

## The Impact of Social Media on EFL Learners' Speaking Skill: A Survey Study Involving EFL Teachers and Students

**Ehsan Namaziandost \***

PhD Candidate, Department of English, Faculty of Humanities, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad University,  
Shahrekord, Iran

**Mehdi Nasri**

PhD Candidate, Department of English, Faculty of Humanities, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad  
University, Shahrekord, Iran

### Abstract

Social media have gained much respect and popularity among EFL teachers who are in need to go beyond the traditional methods of teaching where teachers used to accomplish most parts of the job. Moreover, our traditional classrooms still emphasize on writing and reading at the expense of speaking. Therefore, teaching speaking represents a great challenge for both EFL teachers and learners who display low achievements in their oral skills. The current study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using Social media on EFL students' speaking skill. The research covers two basic issues. First, the extent to which Social media affect students' speaking skill. Second, how can Social media be helpful in EFL context to improve speaking? The research was done at Islamic Azad Universities of Iran. Two questionnaires were distributed; one for 100 EFL teachers and the other one addressed to 100 learners. The practical outcome of the study has displayed that the frequent usage of Social media by EFL students as well as teachers constitutes a significant impact on both users. It has also reflected the teachers' readiness to integrate Social media in EFL context by means of a convenient pedagogy. Technology is believed to make students respond positively in a language classroom, therefore, it is tremendously important for teachers to enrich their teaching process with the appropriate use of Social media and to promote a global understanding among the EFL Students who should broaden their perspectives about the target cultures and ameliorate their communicative competence in order to interact and communicate effectively and appropriately in English Language.

**Keywords:** social media, social media tools, speaking skill, EFL students, EFL teachers

### INTRODUCTION

For many years Language has been regarded as a means of communication among people regardless their different races and colors. Humans need language as much as they need air, water, and food. There would be no life without that channel which connects people, as it is the basic means of oral communication among individuals, groups and people.

Language teaching has always been facing various difficulties in the process of seeking successfulness. One of the main issues that EFL teachers come across is how to make learners use the language competently and function accurately in real context. Similarly, Students are proved to have low performance when they are asked to fulfill tasks that require speaking in class. In addition, what makes the situation even more complicated is that some teachers are still using traditional techniques and methods which do not provide the required environment for students to speak comfortably.

In an attempt to find remedial solutions for this low performance by learners, teachers and instructors opted for a variety of activities and procedures that make the learner use the language. However, the language they learn in class is not helping them to enhance their communicative competence. The student of the twenty first century can never learn how to speak by drills or words learned by heart, he would rather be motivated to learn if the learning itself is interesting and entertaining, Social media as taking most of student's time, can be thought of as an educating tool if used properly (Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, & Ahmadi, 2019).

The significance of this study then is to help EFL learners find the right environment to speak and improve their speaking skills by means of Social media. The work covers also, a variety of creative solutions and ideas concerning using ICTs to enhance the learners speaking proficiency. It is of great importance to measure the extent to which Social media can help education and EFL members, especially with the inventions of new technologies. This study is believed to open the door to new unprecedented approaches and pedagogies that will enrich the domain of teaching in the future.

Concerning the main problem of this study, it is vitally important to mention that the speaking skill of any language is crucially paramount because it serves the purpose of communication which is this language using by all people around the world to share their ideas and communicate via a language speech , especially, English language speech which is the most useful one in the world. EFL learners in Iran are one of those users of English as a foreign language (Namaziandost & Ahmadi, 2019). They are looking all the time to improve their speaking skill because English as a foreign language in Algeria is mainly taught in terms of grammar and structures. Therefore, less attention is payed to the speaking skill. So, this need to improve the speaking skill for Iranian EFL learners has led to the use of new ways of technology in order to keep up with the times. As a matter fact, they use Social media to communicate with different people around the world using English as a global language of communication. Starting from this point we need to know if Social Media have any effects on EFL learners speaking skill.

Therefore, this study is designed to find answers to two main research questions:

1. To what extent Social Media influence students' speaking skill?
2. How can Social Media be helpful in EFL context to enhance student' speaking proficiency?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The history of EFL teaching has witnessed a great amount of changes in strategies, procedures, and sometimes roles of teachers and learners. Despite this, the goal has

always been the same which is making EFL learners communicatively competent in the target language and shape their proficiency to meet the different challenges of life in real situations (Nasri, Biria, & Karimi, 2018).

Nowadays, EFL teaching and learning has been influenced by the technological innovation, and many tools have been added to the English class so as to facilitate the process of teaching/learning and provide a more realistic environment for learners to mention but a few of these tools one can cite: the Data show, computers, and recorded tapes. However, there should be a great need to update these tools as the time goes on, in order to keep up with the advancement of ICT's in the world.

