts to solve these long-standing issues through a variety of techniques that may help enhance speaking skills efficiently.

Technology has become increasingly powerful over the years as a change agent in teaching English. YouTube videos are emphasized by (Syafiq et al., 2021) in this respect for improving fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary amongst students. The ease with which YouTube can be accessed and manipulated has opened opportunities for learners to practice at their own pace and even get some exposure to authentic input. All this has turned into a big plus for the approach, especially in these times of the pandemic when online learning has become more central. Also, it was noted by (Parveen, 2016) that advanced tools such as podcasts, video conferencing, and speech recognition software create an interactive and immersive learning experience. Such resources not only provide immediate feedback but also develop collaborative learning contexts that encourage students to participate in real communication.

Simulation-based instruction is another innovative approach. Web-based simulations in real time to improve the learners' oral production of English (Angelini M.Laura & García-Carbonell Amparo, 2019) This approach too offers realistic conversation situations, very representative of real-world life, so it is especially powerful to enhance fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. Simulations enable students to engage actively and learn in context, helping them gain confidence and proficiency with spoken English.

In contrast to that, some of the options for improving speaking will always include storytelling and project activities. For example, does through storytelling (Zuhriyah, 2017) demonstrate that Learners can systematically develop understandings, comprehensions; grammar and fluency capabilities. Indeed, (Purnomo et al., 2024) state that storytelling is a skill that allows students to plan and narrate ideas where they give expression to their bodies in an organized and ingenious format. On PBL approach, there requires an encouragement

on behalf for the students to be included in group works and promoting collaboration and active participation. PBL allows students to deal with tasks closer to real-life situations and involving meaningful communication, which will significantly improve their speaking.

Despite the increasing research conducted in the field of online learning tools, there are several research gaps that point to the need for further study. First, most studies in the field involves investigating short-term outcomes, meaning that there is very little data on the extent to which using online tools continues to enhance the learners' speaking skills over time. In other words, it remains unclear how long the effects claimed by researchers may last. Second, while some studies reveal the potential of individual tools, such as YouTube, simulations, or speech recognition software, there are no data on how these tools can be combined and which ones work best depending on the demographic of learners and other factors. The third concern is that several studies consider online tools separately from language learning. Thus, it is difficult to decide how these tools fit into the existing education paradigm. Finally, very few authors address the issues of socioeconomic inequality, focusing on how many people do not have access to the internet or a device and not on how this fact may determine the future of implementing online learning tools. Finally, even though most of the reviewed research claims the effectiveness of online tools, it is crucial to understand that their efficiency entirely depends on how educators use them. Presently, there is very little evidence concerning the impact of educators' qualification on the effectiveness of online speaking enhancement tools.

This review has important implications for educators, policymakers and researchers alike. Educators can implement a blended model with different distance tools to cater for the different learner needs. E.g. you can use YouTube to teach vocabulary, simulations for fluency, speech recognition software for real time feedback. Policymakers need to invest in the digital infrastructure and teacher training that will make online tools as appropriate for use both in urban and rural settings. We must think critically about digital equity to close the privileged versus underprivileged gap we observe between learners. For research, future studies should investigate the long-term effects of a tool online and how long-term use impacts speaking proficiency over time. Moreover, questioning the effectiveness of different tools in working positive to a set of tools across structured curricula might be constructive for learning outcomes.

Based on the identified gaps and implications this study asks to explore the following research question: How may online learning tools be incorporated systematically through English language curricula to maintain sustainable gains of speaking in a wide range of contexts?

2. Method

2.1 Participants

This study involves 20 selected peer-reviewed journal articles focusing on the effectiveness of online learning tools in improving English speaking skills. These articles were written between 2017 and 2023 and selected in accordance with the empirical data and applicability to the research problem. The studies include diverse contexts and tools such as YouTube, speech recognition software, and simulation-based learning platforms.

2.2 Data Collection

2.2.1 Instrument of Collecting Data

This study used a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to collect data. Articles with a rationale were searched in academic databases (e.g., Google Scholar, Scopus, ERIC). Keywords used in the search included online learning tools, speaking skills, e-learning in English education, technology-assisted language learning, and English-speaking proficiency. The selection was limited to the peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2017 and 2023 to maintain quality and relevance.

