


Exploring the Influence of Social Media and Online Communities on Affordances in ELT

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ABSTRACT

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In modern times, the popularity of social media and online communities play an important role in both daily life and language learning. Social media and online communities have become integral to modern life, offering unique opportunities to transform English Language Teaching (ELT). This literature review examines how the affordances provided by these platforms are reshaping the current landscape of ELT through an ecological perspective. Specifically, the study investigates their influence on teaching and learning practices, focusing on how these affordances foster authentic language use, collaboration, and personalized learning experiences. Additionally, the review explores the implications of these affordances for teachers' strategies in designing dynamic, multimodal learning environments that extend beyond traditional classrooms. By synthesizing findings from recent research (2014–2024), the study highlights the transformative role of social media and online communities in creating enriched affordance environments. These platforms enable greater learner autonomy, cultural awareness, and engagement. The study also identifies practical recommendations for educators to integrate these tools effectively while addressing challenges such as digital literacy and privacy concerns. This review provides a comprehensive understanding of how digital affordances are shaping ELT and suggests strategies for leveraging them in innovative and sustainable teaching practices.

Introduction

More and more research studies are being done on how people use social media to learn languages outside of school and institutions (Barrot, 2022). The tools used for this kind of learning are usually more geared toward social and fun activities than official schooling. Some of the interest-based communities that have been studied look at creative ways that massive multiple online players (Reinhardt, 2022), fanfiction groups (Black, 2008), social networking sites like Facebook (Özdemir, 2017) and Twitter (Taskiran et al., 2018), and photo- and video-sharing websites like Flickr (Barton, 2015) and YouTube (Benson, 2016) can be used for

informal learning. These sites go beyond the standard classroom and give students a lot of freedom in communicating and sharing resources. They offer many benefits that help with language learning, such as real-life language use, chances to connect with others, and access to different cultural points of view (Nasution, 2022).

Thanks to the application of these digital platforms and networks in educational settings, modern instructional methodologies in ELT have undergone great changes. Indeed, utilizing these technologies' capabilities in instruction means that teachers' main responsibility is to design educational activities that optimize students' learning experience to the fullest. According to Pegrum (2014), integrating digitalized instruction into the curriculum provides learning settings that encourage participation and active participation via the use of technology. As to Reinhardt (2022), both conventional teaching strategies and cutting-edge strategies that may meet the many demands of students in this digital era have been reevaluated.

However, despite the rising body of research on the use of social media and online communities in the context of ELT, there is still a substantial gap in our overall grasp of the subject matter. While numerous studies have emphasized the potential benefits of these platforms, there is still a lack of a holistically insightful understanding of the potential affordances they offer on the state-of-the-art picture of instructional approaches (Reinhardt, 2024). Besides, the existing research tends to focus on individual platforms or specific case studies, rather than providing a holistic view of the broader implications. Furthermore, the dynamic and ever-changing nature of social media and online communities demands ongoing research and analysis to guarantee that our knowledge is current (Abdullah et al., 2023; Heil et al., 2016; Tang & Hew, 2017). Moreover, it is noteworthy that despite the promising scenarios these digital forms offer, few studies have investigated their possible practical concerns, such as privacy infringement, students' digital literacy disparities, and teachers' digitized teaching skills (Chen & Tsai, 2021). As a result, additional in-depth study into these elements is critical for providing a broad picture of social media's and online communities' role in contemporary ELT.

The goal of this study is to shed light on how the affordances offered by social media and online communities reshape the current landscape of ELT by evaluating recent relevant research on the aforementioned topics. Furthermore, another purpose of this study is to equip English language instructors who want to include social media and online communities into their teaching practice with practical pedagogical implications. To fulfill these purposes, this research seeks to answer the following questions:

What affordances do social media and online communities offer in ELT?

How can these affordances inform teachers' strategies for creating enriched learning environments?