The overwhelming spread of Social media among learners and even teachers proved itself as a successful tool to education. Similarly, most teachers believe that the main aim behind learning a language is to speak it fluently and accurately which means that understanding a language should not necessarily construct the assumption that he/she knows the language (Namaziandost, Nasri, & Rahimi Esfahani, 2019; Nasri & Biria, 2017). The learner should rather accomplish a great level of proficiency in the four language skills including speaking. However, speaking a foreign language is not an easy task, and it is definitely not as easy as speaking mother tongue. As a solution, many scholars believe that the appropriate use and the successful integration of ICTs and social media in the classroom can reduce the impediments that prevent EFL learners from the mastery of the speaking skill.

### **Speaking Skill**

Speaking is a key used between people to communicate in the social context. Also Speaking is "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts" (Chaney, 1998, p. 13). (Brown, 1994) and (Burns & Joyce, 1997) define Speaking as a reactive process of a structured meaning that includes receiving and producing and sharing information. In Applied linguistic speaking has a set of descriptions; speaking as a social and situation-based activity and speaking as an interaction, (Azadi, Biria, & Nasri, 2018; Thornbory, 2005). All these perspectives see speaking as a whole side of learner's daily lives in receiving and producing speech.

Speaking is an important language skill for learners and teachers. Bygate (2002) See it as a complex, and multilevel skill; the complexity part is explained by the fact that the use of speakers' knowledge of the language and activate their ability is necessary to do this under real situations.

Speaking plays a crucial part in foreign/second language teaching-learning. It has occupied a significant and delicate rank all the way through the history of language teaching. Despite its importance, teaching speaking has been undervalued and it is just in the last two decades that has gained its right to be an independent<sup>4</sup> branch of teaching (Hosseini, Nasri, & Afghari, 2017). Speaking then is not dependent only on pronouncing words. English teachers therefore, devoted paramount time to speaking as being essential in facilitating the enhancement of English learners' proficiency.

It is worth mentioning that the four skills are described in terms of their direction as far as language teaching is concerned , that is to say , the language generated by the learner

(in speech or writing) is referred to as “productive” while , Language directed at the learner (in reading or listening) is called “receptive” . Another important idea is “the channel”, which refers to the medium of the message (aural/oral or written). Thus, speaking is the productive aural/oral skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal “utterances” to convey meaning.

Speaking, yet is a skill which deserves attention, the learners often need to be able to speak with confidence in order to carry out many of their most basic transactions. It is the skill by which they are most frequently judged and through which they may take or lose opportunities in life (Namaziandost, Abdi Saray, & Rahimi Esfahani, 2018). It is the vehicle of social solidarity, of social ranking, of professional advancement and of business. Perhaps then, the teaching of speaking merits more thought.

### **Issues of The Oral Production class in The English Department**

One of the major responsibilities of any teacher working with English Language Learners (ELLs) is to enable them to communicate effectively through oral language. Teachers concerned with teaching the spoken language usually debate thoroughly about one question: why is it too difficult for learners to learn oral expression? To a large extent, it is because the current oral production class is teacher centered, despite the various attempts teachers make to engage learners in discussions and motivate them to speak, the amount of speeches students have are still not sufficient. Besides, the Oral language that students learn at the classroom does not help in enhancing their communicative competencies which are mostly needed in real life situations. Similarly, Baker and Westrup (2003, p.5) state that: “a student who can speak English well may have greater chance for further education, finding employment and gaining promotion”.

In the same line of thought, speaking appears to be a difficult skill to develop in the EFL classes because students not only need to be well prepared in English skills, they need also to use them to build social relationships that allow them to interact with each other. An argument that supports this view is found in Gutierrez (2005, p.3) statement he claims that: “learners often need to be able to speak<sup>7</sup> with confidence in order to carry out many of their most basic transactions. It is the skill by which they are most frequently judged, and by which they make or lose friends”. In addition to what has been mentioned earlier, many other factors prevent learners from reaching oral expression proficiency in class most of which are psychological, for instance; anxiety and inhibition. There are many procedures that should be opted for by language teachers to improve learners' proficiency in Oral Expression module among which group work, role-play and discussions which encourage students to take communicative initiatives (Namaziandost, Saberi Dehkordi, & Shafiee, 2019). Moreover, learners cannot be effective in tomorrow's world if they are trained in yesterday's skill which means that the student who use technology in almost every task of his daily life should make use of technology as well improve his speaking skill.

### **EFL Students' Speaking Problems**

Beyond any doubt, English as foreign language (EFL) learners, no matter how much they know about the English language, still face many speaking difficulties. Many studies have

indicated that oral language development has largely been neglected in the classroom, and most of the time, oral language in the classroom is used more by teachers than by students. However, oral language, even as used by the teacher, hardly ever functions as a means for students to gain knowledge and explore ideas (Abram & Pearlman, 2010). To develop the knowledge to deal with oral communication problems in an EFL context, researchers first need to know the real nature of those problems and the circumstances in which 'problems' are constructed.

**Inhibition:** One of the main problems is when students try to say things in a foreign language in the classroom and they get inhibited. Much of their worry is built over making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face. They are shy of the attention that their speech attracts. Littlewood (2007) asserts that a foreign language classroom can create inhibitions and anxiety easily.