2.2.2 Techniques for Collecting Data

Exclusion and inclusion criteria were applied during the screening of articles to maintain the validity of the items selected for the analysis. The inclusion criteria required articles to focus on the use of online tools for improving English speaking skills, employ empirical methods (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed), and provide measurable outcomes such as fluency, pronunciation, or vocabulary. Conversely, articles were excluded if they did not specifically address online tools or speaking skills, lacked empirical evidence or methodological rigor, or were inaccessible (e.g., without DOI or full text). The first search yielded 50 articles, which in turn were screened for suitability by checking the titles and abstracts for appropriateness. This process resulted in 30 shortlisted articles. Following a strict assessment based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, 20 articles were finally selected for final analysis.

2.3 Data Analysis

The selected articles were analyzed systematically to extract key data on the types of online tools used, their implementation methods, and their outcomes on speaking proficiency. Thematic analysis was used to extract the emerging patterns, trends, and gaps of research. Attention was given to aspects of speaking ability (i.e., fluency, vocabulary, phonetics, and difficulties during implementation). Through use of this scientifically rigorous method, this study guarantees the internal and external validity of its results and provides the very applicable insight into the function of online learning supports in the improvement of English-speaking abilities.

3. Results

Analysis on the 20 articles of those 20 selected, provided acidic and essential pieces of knowledge about effectiveness in effective for online learning tools for speaking English. For example, (Syafiq et al., 2021) highlighted YouTube videos) implemented on students improvements their pronunciation fluency vocabulary significantly. It was accomplished with much reading of genres like authentic materials that consumed learners in lifelike conversations for self-paced practice. Simulation-based learning (Angelini M.Laura & García-Carbonell Amparo, 2019) was another potent form that students got an opportunity to (Parveen, 2016) attempt real-life conversational practices enhancing their oral proficiency. Moreover, showed the utility of speech recognition software to drive student engagement and encouraging learners to self-correct through podcasts so their speaking skills could be refined.

The tools measured had large effects on some aspects of the tool-used speaking. Several of which added to enhanced fluency, grammar vocabulary and pronunciation; some excel at one aspect over another. Simulation tools worked particularly well in fluency and pronunciation and real-time immersive environments of practice. YouTube videos for vocabulary extension (rich linguistic context for students) in contrast to more general exposure and did the best job. Hence targeted benefits clear how these online tools fill in on specific dimensions of speaking abilities that allow teachers the capacity to focus on individual differences among learners.

One more important result derived from this study was the usage of online tools in better student engagement and motivation. Those tools led to significantly higher levels of participation compared to conventional methods, especially when they revolved around collaborative platforms whether it has been video conferencing etc. These discussions in groups that the tool created not only got more of the students engaged but also provided functions for authentic

communication. This is the engagement that is so critical for speaking, because it compels students to engage in using the language.

Limitations and limitations of the studies notwithstanding, some concerns about the advantages were uncovered as well. Technical concerns (poor internet connectivity, and little resource for poorer regions one to be able to exist in) were major bottlenecks. Also, the low degree of teacher preparedness and familiarity with these tools often limited their successful embedding into classroom use. On the contrary, lack of alignment with curriculum goals prevented online tools from having long-term effects as the ability to be impactful is limited. Overcoming these hurdles will be critical to the full value proposition of developing effective online tools for enhancing English speaking skills.

4. Discussion

The Conclusions of this review indicate that online learning tools can play a true transformational role for the improvement of one's speaking skills in English. Tools such as integrating YouTube lectures, simulation-based e-Learning platforms and speech recognition software support the pedagogical needs of today for effective and flexible learning today. Summary of this review highlights the transforming function that online learning tools play in developing English speaking. Aligning with Contemporary Pedagogical Ideals: Elements that are constituted and enabled by the integration of YouTube Videos, simulation-based sources and speech recognition software. These methods provide for a more customized and engaging approach, opposed to traditional techniques that allow students to practice speaking in dynamic ways.