Literature Review

Definitions of key concepts

Social Media

Many scholars have defined the concept of “social media” in various ways (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) mentioned “Web 2.0” as a technological foundation on which social media, a group of Internet-based applications, was built to allow users to create and exchange content. From their viewpoint, social media is an umbrella term with six different categories, including blogs, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, virtual social worlds, communities of content, and collaborative projects. On the other hand, Davis et al. (2014) emphasized the communicative

nature of social media when stating that "social media" included all web-based and mobile applications that assisted users in creating, engaging, and sharing digital content through various communication forms. Maca's description of the concept was slightly different. According to Manca (2020), social media refers to Internet-based applications that serve a wide range of functions, such as sharing photos (e.g., Instagram), searching and organizing information (e.g., Pinterest), sending instant messages (e.g., WhatsApp, Messenger), expressing personal viewpoints (e.g., Twitter), or a mixture of those purposes mentioned above (e.g., Facebook). However, the rapidly changing nature of today's technological environment means that approaches to defining social media still rely solely on functions and communicative forms, which may result in outdated descriptions of the concept and overlook some aspects of the technological influences on modern educational activities. O'Reilly and his colleagues (2018) made valuable additions to the "social media" concept. These include "user participation", which highlights the active involvement of users in interacting with content, "openness", which encourages users to utilize flexible development models and social media tools by opening up technological architectures, and "network effects", which involve showcasing one's activities and accomplishments to a large audience (Zourou, 2019).

Online Communities

One of the concepts that is directly associated with "social media" is online community. According to Preece (2000), an online community is composed of different elements. Firstly, the *individuals* engage in social interaction to fulfill their needs or take on specific roles, such as leading or moderating. Secondly, there should be a *common goal*, which can be a shared interest, mutual need for information exchange, or service, to maintain social interaction among individuals. Thirdly, the community is often operated by agreed *policies* that govern the way people interact, although these policies may not always be explicitly stated. The last element is the *computer systems* that are used to facilitate communication and interactions among the community members.

A number of scholars and educators have realized the limitless potential of online communities for educational purposes in the twenty-first century. Online communities in educational settings can have either a formal or informal character. A formal community is defined by its explicit goals, and the success of an online formal community is measured by its capacity to accomplish these goals and cultivate an environment of collaboration and confidence (Booth, 2012; Bourhis & Dubé, 2010). An informal online community creates a learning ecology (Barrot, 2022). This learning ecosystem encompasses informal environments where collaborative learning occurs. The primary differentiation resides in a shared goal or objective defining a formal community, whereas individual members of an informal society pursue their own unique interests.

Affordances and Ecological Perspectives in Social Network-Based ELT

The employment of social networks in ELT settings is primarily based on the theoretical Concept of Affordances and the Ecological Perspective on Language Learning, which provide insights into how learners utilize and engage with social networks for language acquisition.

Affordance

The concept of affordances was first coined by the psychologist Gibson in 1979, it is defined as the potential actions or interactions that an environment offers to an individual. Later, in the field of education, affordance is expanded to indicate a paradigm shift in our knowledge of language learning (van Lier, 2004). In the process of language acquisition, it is necessary for learners to get exposure to the rich affordance environment. In this sense, social networks, as digital environments, can present a rich source of affordances through the digital environment

that can connect worldwide users as well as authentic sources of materials for several reasons. Firstly, learners can communicate authentically with native speakers and peers worldwide, fostering communicative competence and sociolinguistic awareness (Lyu & Lai, 2024). Secondly, forums and group chats, among other features, encourage community formation and cooperation, which promotes language learning (Godwin-Jones, 2021). In addition, text, pictures, movies, and audio are among the many multimodal resources that have the potential to satisfy a wide range of different learning styles and accelerate the process of language acquisition (Kern et al., 2004). By actively choosing learning materials, interactive modes, and adaptive tools that suit their personal needs and interests, students may be able to customize their learning experiences, which triggers learning motivation and autonomy (Chapelle, 2009).