**Lack of Topical Knowledge:** It is highly important for teachers to engage students in oral communication in topics that are familiar to them, students usually complain about having nothing to say in certain topics simply because the topic is not suitable for them.

**Low or Uneven Participation:** Another problem in speaking class is that students can never be in the same level of proficiency and as a result, some of them may speak a lot, so there is a tendency of some learners to dominate others.

**The mother tongue use:** One of the most frequently done issues in classroom is the use of mother tongue. In fact, students sometimes can never be blamed for using the mother tongue. Harmer (1991) puts forward several reasons amongst the fact that it is rather a natural phenomenon that needs practice more and more to overcome it. Another reason is when teachers use mother tongue, this may give students the impression that it is of no harm to use mother tongue on their part as well.

### **Technology and Learning Tools in the EFL Classroom**

First of all, the last two decades have witnessed rapid explosions of information which lead to an urgent need to cope with the ongoing scientific acceleration in all fields. Information revolution, which yielded the internet, is the most important technological accomplishment to date. Internet enables people to cancel distances, shorten time, and make the world more like a small electronic screen (Al Musa, 2002; Namaziandost, Abedi, & Nasri, 2019). Similarly, education is required to meet the needs of this growing scientific acceleration. To put it another way, education aims and objectives in the Third World countries should be changed to meet the era's variables, aiming not only to help students in the cognitive domain, but also focus on their needs to attain the skills, capacities, and self-reliance to interact with the era's variables and build a new life based on sovereignty, not dependency on others (Al Musa & Al Mubarak, 2005; Namaziandost, Abedi, & Nasri, 2019).

Education needs to equip students with the needed tools and skills that make them capable of dealing with these new requirements effectively. Thus, involving technology as a goal in itself in the educational paradigm is no longer a privilege; on the contrary, it is an urgent need (Aziz, Shamim, Aziz, & Avais, 2013). With the increasing reliance on technology and the need for digital proficiency, it is expected that the use of online

technology to work with second language acquisition is a natural by-product of the changing face of the educational world. Evidences have shown that students who conduct their learning online are better than students who work in traditional settings for the learning of a second language, in terms of their levels of anxiety and their need for gap awareness in their language skills (Akinola, 2015; Pichette, 2009). Studies have also shown that the use of technologies in teaching languages have an increased advantage on the development of grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, pronunciation, listening, and speaking skills (Haigh, 2010; Levy, 2009; Namaziandost & Shafiee, 2018).

## **Social media**

The meaning of the term 'Social media' can be derived from two words that are 'social' and 'Networks'. The first term is 'Social' which means connected with society and the way it is organized, in which they meet and spend time with other people. The second one is Networks which means: a group of two or more computer systems linked together (Eren, 2012; Beal, 2015; Namaziandost, Sabzevari, & Hashemifardnia, 2018).

Social media is a current phenomenon that includes both web-based communication with Internet users through websites and interaction with others via cellular phones. It is very clear that education industry worldwide is in the midst of a revolution caused by the evolving technologies such as the web 2.0 and the advent of web 3.0 allowing students to create content, exchange ideas and share knowledge. So much so that in the last few years there has been extensive discussion and heated debate exploring social media in journal articles and conferences. Much of this discussion has focused on developing a clearer understanding of the capabilities of such technology as a new platform for enhancing students' independent learning and how much Social media has yielded as academic achievement and whether it could be used as new pedagogical tools outside or even inside the classroom. At the same time, the ubiquitous presence of social media has attracted researchers to study both positive aspects and concerns of using such tools in various settings offering new and various ways of using computers or/and mobile devices. (Hashemifardnia, Namaziandost, & Rahimi Esfahani, 2018; Paliktzoglou & Suhonen, 2014).

As education institutions are embracing social media there is a need to optimize the positive effect of such technologies to bring them into pedagogy to make instruction and learning active and applicable to the cyber environment of the new millennium. In recent years, more and more education institutions are making a presence in Social media such as Blogs, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook to create effective ways for the establishment of collaborative and interactive online learning system. Therefore, technology-driven culture is featuring prominently in all pedagogical activities. Hence, the focus of learning and instruction needs to be viewed from a newer perspective "without gathering students and teachers in the same physical space" (Aloraini, 2012; Maney, 2009). In other words, learning should no longer be tied to a particular location and a particular time table. Basically, Social media sites extend far beyond their traditional purpose of communication and entertainment to promote students' self-reliance in learning through enquiry and sharing and more importantly, enhance their speaking abilities by means of online interaction. With this in mind, it has been suggested that the language teaching

situation in terms of the students' speaking competence is not successful to a certain extent in EFL contexts which can cause verbal communication barriers in their everyday lives and in the maritime environment. Therefore, an urgent need for a solution is needed.

