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Pedagogical Applications of Google Tools for Strengthening Oral Communication among Undergraduate Learners

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Abstract:

Recent developments in educational technology are reshaping English language teaching (ELT), introducing digital tools that strengthen instruction and enhance learner engagement. Google tools, including Google Meet, YouTube, Google Classroom, Google Sites, and other related applications, serve as valuable resources for enhancing undergraduate students' communicative competence. This study synthesizes existing literature to examine the pedagogical applications of Google tools for strengthening oral communication skills in undergraduate English language teaching and to identify related instructional strategies. Existing literature indicates that these tools can facilitate a range of speaking-focused practices, including interactive discussions, pronunciation support, and real-time feedback. However, their pedagogical application in undergraduate English classrooms remains relatively unexplored, offering opportunities for

further inquiry. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of integrating these digital tools, demonstrating their capacity to enhance student collaboration, oral fluency, and communicative competence in English across diverse contexts. Consequently, the review provides critical insights to guide the development of evidence-informed strategies for the effective deployment of ICT in higher education contexts.

Keywords: Google Tools; Oral Communication Skills; Undergraduate ELT learners; Technological intervention; Pedagogical Applications.

Introduction

Teaching is a complex process that requires addressing diverse learners' needs, designing effective classroom practices, and maintaining consistent engagement. This complexity has long encouraged the search for tools and approaches that can make instructional work more manageable. In recent decades, this search has coincided with the rapid growth of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which has introduced practical opportunities to support and enrich language teaching (Banerjee et al. 158).

ICT tools act as scaffolding, supporting teachers by reducing routine burdens and enabling them to focus on guiding and engaging students in active learning. They provide access to diverse teaching materials, support a more effective instructional environment, and facilitate efficient assessment through real-time feedback and monitoring. However, despite these advantages, the use of ICT in teaching remains limited due to factors such as insufficient training, inadequate infrastructure, time constraints, and rigid curriculum structures (Linombay and Taganas 322).

The practical integration of Google tools to strengthen oral communication in undergraduate English teaching remains insufficiently defined. Although these tools are widely available, their use to enhance oral communication remains limited, and many teachers who recognize ICT's potential lack clear strategies for effective implementation. This situation underscores the need for research that raises awareness and offers practical guidance on integrating ICT to support oral communication instruction.

Accordingly, this review pursues two objectives: first, to synthesise existing research on the pedagogical use of Google tools to strengthen undergraduate learners' oral communication skills; and second, to identify instructional strategies that support speaking-focused activities, such as interactive discussions, pronunciation practice, and real-time feedback. To address these aims, the study adopts a focused literature review methodology, drawing on recent peer-reviewed studies on Google tools in undergraduate English language teaching and analysing their reported practices, outcomes, and pedagogical implications.

Google Tools as Global Resources for Knowledge Access and Dissemination

Google has become a primary reference point for millions of people, offering quick access to information on almost any topic. Whenever users encounter something unfamiliar, they often turn to Google first, relying on its extensive and regularly updated database for immediate clarification. In addition, it is widely used in education, supporting learners and educators with accessible resources and reliable information. Many prominent educational institutions, teachers, and educational organisations have extensively used Google to access and share educational materials with audiences around the globe. According to (Sinha), Google Workspace for Education now serves over 170 million students and educators worldwide, offering a range of tools, including Classroom, Meet, Gmail, Drive, and Docs. These tools allow educators to

streamline communication and share resources seamlessly. They routinely upload course content, reference documents, and instructional materials, making the platform a practical and efficient space for distributing academic information worldwide.

Google's quick-access model has redefined how information is retrieved and used in learning. Its ability to provide immediate, relevant results supports continuous inquiry and reduces reliance on traditional reference sources. This rapid retrieval enables learners to clarify concepts instantly, verify information efficiently, and integrate knowledge more effectively into academic tasks.

This accessibility has also reshaped personal learning practices. Learners can tailor searches to their level and purpose, selecting from a wide range of scholarly, multimedia, and explanatory resources. Supported by tools such as Classroom, YouTube, Drive, and Docs, Google facilitates self-paced engagement and individualized resource management, making knowledge acquisition a more structured and self-directed process. Teachers apply personalised learning through Google tools in ways that directly enhance the development of oral communication skills. In Google Classroom, they can assign differentiated speaking tasks—such as short presentations, discussion prompts, or pronunciation exercises—aligned with learners' proficiency levels. Students who require additional support may receive model recordings, guided practice videos, or simplified speaking tasks, while more proficient learners are offered analytical or extended oral activities. The platform's flexible deadlines and varied resource formats allow learners to rehearse and prepare at a pace suited to their individual needs, reinforcing confidence and performance.

Tools such as Google Meet, YouTube, and Google Docs further consolidate this personalised approach. Google Meet enables small-group or one-to-one speaking sessions, providing opportunities for focused practice and individualised feedback on fluency, clarity, and pronunciation. Teachers frequently use curated YouTube playlists to supply demonstrations of effective speeches, pronunciation drills, or conversational models that learners can study independently. Through Google Docs, instructors offer targeted feedback on speech outlines, vocabulary choices, and organisational features before students deliver their oral tasks. Collectively, these tools create a structured and adaptable learning environment where oral communication is strengthened through tailored preparation, continuous support, and flexible learning pathways.

Google Tools for Enhancing Oral Communication in Undergraduate English Teaching

Google tools have become integral to modern English language classrooms, offering flexible digital environments that support the development of oral communication skills. Their features enable real-time interaction, personalised feedback, and continuous access to instructional materials—all of which are essential for effective speaking practice. While a wide range of Google applications is available, this study concentrates on selected tools that play a direct role in facilitating oral communication among undergraduate learners. By examining how these tools support speaking activities, collaboration, and guided practice, the study highlights their pedagogical value in enhancing learners' communicative competence.