The Ecological Perspective on Language Learning

The ecological perspective views language learning as a complex, dynamic system influenced by learners' characteristics, social interactions, and the broader socio-cultural context (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; van Lier, 2004). According to Tudor (2003, p. 10), the ecological approach "involves exploring the deep script of human interaction with the learning process, not in isolation, but within the broader context of students' concerns, attitudes, and perceptions." This is an explanation of what the ecological perspective entails. This viewpoint has elaborated on how students' individual traits, interpersonal relationships, and socio-cultural environment affect language learning. In the context of social networks, this perspective emphasizes the interplay between learners and their digital environment. Learners actively navigate and utilize the affordances offered by social networks to achieve their language learning goals within a dynamic social and cultural context. This viewpoint emphasizes the dynamic interaction between students and their changing digital environment (Lyu & Lai, 2024). The platform features, the kind of social interactions, and the individual peculiarities of the learners are considered to be related and mutually beneficial to the learning process (Lai et al., 2016). Importantly, learners actively exercise agency in selecting how to make use of social network opportunities to accomplish their language learning objectives (Godwin-Jones, 2021).

Methods

Design of the Study

This research review investigates the influence that online communities and social media have on the affordances of ELT and suggests the implications for teacher's strategies. The decision to focus on this topic stems from the growing recognition of social media and online communities as transformative tools in modern language education. These platforms provide unique affordances that foster authentic communication, collaboration, and personalized learning, reshaping traditional instructional methodologies. By synthesizing findings from prior studies through an ecological perspective, this research aims to provide educators with practical insights for leveraging these affordances effectively.

The need to capture a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon guided the choice of a literature review as the research method. A full literature evaluation was conducted to synthesize knowledge from diverse studies, ensuring that findings reflect a broad range of perspectives and contexts. This approach allows for a holistic examination of the affordances provided by social media and online communities and their implications for ELT.

Data collection & analysis

To collect the data, researchers selected a sizable number of published articles from prestigious academic databases, such as Google Scholar, ProQuest, JSTOR, Web of Science, and ERIC (Education Resources Information Center). Criteria for this first stage of the screening process are the following keywords: “Social media”, “Online communities”, “ELT”, “English Language Teaching”, “Affordances”, “Technology in education”, “Teacher professional development”, “Learner engagement”. Moreover, to capture the recent research trends and state-of-the-art influential findings of development, only studies that were published within the last ten years (2014-2024) were chosen.

The second phase involves skimming the abstracts of the selected papers. During this stage, specific requirements were strictly adhered to guarantee that the chosen studies were relevant to the research questions and of high quality. Qualified papers should meet the following requirements. Firstly, they must specifically discuss the role of social media and online communities in ELT, with a focus on affordances. Secondly, they must be based on a peer-reviewed journal article, book chapter, conference proceedings, or credible report from an established educational organization. Seminal works and foundational studies were also included to provide a comprehensive historical context. Lastly, all included studies had to be published in English to ensure accessibility for analysis and to maintain relevance to the focus on English Language Teaching.

Table 1

Key Themes in Social Media and Online Communities for ELT.

Theme	Description	Key References
Enhanced Communication and Interaction	Explores how social media and online communities facilitate communication and interaction in ELT.	Abdullah et al. (2023); Gao et al. (2017); Godwin-Jones (2018); Greenhow & Askari (2017); Naghdipour & Manca (2023); Tang & Hew (2017); Thomas (2020).
Collaborative Learning and Peer Feedback	Investigates how digital platforms support collaborative learning and peer feedback processes.	Barton (2015); Dellatola et al. (2020); Gao et al. (2017); Oh et al. (2020); Wang & Chen (2020); Yeh & Mitric (2019); Yuan et al. (2021).
Authentic Materials and Richer Multimodal Environment	Examines the role of social media in providing authentic materials and creating a multimodal environment for language learning.	Allsop (2016); Benson (2016); Godwin-Jones (2018); Otajonova (2024); Purnama (2017); Thomas (2020).
Personalized Learning	Delves into how these platforms enable personalized learning experiences and promote learner autonomy.	Allsop (2016), Benson (2016), Heil et al. (2016), Lai et al. (2016), and Yadav (2021).