Social media with its various kinds could be considered as a remedy as these materials have potential to attract the students by being flexible, entertaining, and interactive and provide an excellent chance for learners to express themselves in a self-confident way. Indeed, the use of Social media as a tool to improve students' listening and speaking / communicative skills would find an enthusiastic welcome from the learners' part as it goes hand to hand with their interests (Gibbins & Greenhow, 2016; Hashemifardnia, Namaziandost, & Sepehri, 2018). As Social media have penetrated so deeply in our lives, it is tremendously important to analyze the types and nature of each means.

To sum up, it is worth stating that speaking is not an easy task to teach and teachers should be aware of their students' needs and requirements in order to achieve proficiency in speaking. EFL teachers are also inclined to give ICTs their fair share of importance and utility in class. In fact, ICTs in general have contributed enormously in shaping the current teaching /learning process. Instructors and teachers on their part should make use of technologies as accurately as possible. It is indeed the ultimate way to keep the strategies up to date. ICTs nowadays are imposing themselves as a necessity in EFL classroom. Therefore; it is no more a privilege but rather an urgent needed tool to improve the students' communicative and speaking abilities.

## **METHOD**

### **The population**

The present research work is a survey study involving both EFL teachers (N=80) and students (N=120) at Islamic Azad universities of Iran. A survey design is defined by (Dana Lynn Driscoll, 2011) as a study "where you can gather information about people's beliefs or behaviors; the information you collect is not first-hand (like an observation) but rather self-reported data" Consequently, opting for a survey design to figure out the influence of Social media on EFL learners can be more appropriate especially with combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches; this last will help to seek more reliable and valid results from both teachers and students.

The research was conducted at the department of Foreign Languages (English section) at Islamic Azad universities of Iran. The researcher deals with a sample of population consisting of both EFL teachers (N=100) and students (N=100) during the academic year 2018/2019. This research aims at drawing interest from both EFL teachers and learners to make use of Social media as an attempt to raise awareness about its great effects in shaping the students' oral proficiency, and also to spark their interest in learning speaking.

### **Teachers**

In the present study, the questionnaire was administrated to one-hundred (100) teachers from the department of English at the Islamic Azad universities of Iran. There has been an underlying reason for making EFL teachers involved in the research population

because teachers play an intensive role , on the one hand they can be regarded as direct observers of the phenomenon and can evaluate students' oral proficiency during the course , on the other hand they can simply be engaged in oral discussions with learners through the use of Social media and this will show how Social media influence the students' level of speaking . The teachers taking part in this study hold either the degree of 'Doctorate' or 'Magister' most of them were experienced teachers who taught different modules.

### ***Students***

The choice of the sample of the students was based on the observation that was done by the researchers, where we observe the WhatsApp, Facebook, and Telegram groups that are created by students of the department of English at the universities of Iran from all the different levels and specialties. In these groups, students are sharing and discussing course-related materials with their classmates. Therefore, the present study took place in the Department of English at Islamic Azad universities of Iran. The participants were 100 students of English randomly selected as a sample population for the present study. They belonged to different levels from First year to master two students. The main aim behind this blend was to gather as much points of view about the use of Social media and examine their attitudes towards them and for a greater extent to derive from learners a variety of creative ideas on how to better use Social media to improve speaking.

### **Research Instruments**

It is often assumed that "the backbone of any survey study is the instrument used for collecting data"(Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011) therefore, the researcher has opted for the use of two questionnaires one intended for teachers and the other for students , basically the same questions were asked with a slight difference in the style .

### ***Questionnaire***

The essence of any scientific research is the attempt made to find out answers to questions in a systematic manner. Yet, questionnaires in their various kinds are of the most common methods in collecting data in Foreign Language research and have attracted a worldwide interest among researchers. In the same vain Dornyei (2003, p.3) states: "Questionnaires are certainly the most often employed data collection devices in statistical work".

The questionnaire is addressed to EFL students and Teachers aiming at analyzing to which extent Social media impact the students' speaking skill and which strategies can be undertaken in order to integrate Social media in educational institutions such as university. Eight questions were included and different types of questions were used starting from open-ended and close-ended to multiple choice questions.

## **RESULTS**

### **Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is addressed to ten EFL teachers. It mainly aims at reporting their ideas concerning the use of Social media among learners and teachers as well. In addition to



that, its basic purpose is to show their impressions about how Social media contribute in shaping the students' speaking skills. This questionnaire includes eight questions that will be analyzed and presented as shown below.

