

Exploring the Role of Social Media in Enhancing Communicative Compensation Strategies for B2 EFL Learners

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of social media on the development of communicative compensation strategies among B2-level EFL learners. With the increasing use of digital platforms in language education, social media offers new opportunities for students to practice and enhance their communication skills. Drawing on previous research on communicative competence and social media-assisted learning, this study examines how B2 learners utilize social media tools, specifically Telegram, to solve communication difficulties and apply compensatory strategies. The findings suggest that social media facilitates the use of strategies such as paraphrasing, synonym replacement, and contextual explanation, enabling learners to communicate more effectively despite language limitations. The study contributes to the understanding of how digital tools can support language learning and provides implications for integrating social media into EFL teaching practices.

Keywords: Social media, Communicative compensation, EFL learners, B2 level, Telegram, Language learning.

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1. Introduction

The integration of social media into language education has created new opportunities for learners to enhance their communication skills and engage in authentic interactions. Platforms such as Telegram provide B2-level EFL learners with opportunities to practice communicative strategies, including paraphrasing, synonym use, and contextual explanation, which support effective communication despite language gaps. The research has shown that teacher-mediated guidance, such as structured assessment tools like rubrics, can influence

learners' engagement and strategy use, enhancing the benefits of social media-based learning activities (Normatova, 2025). Building on these insights, the present study explores how social media can reinforce communicative compensation strategies in B2 EFL learners, emphasizing its practical significance in modern language teaching and learning.

2. Literature Review

Social media networks (SMNs) and computer-mediated communication (CMC) have increasingly become

central tools in foreign language learning. Research by Mondahl & Razmerita (2016) highlights that SMNs facilitate communication, collaboration, and knowledge sharing, allowing learners to express ideas, clarify meaning, and receive feedback. Similarly, Mirzaei, Hashemian, and Khoramshekouh (2016) emphasize that virtual spaces provide accessible, flexible platforms for learner interaction, promoting engagement even when participants are geographically distant. These studies suggest that integrating SMNs into language instruction can enhance compensatory strategies, encourage peer collaboration, and support reflective learning. By building on this theoretical foundation, the present study explores how B2-level learners employ communicative compensation strategies through social media, offering practical insights into online interaction for language development.

3. Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design to examine how B2-level EFL learners utilize communicative compensation strategies through social media. The participants include 10 university students with the level B2 enrolled in English courses who regularly engage in online speaking discussions and chat interactions via Telegram. Data were collected from video-mediated discussions, where learners could freely express themselves using facial expressions, gestures, and spoken communication, as well as from chat messages, including short informal conversations and emoji use, which reflected learners' feelings and communicative choices.

Teacher-made rubrics, as emphasized by Normatova (2025), guided students' engagement and helped systematically observe their strategy use. For example, different kind of photos can be shared by teacher for discussions in order to observe and analyze and they can use video recording during the chat, this function is very useful both for teacher and students. Teacher can analyze and give feedback for their students after watching the video and students can also see and listen to themselves as a listener. Social media and Web tools, such as chat forums and collaborative platforms, allow learners to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and receive feedback from peers and instructors. Multimedia features, including audio and video recording, enable students to save discussions for reflection and assessment, creating a more integrated and productive learning environment (Mondahl & Razmerita, 2016). As Mondahl & Razmerita emphasizes social media is good option to share quickly

and connect with others in an easy way.

The analysis focused on identifying the strategies students used, observing patterns in chat messages, and examining how they shared ideas, understood each other, and interacted with classmates. The study also considered some challenges, such as interrupted conversations and loss of attention, as well as benefits like better self-expression, higher participation, and cooperative learning. This approach helped the researcher understand how social media can support speaking practice and help students improve their communication skills in an online learning environment.

4. Results

The analysis of students' speaking activities on social media revealed several notable patterns in the use of communicative compensation strategies. Most participants frequently employed paraphrasing, synonym substitution, and contextual clarification when they encountered vocabulary gaps. Students also used gestures, facial expressions, and emojis to convey emotions or clarify meaning during both video discussions and informal chat interactions. These strategies allowed learners to maintain communication flow even when threads were interrupted or attention shifted, demonstrating the flexible and adaptive nature of online communicative practice.