After this process, the selected papers were put through a multi-stage theme analysis. Part of this method was carefully reviewing each study to find the most important results and see how they connected to the research goals. It was very hard to keep track of all the themes, trends, and findings that kept coming up about how online groups and social media affect teaching English. The focus was on their unique benefits to teachers and students. The study questions guided the categorization of the detected themes into larger thematic areas, which allowed for

a thorough synthesis of the data to derive broad insights and conclusions on the impact of various digital platforms on ELT.

Thematic analysis of studies published between 2014 and 2024 identified several key sub-themes, each reflecting distinct aspects of how social media and online communities influence English Language Teaching (ELT). These sub-themes and their descriptions are summarized in the Table 1 above.

Findings

Reshaping of affordances in ELT through social media and online communities

Many studies have already been done that show how online and social media sites have completely changed how English language learners and teachers use the language. These tools help both students and teachers in many ways, such as by letting them communicate, work together, and access real language materials. When students have no other way to learn the language or see how well they're doing, it's much harder to teach them a second language (Siddig, 2020). Using social media in school in a smart way that encourages student participation and communication could help them learn more. The idea behind this is that students can judge their English skills by interacting with others on social media sites. Also, kids can improve their language skills on social media by working together, sharing their work, and getting helpful feedback (Godwin-Jones, 2021). Altogether, the data showed that online groups and social media can help people learn languages in a lot of different ways.

Enhanced Communication and Interaction

The main benefit of social networks is that they make it easier to talk to each other and share information. This is something that regular classes can't do. For example, social media sites like Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook allow students to talk to their peers in real-time and later on. Researchers have found that having these kinds of talks in real life can help people improve their speaking skills (Abdullah et al., 2023; Thomas, 2020). In particular, talking to people from around the world is an important part of learning a language because it exposes students to authentic language materials, such as everyday words, phrases, and colloquial expressions (Godwin-Jones, 2018). In addition, students can add videos to their talks on social networking sites (Siddig, 2020). Because of this, social networks and online groups can provide a more complete setting for students to experience real conversation and work together with people from around the world. As for the potential of mobile social media, Gao et al. (2017) and Naghdipour and Manca, (2023) claimed that it can create a stimulating learning environment that encourages active participation and remarkably fosters learners' attention and autonomy. In the same vein, another study by Greenhow and Askari (2017) strengthened this idea by stating that mobile social media promotes engagement between teachers and students. Overall, it can be concluded from the above findings that the use of social media in ELT aligns with ecological approaches, as it provides diverse and dynamic opportunities for language acquisition (Tang & Hew, 2017).

Collaborative Learning and Peer Feedback

Collaborative learning and peer feedback that are believed to contribute to language acquisition could also be conducted effectively by online communities and social media. Edmodo, Google Docs, and Padlet are just a few examples of online platforms that provide limitless opportunities for students to collaborate on writing, editing, and mutual feedback (Yeh & Mitric, 2019; Yuan et al., 2021). Regarding social media, recent findings have shown that mobile platforms may

efficiently provide a stimulating learning environment that encourages active participation. In other words, these social media platforms may offer a stimulating learning environment that triggers learners' interest and autonomy (Gao et al., 2017). It can also promote engagement for teachers and students (Dellatola et al., 2020). Indeed, Barton (2015) found that allowing interactive comments in 'comment' sections has generated handy conversational places combining social networking with media-sharing functionalities on YouTube and Flickr. In the work of Wang and Chen (2020), 'Liking' and 'sharing' videos with friends for conversations is a common way for Thai university students to learn the language on YouTube. In light of these results, it seems that the features of these types of media-sharing websites facilitate multimodal social interactions centered on certain content or activities. As a result, these platforms' multimedia sharing can provide the affordances that help enhance the learning experiences. These affordances are not limited to the boundaries of conventional classrooms, but they are expanded to digital sites, which can offer better flexibility and a larger range of participants. From an ecological perspective, the use of mobile social media enhances language learning by facilitating collaborative learning and fostering a sense of community (Tang & Hew, 2017).