**Table 1.** Teachers' answers to the Questionnaire

Question 1. How often do you use Social media?			
Frequency of Use	Absolute Frequency	Percentage	
Always	55	55 %	
Sometimes	35	35 %	
Rarely	5	5 %	
Never	5	5 %	
Question 2. Have you ever used Social media for educational purposes? If yes, How?			
Frequency of Use	Absolute Frequency	Percentage	
Yes	80	80 %	
No	20	20 %	
Question 3. Do you get in touch with learners through the use of Social media?			
The use of S.N to communicate with learners	Absolute Frequency	Percentage	
Always	14	14 %	
Sometimes	76	76 %	
Rarely	3	3 %	
Never	7	7 %	
Question 4. Among the different types of social media, there are social media that are mostly based on oral communication such as Skype, WhatsApp or Telegram. As a teacher do you use one of these to get in touch with learners or native speakers? If yes, which one is your favorite?			
The Social Media	Number	Percentage	
Skype	8	8 %	
WhatsApp	51	51 %	
Telegram	39	39 %	
None	2	2 %	
Question 5. Which language is mostly used when using these tools?			
The Language Used	Absolute Frequency	Percentage	
Mother Tongue	13	13 %	
English	84	85 %	
Arabic	2	2 %	
None of the languages	1	0%	
Question 6. To what extent can Skype, WhatsApp or Telegram be helpful to students? and why?			
The Influence	Absolute Frequency	Percentage	Reasons
High	24	24 %	Because they practice the language.
Medium	72	72 %	Because Social media represent a motivating and helpful environment.
Low	4	4 %	Because students need face to face interaction.

The first question aims at finding out to what extent teachers are attached to Social media and how often do they use them. Based on Table 1, The majority represented by five teachers use Social media always, while three of them use them sometimes and only two teachers have never used Social media. The second question was meant to determine the

number of teachers using Social media for educational purposes. The main aim behind this question is to discover how teachers use Social media to achieve any educational goals. (80%) of teachers confirm that they use Social media for educational purposes such as sharing lectures, publishing useful links or sending messages to colleagues or students, while only one teacher used Social media to give lectures. The remaining (20%) believe that Social media can better be used for other reasons. The answers concerning this question revealed that despite the fact that most teachers use Social media to achieve educational goals, only few of them use them to give lectures or perform oral conversations with learners. Regarding the third question, the rationale of this question is to figure out if teachers benefit from Social media at the level of communicating information and ideas with EFL learners. The findings of this question reveal that (76%) of teachers sometimes use Social media to communicate with learners in matters more likely to be related to education while (7%) have never used them to communicate with learners. In question four, knowing which Social media teachers prefer is the ultimate goal of such a question. Teachers and even learners may have different Social media to use when they seek oral communication therefore, it is very important to our research to know which Social media ranks the best among EFL teachers. The results show that WhatsApp is the most used Social media among teachers with (51%) while (39%) of them are using Telegram. Teachers have made their choices based on different criteria that characterize each Social media. Question five is administered in an attempt to know which language is being used by teachers when using Social media and also to see if teachers are making use of these Social media to contribute in the whole field of education. The result denotes the remarkable control of English over the other languages in use, research shows that most teachers represented with (84%) use English as the main Language in oral communication , while Mother Tongue is ranked second with (13%) of use.(1%) of teachers state that they don't use any language and their use is entirely passive. Last but not least, the use of Arabic language with only (2%). Question six is designed in an attempt to know the teachers' point of view about the main issue of the whole research which is the influence of Social media on the students speaking skill; it also includes an opportunity for teachers to justify their opinions. Accordingly, the results display that the overall number of teachers believe that Social media do have an impact on the students' level of speaking. As the results show, seven teachers measured the influence at medium level attributing their choice to the motivating and helping environment that Social media provide. In addition, twenty-four teachers claim that Social media have a high influence since they represent an ample opportunity to practice the language and therefore improve the speaking skill. On the other hand, there is only four teacher who goes with the idea that the influence is low and barely existing since Social media do not provide face to face interaction and therefore, the positive influence is very low.

### **Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire**

This questionnaire is mainly designed to diagnose the students' use of Social media and its impact on the students speaking skill. After treatment of the teachers' questionnaire, the present section is devoted to the analysis of the data collected from the students'

questionnaire. All 100 students answered this questionnaire for the sake of obtaining as much as various data available. The questionnaire consisted of six questions and each one will be treated separately as follow:

**Table 2.** Students' answers to the Questionnaire

Question 1. Do you use Social media?		
The use	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
Always	82	82 %
Sometimes	16	16 %
Rarely	2	2 %
Never	0	0 %
Question 2. Have you ever used Social mediaing for educational purposes? If yes, How?		
The influence	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
A lot	71	71 %
A little	27	21%
Not at all	0	0%
I don't know	2	2 %
Question 3. Among the different existing Social media there are, those which can be used in oral communication such as Skype, WhatsApp or Telegram, do you use any of them? If yes which one is your favorite?		
The Social Media	Number	Percentage
Skype	1	1 %
WhatsApp	69	69 %
Telegram	29	29 %
None	1	1 %
Question 4. Which language do you use when doing so?		
The Language Used	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
Mother Tongue	21	21 %
English	78	78 %
Other languages	1	1 %
Question 5. Have you ever used Social media to talk with native speakers of English around the world?		
The use	Number	Percentage
Yes	77	77 %
No	33	33 %
Question 6. To what extent do you think these types of Social media can help to improve students' speaking skills?		
The Influence	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
High	82	82 %
Medium	18	18 %
Low	0	0 %