Such online tools contrast in nature with traditional teaching strategies that are primarily centered on the teacher. In contrast to standard classroom activities, YouTube Videos give students the freedom to rehearse without being actively involved. As (Syafiq et al., 2021) furthered that by using YouTube videos can help students learn vocabulary and eventually pronunciation because it is a natural language input in real situations reviewed by ready for making learners to self-learn your language capabilities. Thus the enabling of autonomy in learners to progress in courses at their own speed, meeting their specific issues and gaining the confidence for speaking.

Out of the list of online tools, simulation-based instruction was found to be one of the most effective. Another way that the method facilitates authentic conversational situations similar to real communication, increasing fluency and vocabulary retention. (Angelini M.Laura

& García-Carbonell Amparo, 2019) also indicated how the simulation-based platforms significantly improved, students submerged in acting scenarios where practice speak their virtues. These tools not only encourage active learning but also start to serve functional communication needs, they are very encouraging for educators looking to better equip students for real-world interactions.

With the powerful advantages of online tools though there are challenges to be resolved to get the most benefit from them. Remarkable is the technical access that is far from being simple, especially in deprived areas where there is not an available internet and/access to reliable hardware. In addition, teacher proficiency and experience with online tools are important elements to use effectively. Language education training programs that focus on technology integration may be necessary to fill this gap, increasingly tight is that teachers will come out better trained. Type of just-in-time incorporation: At the same time, it is equally important to align the use of online tools within larger educational goals of curricula, so their potential gets realized.

This review also identifies important levers for additional research down the line. Long-term impacts of online tools on speaking should be studied to fully comprehend the durability of effect learners. Artificial intelligence might also create the personalized learning tailored to individual, allowing content and feed-back to be delivered just suited to that needs. Further lines of inquiry could be conducted to examine the impact that online tools have on other language skills (e. g., Listening, Writing), to provide a more in-depth investigation of what these mediums contribute as a component of language education. This review, by looking at these findings across multiple studies reveal the promise of online learning tools to drastically improve English language learning. Ultimately though, their success will rely on how they are implemented, blended with educational practices in place of some classrooms.

5. Conclusion

This online learning to enhance English speaking skill – review of the impact that years of Language learning challenges has on prospects. Review this captures the major advantages of online learning tools to build speaking skill in English, leaps and bounds. In the frontier of teaching tools that so far we have seen YouTube video tutorials, interactive sim-based learning thrashing environments and voice recognition software to come up with fresh ideas attuned to current pedagogic needs. Furthermore, these are tools incorporating pedagogy to allow for a time-perspective interactive learning experiences where students can interact, test and improve

their speaking skills dynamically in different ways.

Independent practice hours, real conversations and real time feedback for this are found in these tools which has been proven to improve fluency, pronunciation, vocab and overall speaking ability. In summary, the results reaffirm that online tools are more learner-centered than traditional teacher-centered methods. YouTube videos empowers students to practice independently and gain confidence with a variable pace, simulation-based platforms are used in real-world communication and gives a context to the students enabling them with fluency, vocabulary retention. In the same vein speech recognition software promotes student self-correcting and learners improving their grammar and pronunciation. Not just practical and functional use for communication, but also by enthralling and demanding experiences to motivate learners.

Though there are many benefits to online learning tools, additional challenges must be overcome to realize the true potential of these resources. Technical issues — lack of internet access and device availability is still a big obstacle especially to those living in poor areas. Moreover, the lack of teacher training and agenda relevance prevent the appropriate application of these tools within classroom practices. Solving these challenges requires investments in digital infrastructure, educator professional development and policies around equitable access to technology.

Future studies may also shed light on the longer-term effects of these tools on developed speaking ability and how emerging technologies (e.g. AI) can extend personalized to authentic language experiences. Studies should take into account the incorporation of online tools in a programmatic way so that they are applied for long-term improvements and across various kinds of educational programs.

Ultimately, it is all about how well the online learning tools have been put to use and are aligned with education purposes in revolutionizing English language education. These tools can be leveraged to create more inclusive and impactful educational environments for students to reach their full potential in the speaking of English.

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