Authentic Materials and Richer Multimodal Environment

Thirdly, a plethora of credible resources, including films, articles, podcasts, and live news updates, are readily available via online forums and social media. According to Godwin-Jones (2018) and Otajonova (2024), students exposed to real-world information improve their listening and reading comprehension abilities and gain cultural awareness. Besides the wide range of authentic materials, social media and online forums also offer a richer multimodal environment for the users. Allsop (2016), Purnama (2017), Thomas (2020) as well as Abdullah et al. (2023) found that users of Instagram and TikTok, respectively, take advantage of these new capabilities to create and share language learning material. Benson (2016) uses YouTube to demonstrate how multimodal digital texts are becoming. He explains that multimodal textual creation occurs when individuals remix written texts in new digital environments using visual media and other semiotic resources. Purnama (2017) examined an Instagram account to discover how Indonesian students use memes. Nguyen (2024) demonstrates how online resources accessed through personal devices enrich learners' reading practices by providing leveled content and exposure to diverse perspectives. This approach enhances vocabulary acquisition, reading fluency, and cultural understanding, making it a valuable strategy for creating authentic learning experiences. In short, the multimodal textual creation and sharing facilitated by social media platforms contribute to a more dynamic and engaging language learning experience.

Personalized Learning

Fourthly, social networking sites also provide customized educational opportunities catered to the needs of each learner and promote self-directed learning. Self-direction is essential for effective learning. Self-direction is vital in language instruction (Lai et al., 2016). This may be done using technology and collaborative learning. Learners of English as a second language may work together to achieve their objectives. This applies particularly when learners share a mother tongue and want to acquire the same foreign language. Collaboration improves self-directed learning and social media may help English learners by offering a common platform (Benson, 2016; Lai et al., 2016). Learners may cooperate and produce ideas using social media platforms like Facebook pages and groups, WhatsApp chat groups, etc. By doing so, students may recognize and fix their mistakes, improving their learning. Social media in second language instruction is similar to group debates in science, where collaborative engagement improves learning. Group learning improves performance because students may interact more

freely with peers than instructors (Allsop, 2016; Lai et al., 2016). Thus, social media in ESL training might improve student performance.

Besides, online discussion boards and language learning applications (like Duolingo and Memrise) let students choose their own subjects, study at their own speed, and get feedback right away (Heil et al., 2016). In addition, motive and self-directed learning are increased by this autonomy (Benson, 2016). Learning results may be better when students feel more responsible and in charge of their education in personalized learning settings (Yadav, 2021). Social media lets students take charge of their education and control the learning process, which is one of the most effective ways to learn languages (Benson, 2016). Do et al. (2024) emphasize the critical role of technology self-efficacy in fostering learner autonomy. Their findings reveal that higher self-efficacy correlates with increased engagement and better utilization of online tools, underscoring the importance of confidence-building strategies in technology-mediated environments. Consequently, personalized learning is a special affordance offered by social networks to the language learning process to fulfill learners' needs.

Implications for teachers

In terms of the second research question, there are some key points for teachers' teaching practice to promote affordances through social networks and online communities. The integration of social media and online communities into ELT presents a transformative opportunity for language educators. Teachers need to adopt a proactive and informed approach to harness the affordances of these platforms effectively.

Teacher Awareness and Preparedness

First and foremost, teachers must recognize the potential of social media and online platforms as rich affordance environments that offer unique learning experiences beyond the traditional classroom (Siddig, 2020). This necessitates a shift in mindset, acknowledging the value of these tools for enhancing listening, speaking, writing, and reading skills. These platforms create rich affordance environments, enabling unique learning experiences beyond the traditional classroom setting (Siddig, 2020). This recognition involves understanding their value for enhancing key language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

However, recognition alone is insufficient. Teachers need comprehensive preparation to integrate these platforms effectively. This includes developing a strong grasp of the technical aspects as well as pedagogical strategies that align with the affordances of social media (Naghdi-pour & Manca, 2023). For instance, teachers can leverage social media to facilitate online communities, curate authentic materials, and design collaborative activities that connect formal instruction with informal communication. Despite these opportunities, research indicates a gap between awareness and implementation due to factors such as skepticism and perceived curricular constraints (Allsop, 2016; Siddig, 2020). Vo and Le (2023) identified key challenges that teachers face in online learning environments, including technological constraints and maintaining student motivation. Their findings highlight the need for professional development programs that equip educators with the technical and pedagogical skills to effectively leverage digital platforms. Overcoming these barriers through professional development and institutional support is essential for widespread adoption.