The first question has been asked for two main reasons the first is to engage the participant in the topic so that he/she constructs a previous knowledge about what is coming next of questions. Secondly, to know how far students are attached to Social media. The majority of participants (eighty-two) making up (82%) stated that they always use Social media, while only sixteen students making (16%) stated that their use of Social media is not a priority and therefore, they use them only sometimes. Regarding the second question, it is very important for the researcher to know the students' standpoint about the influence of Social media simply because they represent an effective

part in the phenomenon. The results have shown that most students seventy-two, making up (72 %) believe that Social media do influence a lot the students' level, while twenty-seven students making up (27%) claimed that the influence is subtle and have little influence, besides this, only two students did not have an answer. The third question was addressed to EFL students to know which Social media is mostly used or favored by students. The answers concerning this question have revealed that WhatsApp is the most favored Social media between students making up (69%) of users, while Telegram occupied the second most used Social media with twenty-nine students making up (29%). Skype on the other hand ranked the third with one user making up (1%), while only one student claimed they do not use any. Question four is devised to determine the language that students mostly use when using Social media. This question is very essential to the research work. It shows its significance as far as English is concerned. The research has displayed that seventy-eight students making up (78 %) use English as the main language for oral communication in Social media while twenty-one students making up (21 %) opt for the Mother tongue. Moreover, one student making up (1%) use other languages. Some students opted for more than one choice which means that they shift from one language to the other according to the speakers' need. Behind question five, the researcher aimed to know the extent to which students of English are making use of Social media by having oral conversations with native speakers. The results have displayed that sixty-seven students making up (77 %) have had the opportunity to speak to native speakers online, while only nine making up (23%) students did not go through the experience. By the question sixth, the researcher wanted to know EFL students' attitudes and ideas towards the employment of Social media in educational fields to improve speaking skill. The majority of students making up (82%) think that Social media do improve the speaking proficiency to a high extent, while (18 %) of students claimed that the improvement is medium since the process is at the risk of causing many shortcomings.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

First of all, it is worth saying that teachers at the university are conscious of the advancement and progress of communication and technology and its assumption to the field of education, and what makes this true is the frequent use of Social media by teachers who tend to publish educational links and share knowledge with their students. Moreover, the benefit gained from Social media is dependent, and differs from one teacher to another, in the same vain only few teachers use Social media for online lecturing. In addition, WhatsApp and Telegram have got quite large popularity among teachers in comparison with other Social media. Thus, their use involves mostly colleagues and not students. Furthermore, teachers believe in the influence of Social media supporting their stand point with the fact that Social media give the students the opportunity to practice the language due to the motivating and helpful environment it provides. Another key thing to remember is that teachers regard Virtual Classroom as a very successful experience and would enhance the student learning and speaking abilities through the conversations conducted with native speakers of English. Similarly, teachers do agree that Social media can be used at university to improve speaking and listening as well. The main challenge, however, lies at the pedagogic strategies that should be

followed in order to implement Social media and how they can best be employed, not to mention the availability of necessary equipment.

The intensive use of Social media by students should not be looked at only as a negative process. To put it another way, 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. WhatsApp and Telegram have got tremendous popularity among students and this makes a lot of sense because Messenger is an additional tool and connected to the most used Social media all over the world that is Facebook. The research has revealed that English is the most used language among students when using Social media with a challenging degree of use of mother tongue as well and maybe that is exactly the reason why the improvement is seen with Virtual Classroom students and not with other students. In the Virtual Classroom, the use of Social media is guided and conducted to speak only English and not other languages. In a question designed for students about the use of Social media to improve speaking most students welcomed the thought and claimed its effectiveness in learning. Likewise, students believe that talking to native speakers is the best method to benefit from Social media in addition to implementing them in research and communication.

Improving the speaking skill is a hard task for foreign language learners. It requires some strategy and experience to produce the language strictly and understand the intended meanings of other speakers. According to many teachers the best way to do that is; to encourage some new strategies inside or outside the classroom, since learners do not use foreign language frequently in their daily life outside the classroom (Alexiou & Fotini, 2010; Namaziandost & Nasri, 2019; Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, Nasri, & Mirshekaran, 2018). Our study has been focused on the effectiveness of the use of Social media to improve EFL learners speaking skill. So, this study was composed of two parts (Theoretical, Practical part). The theoretical part was an overview on Social media, and the Speaking skill, including the main titles and types of each variable in order to give a clear idea about each one and the relation between them. The practical part of this study was an analysis in order to confirm the results that have been obtained from both students and teachers' questionnaire. The findings went hand in hand with our hypothesis which emphasize that learners will enhance their speaking skill if they use Social media in an appropriate way.

The aim of this study was to investigate if there are any positive effects or influence of Social media on EFL learners speaking skill and determine to what extent Social media can be an assistant for the teachers to improve their courses of speaking activities in order to encourage their learners to participate and improve their speaking skill, because the majority of students want to use these aids in the classroom continuously in order to avoid the bored study and make them motivated to participate in speaking activities.