In line with previous research, these findings reflect the theoretical perspectives of Mondahl & Razmerita (2016), who highlighted that social media facilitates communication, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among language learners. Similarly, Mirzaei, Hashemian, and Khoramshekouh (2016) emphasized that social media networks offer accessible platforms for interaction, feedback, and idea exchange, which can enhance practical language learning. Moreover, as John, E and Yunus, M. M. (2021) mentioned that One effective approach to enhancing learners' speaking skills is to use technology, particularly social media platforms, as tools for creating increased opportunities for language practice and interaction.

Despite the benefits, challenges were also observed. Conversations often shifted topics suddenly, and short informal messages sometimes made difficult to understand meaning. When it comes to such kind of problems, a scholar, Belal, A (2014) considers that although both students and teachers can organize group discussions through digital platforms, enabling them to

exchange ideas, share course-related materials, and communicate about assignments, the results also reveal that digital social media can have negative effects. Students often adopt informal language features such as abbreviations, incorrect grammar, and poor sentence structures in their formal writing and speaking, largely due to their familiarity with such language online. Overall, the study concludes that while digital social media has both positive and negative impacts, students must be properly motivated to use social networking sites effectively in order to enhance their English writing and speaking abilities. Nevertheless, these interactions encouraged peer collaboration, active participation, and reflective learning, aligning with the pedagogical potential highlighted in the literature. Overall, social media-based speaking activities enabled students to develop compensatory strategies, express themselves creatively, and engage meaningfully with peers, demonstrating both the practical and theoretical advantages of language learning.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that B2-level learners actively employ various communicative compensation strategies during social media-based speaking activities. Students frequently used paraphrasing, synonyms, emojis, and facial expressions to maintain communication flow, clarify meaning, and express emotions. However, as Wiemann, J. M., & Backlund, P. (1980) explains Once educators have a basic understanding of the communication skills required for effective participation in society, they face the challenge of developing teaching strategies that provide students with both the knowledge and practical experience needed to become competent in this essential area of life and Normatova (2025) suggest these kinds of strategies for that. These observations align with Mondahl & Razmerita (2016), who argue that social media facilitates interactive and collaborative learning, enabling learners to engage in meaningful exchanges despite geographic or temporal barriers. Similarly, Mirzaei, Hashemian, and Khoramshekouh (2016) emphasize that virtual spaces provide flexible opportunities for feedback and peer interaction, which help learners develop adaptive strategies in real-time communication.

The students' use of short chat messages, informal conversation, and video discussions demonstrates that social media encourages learner autonomy, active engagement, and reflective practice. However, the semi-structured nature of online discussions sometimes caused

topic shifts and occasional misunderstandings, highlighting the need for guidance in managing online interactions effectively. Overall, the results suggest that communication tools can significantly enhance communicative competence and compensatory skills, confirming both the theoretical and practical value of integrating social media into language instruction.

6. Conclusion

This study has shown that B2-level learners effectively use social media to reinforce their communicative skills through a variety of compensatory strategies. Tools such as chat messages, emojis, paraphrasing, and video interactions help learners maintain communication, express emotions, and clarify meaning. The findings support the view that social media networks and computer-mediated communication provide flexible and engaging platforms for language practice, encouraging learner autonomy, active participation, and reflective learning (Mondahl & Razmerita, 2016; Mirzaei, Hashemian, & Khoramshekouh, 2016).

Furthermore, as Normatova (2021) highlights, the quality of language development depends on both teacher expertise and student motivation, indicating that integrating teachers' methodological skills with active student engagement can lead to significant improvement in oral communication in a short period and in a similar way Savignon, S.J. (2017) suggests that for language teaching to achieve genuine transformation in both theory and classroom practice, revising goals, materials, and assessment alone is not enough. Greater emphasis must be placed on providing both pre-service and in-service teachers with opportunities to experience and apply methods that incorporate communicative activities into their lessons for learners at all levels, so using social media can be a good option for that. Despite occasional topic shifts and informal digressions in online discussions, the overall impact of social media on communicative competence is positive. By integrating these digital tools into language instruction, educators can foster an interactive environment where learners develop both linguistic and compensatory strategies, confirming the practical and theoretical value of social media in EFL learning.

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