Transformational Potential and Pedagogical Adaptation

Social media's true transformational potential lies in its ability to redefine language acquisition through dynamic affordances such as community building, resource sharing, and collaborative learning (Nasution, 2022). These affordances support the creation of engaging, learner-centered environments that transcend traditional teaching boundaries.

To capitalize on this potential, teachers must adapt their pedagogical approaches to align with the evolving demands of digital learning environments. For example, blended learning strategies that incorporate multimedia resources, interactive communication tools, and collaborative activities are key. Social media platforms also serve as adaptive tools, enabling personalized learning experiences tailored to individual needs and fostering sustained student engagement (Siddig, 2020). Teachers can create innovative and inclusive learning ecosystems that empower learners by strategically leveraging these affordances.

Clear Guidelines and Student Training

Effective integration of social media necessitates clear guidelines, well-defined learning goals, and expectations for student behavior and participation (Abdullah et al., 2023). Teachers should provide students with guidance and training on utilizing these platforms for language learning purposes, including finding and evaluating reliable sources, engaging in respectful online discussions, and maintaining a focus on language practice (Godwin-Jones, 2021; Greenhow & Askari, 2017).

Student Engagement and Constructivist Approaches

Research indicates that interactive activities like group projects, online chats, and peer feedback exercises can significantly enhance student engagement (Dellatola et al., 2020). However, it's crucial to move beyond teacher-centered approaches and embrace constructivist pedagogies that empower students to actively construct knowledge through technology (Allsop, 2016). Constructivist pedagogies offer an alternative framework by positioning students as active participants in their learning journey. These approaches empower students to construct knowledge by engaging directly with content, peers, and technology (Allsop, 2016). For example, tools such as collaborative document editing platforms or discussion boards allow students to co-create knowledge, reflect on their learning, and develop critical thinking skills in authentic contexts. Adopting constructivist methods also involves designing tasks that integrate real-world applications of language learning, enabling students to see the relevance of their efforts. This approach fosters deeper engagement as students take ownership of their learning process and contribute to shared learning outcomes. Educators can create dynamic, student-centered environments that promote autonomy, collaboration, and sustained engagement by combining interactive activities with constructivist strategies.

Professional Development and Digital Literacy

To fully realize social media's potential in ELT, teachers require ongoing professional development that focuses not only on technical skills but also on pedagogical understanding and technology integration (Bostancıoğlu, 2016; Chen & Tsai, 2021). Additionally, incorporating digital literacy skills into the curriculum is essential to equipping students with the ability to navigate digital spaces safely and critically (Pegrum, 2014).

Discussion

This literature review underscores the significant role of social media and online communities in reshaping the affordances of ELT). By facilitating authentic communication, collaborative learning, and personalized experiences, these digital platforms offer a dynamic and engaging environment for language acquisition. Similar findings have been noted by Barrot (2022), who systematically reviewed studies on social media's role in informal language learning and emphasized its potential for promoting authentic language use and cultural exchange. Godwin-Jones (2018) also highlighted the transformative capabilities of mobile devices in language

classrooms, particularly in fostering multimodal communication. The findings highlight the potential of these tools to extend learning beyond the traditional classroom, fostering learner autonomy and motivation.