Above all, it is worth explaining that Social media cannot be regarded only as an entertaining tool, they rather play a principal role in the field of education and research, the presence of Social media has changed some of the aspects in the teacher and the learner roles towards clarity and flexibility and therefore, instructors may be looking forward to implement different pedagogies so as to keep up with the technological advancements.

The present section is entirely devoted to state some possible recommendations and suggestions regarding the employment of Social media as a learning material to develop learners' speaking abilities. EFL teachers on the other hand need to assign their learners with tasks that help them communicate and learn with one another. Likewise, technology might be a convenient means to fulfill such goal. The general findings of the current study revealed that the use of Social media is becoming broader and broader among learners as well as teachers. They both make use of it in different fields to achieve different goals including educational ones. Besides the fact that Social media provide time and shorten the distances, they create a relaxing context for learners to talk freely and express their ideas without any fear of embarrassment or lack of confidence. Therefore, they help the learners to overcome many speaking difficulties and boost their speaking skill.

After the analysis of the findings obtained students and teachers' questionnaires, we suggest the following recommendations:

For teachers:

- Teachers are advised to use Social media in preparing classroom speaking activities.
- Teachers should encourage their students to be exposed to authentic language through Social media.
- Teachers should exploit videos from Social media in their courses in order to enhance learners' motivation to speak.

For students:

- Students should use Social media appropriately in order to develop their speaking skill.
- Students should communicate with native speakers in order to develop their speaking skill.
- Students should be interested with such material because they will help them in learning English language with new technology.
- Students should benefit from watching Social media' video courses, and using Various Social media.

For Administration:

- The administration should provide the necessary materials that are required to promote the speaking ability.
- Social media should be supposed to be as a strategy in teaching the oral courses.

Above all, technology and Social media in particular can be used to enrich learners' speaking abilities. Teachers then need to be flexible to their students' needs, and provide as much as space for the students to express their ideas and develop their oral competence. The investigator has tried to present some suggestions that may help in the development of EFL teaching and learning. He has also proposed some practical activities that at the classroom concerning the use of Social media in education. All things considered, it seems reasonable to assume that what brings Social media to the forefront of educational interest is the highly sophisticated delivery and interactivity now available with technological learning. In oral production courses, technology should hold a prominent place. Similarly, Teachers should have the competency required for building and operating technology based courses to achieve the designed objectives. With proper use, technology offers a way to create or construct learning opportunities unlike ever before available.

To sum up, this extended essay has led to conclude that EFL teachers should consider the usefulness of Social media in higher education without ignoring the contribution of the traditional methods and techniques. The integration of Social media in EFL context will provide access to increase the language activities and even more, to enhance the student's motivation to learn speaking which is believed to be the main factor that lacks the traditional classroom. Without a shadow of doubt, the frequent communication with native speakers around the world by means of Social media would improve the student speaking as well as listening skills. Therefore, it became a necessity to give technology its fair share of importance in EFL context.

## REFERENCES

- Abram, C., & Pearlman, L. (2010). *Facebook For Dummies* (2nd ed.). Indiana: Wiley Publishing, Inc.
- Akinola, O. T. (2015). social media as a weapon mass instruction in training library and information science. In A. Tella, *Social Media Strategies for Dynamic Library Service Development* (pp. 175-202). IGI Global.
- Al Musa, A. b. (2002). *Using Computers in Education*. Riyadh. Ima Mohamed BinSaud Islamic University.
- Al Musa, A. B., & Al Mubarak, A. B. (2005). *Electronic Education: Basics Applications*. Riyadh: Data Net.
- Alexiou, A., & Fotini, P. (2010). Enhancing self-regulated learning skills through the implementation of an e-portfolio tool. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2(2), 3048-3054.
- Aloraini, S. (2012). The impact of using multimedia on students' academic achievement in the College of Education at King Saud University. *Journal of King Saud University -Languages and Translation*, 75-82.
- Azadi, G., Biria, R., & Nasri, M. (2018). Operationalising the Concept of Mediation in L2 Teacher Education. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 9(1), 132-140.
- Aziz, S., Shamim, M., Aziz, M. F., & Avais, P. (2013). The Impact of Texting/SMS Language on Academic Writing of Students- What do we need to panic about? *Elixir International Journal*, 12884-12890.
- Baker, J., & Westrup, H. (2003). *Essential Speaking Skills: A Handbook for English Language Teachers*. London: Continuum.

- Brown, D. H. (1994). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Regent.
- Burns, A. & Joyce, H. (1997). Focus on speaking. Sydney: National Center for English Language Teaching and Research. Retrieved July 27, 2019 from [http://www.cal.org/caela/esl\\_resources/digests/Speak.html](http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Speak.html)
- Bygate, M. (2002). Speaking. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 14–20). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Channey, A. L. (1998). *Teaching Oral Communication in Grades K-8*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2003). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and researching motivation* (2nd ed.). Harlow: Longman.
- Eren, Ö. (2012). Students' Attitudes towards Using Social Networking in Foreign Language Classes: A Facebook Example. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 288-294.
- Gibbins, T., & Greenhow, C. (2016). students' out of school writing practices in an educational Facebook application. In I. R. Association (Ed.), *Social Media and Networking: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools and applications* (pp. 1011-1027). Hershey, Pennsylvania, USA: IGI Global.
- Gutiérrez, D. (2005). Developing oral skills through communicative and interactive tasks. *Profile Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 2 - 10
- Haigh, p. (2010). *Social Network Websites: Their Benefits and Risks*. London: Optimus education e-books.
- Harmer, J. (1991). *The practice of English language teaching*. London: Longman.
- Hashemifardnia, A., Namaziandost, E., & Rahimi Esfahani, F. (2018). The Effect of Using WhatsApp on Iranian EFL Learners' Vocabulary Learning. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 5(3), 256-267.
- Hashemifardnia, A., Namaziandost, E., & Sepehri, M. (2018). The effectiveness of giving grade, corrective feedback, and corrective feedback-plus-giving grade on grammatical accuracy. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, 8 (1), 15-27.
- Hosseini, E. Z., Nasri, M., & Afghari, A. (2017). Looking beyond teachers' classroom behavior: novice and experienced EFL teachers' practice of pedagogical Knowledge to Improve Learners' Motivational Strategies. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 4(8), 183-200.
- Levy, M. (2009). Technology in use for second language learning. *The Modern Language Journal*, 93(1), 769-782.
- Littlewood, W. (2007). *Communicative Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Maney, K. (2009). *Next: an internet revolution in higher education*. Retrieved from BloombergBusinessweek. [http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/sep2009/tc20090914\\_969227.htm](http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/sep2009/tc20090914_969227.htm). (July 20, 2019)
- Namaziandost E., & Nasri, M. (2019). A meticulous look at Long's (1981) interaction hypothesis: does it have any effect on speaking skill? *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 6(2), 218-230.



- Namaziandost E., & Shafiee, S. (2018). Gender Differences in the Use of Lexical Hedges in Academic Spoken Language among Iranian EFL Learners: A Comparative Study. *International Journal of Research in English Education*, 3(4), 64-80.
- Namaziandost, E., & Ahmadi, S. (2019). The Assessment of Oral Proficiency through Holistic and Analytic Techniques of Scoring: A Comparative Study. *Applied Linguistics Research Journal*, 3(2), 70-82.
- Namaziandost, E., Abdi Saray, A., & Rahimi Esfahani, F. (2018). The effect of writing practice on improving speaking skill among pre-intermediate EFL learners. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 8(1), 1690-1697.
- Namaziandost, E., Abedi, P., & Nasri, M. (2019). The Role of Gender in the Accuracy and Fluency of Iranian Upper-intermediate EFL Learners' L2 Oral Productions. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 6(3), 110-123.
- Namaziandost, E., Nasri, M., & Rahimi Esfahani, F. (2019). Pedagogical Efficacy of Experience-Based Learning (EBL) Strategies for Improving the Speaking Fluency of Upper-intermediate Male and Female Iranian EFL Students. *International Journal of Research in English Education*, 4(2), 29-41.
- Namaziandost, E., Rahimi Esfahani, F., & Ahmadi, S. (2019). Varying levels of difficulty in L2 reading materials in the EFL classroom: Impact on comprehension and motivation. *Cogent Education*, 6, 1-9.
- Namaziandost, E., Rahimi Esfahani, F., Nasri, M., & Mirshekaran, R. (2018). The Effect of Gallery Walk Technique on Pre-intermediate EFL Learners' Speaking Skill. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, 8, 1-15.
- Namaziandost, E., Saberi Dehkordi, E., & Shafiee, S. (2019). Comparing the effectiveness of input-based and output-based activities on productive knowledge of vocabulary among pre-intermediate EFL learners. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, 4(2), 1-14.
- Namaziandost, E., Sabzevari, A., & Hashemifardnia, A. (2018). The effect of cultural materials on listening comprehension among Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners: In reference to gender. *Cogent Education*, 5(1), 1-27.
- Nasri, M. & Biria, R. (2017). Integrating multiple and focused strategies for improving reading comprehension and L2 lexical development of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, 6(1), 311-321.
- Nasri, M., Biria, R., & Karimi, M. (2018). Projecting Gender Identity in Argumentative Written Discourse. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, 7(3), 201-205.
- Paliktzoglou, V., & Suhonen, J. (2014) Facebook as an assisted learning tool in problem-based learning: *The Bahrain case International Journal of Social Media and Interactive Learning Environments*, 2(1), 85-100.
- Pichette, F. (2009). Second Language Anxiety and Distance Language Learning. *Foreign Language Annals*, 42(1), 77-93.
- Thornbury, S. (2005). *How to teach speaking*. U.K.: Pearson.