The findings in this study align with previous research, such as Gao et al. (2017) and Dellatola et al. (2020), which observed that social media platforms provide opportunities for collaborative learning and peer feedback that are difficult to achieve in traditional classrooms. For example, Dellatola et al. demonstrated that platforms like Google Docs and Edmodo foster collaborative writing activities that encourage interaction and mutual feedback. Similarly, Gao et al. (2017) emphasized the role of mobile social media in creating stimulating environments that boost learner autonomy and engagement. Moreover, the role of social media in providing personalized learning experiences echoes the work of Benson (2016), who examined the affordances of platforms like Facebook and YouTube in enabling learners to take ownership of their language learning journeys. Benson found that these platforms allowed learners to customize their learning experiences through access to diverse multimodal resources, which is consistent with this review's findings on social media's capacity to provide a rich and flexible learning environment.

Despite these parallels, this review contributes a more holistic perspective by synthesizing findings across a broader range of studies, moving beyond single-platform analyses. While studies like those of Abdullah et al. (2023) and Otajonova (2024) explored specific tools like TikTok and Instagram, this review contextualizes their findings within the broader landscape of digital affordances. This synthesis highlights the collective impact of social media on ELT, emphasizing the interplay between authentic materials, multimodal environments, and learner autonomy.

The implications for teachers are clear: embracing these technologies and strategically integrating them into pedagogical practices is essential. However, successful implementation requires careful planning, teacher training, and ongoing evaluation. Vo and Le (2023) identified barriers such as technological constraints and digital literacy gaps, which align with this review's findings on the challenges faced by educators in leveraging social media effectively. By navigating the challenges and harnessing the opportunities presented by social media and online communities, educators can create transformative learning experiences that empower learners to thrive in the digital age.

This study contributes to the existing literature by offering a holistic understanding of the specific affordances provided by social media and online communities in ELT, and how these affordances can reshape instructional approaches. While previous research has often focused on individual platforms or specific case studies, this review synthesizes findings across various studies to provide a broader perspective on the impact of these technologies.

Furthermore, this study emphasizes the dynamic and evolving nature of social media and online communities, highlighting the need for continuous research and analysis to ensure our understanding remains current and relevant. By addressing the gaps in the literature and offering insights into effective implementation strategies, this research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the role of social media and online communities in shaping the future of ELT. It provides a valuable resource for educators seeking to leverage these powerful tools to create more engaging, effective, and learner-centered language learning experiences.

Conclusion

In today's society, communicating on social media and online communities has become essential due to the increasing number of individuals engaging with others outside their immediate social circle. In order to acquire a new language proficiently, it is crucial to use social media as a means of practice without being limited by temporal, geographical, or spatial constraints. The significance of recent research on the use of social media platforms in language teaching lies in its ability to establish future practices.

As a result, this literature study aims to investigate how social media and online groups are contributing to the development of ELT with distinguished affordances and the pedagogical implications for teachers to help create a rich affordance environment for their students outside the traditional classroom. Students and instructors should utilize social media as a tool for experiential, contextual learning as well as social behaviors worthy of critical attention since it is growing in popularity. It is necessary to continue researching how certain media and situational factors might intensify, activate, lessen, or negate the effects of technology-agnostic social media dynamics. Affordances arise from the interaction of instructional ecologies, learner styles, and cultures of use. Mobility and the influence of anytime, anywhere (or always, everywhere) access on learning—and how this genuinely blurs the increasingly antiquated and maybe obsolete barriers between formal and informal learning—are important dynamics that have not been explored in any of the studied literature. There may be opportunities for multimodal, visual, location-based, and other socio-collaborative learning on other social media platforms that have not been thoroughly investigated.

Finally, this study concludes that social media plays an important role in improving language instruction and student performance. The current study offers a more comprehensive picture of how social media and online groups create a rich affordance environment for students outside the traditional classroom and suggests implications for teachers' strategies. This study hopes to contribute to the literature of the field and future research. The research reviewed in this study only scratches the surface of the possibilities for social media tools in language classrooms; language teachers will need to try out different approaches to find what works best for their students and their own situations. In addition, academics, educators, and students will keep looking to social media as a potential new language-learning platform in the years to come. As long as social media keeps influencing our daily lives, including the way we acquire new languages, more studies will be necessary.

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