1. **Google site:**

Google Sites is one of the key Google tools, providing a web-based platform for creating accessible and well-organized websites. It is widely used to present course materials,

support project-based tasks, and host digital portfolios that document students' work and progress. These portfolios allow teachers to monitor progress and provide targeted feedback, while learners gain a clear record of their achievements and growth. This makes Google Sites a practical and effective tool in undergraduate education. In line with this, previous studies have reported generally positive attitudes among both teachers and learners towards the use of digital and electronic portfolios for developing speaking and oral communication skills, including Google Sites–based e-portfolios in EFL contexts (Al-Hawamleh et al. 9–16; Esmaeilee 13–19).

Google Sites can host a wide range of oral communication tasks, including recorded presentations, pronunciation exercises, scenario-based speaking assignments, group discussions, and reflection logs. This versatility supports teachers with clear evidence for assessment and feedback, while offering learners flexible opportunities to practice, review, and improve their oral communication skills.

2. **Google Classroom**

Google Classroom is a web-based platform that organizes coursework, assignments, and communication between teachers and students. It enables instructors to post speaking tasks, share resources, and provide feedback. It can be used for both synchronous sessions via Google Meet and asynchronous activities with recorded lessons and materials, allowing students to practise, review, and develop their oral communication skills in a systematic manner.

Many studies demonstrate the effectiveness of Google Classroom in enhancing communication skills at the undergraduate level. These studies highlight that the platform’s integration of speaking tasks, structured feedback, and opportunities for both synchronous

and asynchronous interaction significantly improves students' oral communication skills, fluency, and confidence in speaking (Warman; Basil et al.; Ruqia et al.).

3. **Google Slides**

Google Slides is a cloud-based presentation platform that supports real-time collaboration, seamless sharing, and interactive learning. Its multimedia capabilities allow students to organise ideas, rehearse presentations, and receive targeted feedback, fostering engagement, autonomy, and confidence in oral communication. Empirical research indicates that multimedia and technology-enhanced tools, including digital presentation platforms, significantly enhance fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and overall speaking competence among EFL and ESL learners (Mahdi 6–8). By providing a structured, dynamic, and interactive environment, such tools strengthen learners' oral performance and promote effective communication skills in academic contexts

4. **Google Meet**

Google Meet is a video-conferencing tool that teachers can use to enhance learners' oral communication skills. It supports real-time interaction, enabling teachers to lead discussions, assign speaking tasks, and engage students in structured dialogue. Features such as screen sharing, breakout rooms, and session recording provide further opportunities for guided practice, peer feedback, and reflective improvement. Breakout rooms, for example, can serve as an effective platform for developing essential communication skills. When well-organized, they create a secure online environment for practicing interpersonal communication (IPC) and discussing sensitive topics, making them a valuable tool for skill-building in virtual learning settings (Almendingen et al. 1)

5. **YouTube**

YouTube is a versatile multimedia platform that teachers can leverage to enhance learners' oral communication skills. It offers access to a wide range of authentic materials, including speeches, presentations, interviews, and instructional videos, which model effective speaking styles and language use (Saed et al.). Teachers can incorporate selected videos into lessons to demonstrate pronunciation, intonation, and discourse patterns, while also assigning tasks such as summarising, commenting, or creating learner-generated videos. These activities encourage active engagement, helping students improve their vocabulary, clarity and confidence in spoken communication (Saed et al.; Fathi and Zarei 55)

6. **Google Docs**

Google Docs is a collaborative word-processing tool that supports oral communication by enabling learners to plan and structure ideas for speaking tasks. Although text-based, its voice-typing feature allows for speech-to-text dictation, providing opportunities to practice articulation and clarity while producing written content. This combination of collaborative drafting and verbal input makes it a useful tool for preparing and strengthening oral communication activities.

Instructional strategies for applying Google tools in undergraduate classrooms

1. **Interactive Discussion**

This strategy enhances oral communication by promoting a supportive and interactive environment where learners practice authentic, purposeful speaking. The teacher guides the discussion, encourages participation, and provides targeted feedback to enhance clarity, fluency, and confidence. For instance, in Google Meet, features such as breakout rooms,screen sharing, and live prompts allow the teacher to structure real-time interaction

and scaffold students' speaking tasks effectively. In this way, the strategy addresses the challenges of distance and ensures meaningful oral communication even without physical presence.

2. Pre-Class Multimedia Input Strategy

By engaging with multimedia resources before class, students acquire both topic knowledge and familiarity with relevant vocabulary, pronunciation, and discourse patterns, enabling more effective participation in classroom discussions and speaking activities. For example, in advance of a lesson on the societal impact of technology, instructors may assign a relevant YouTube video or TED Talk via platforms such as Google Classroom. This allows students to watch the video independently, familiarizing them with key terminology such as 'machine learning,' 'automation,' 'data privacy,' and 'social media algorithms.' In the subsequent class, students are better equipped to participate in discussions or debates, confidently utilizing the vocabulary and concepts they have encountered to engage in informed and meaningful dialogue.

3. Pronunciation Enhancement Strategy

Google tools effectively support pronunciation enhancement by providing opportunities for learners to monitor and improve their speech. For example, Google Docs voice typing allows students to record their speech and see it transcribed in real time, highlighting mispronunciations for self-correction. In addition, YouTube videos offer authentic models of pronunciation and intonation for imitation and practice. Together, these tools enable learners to refine clarity, accuracy, and overall oral communication skills.

4. Peer Teaching Strategy

Sometimes teachers may assign students the responsibility of explaining selected topics, particularly when the syllabus is extensive and class time is limited. This strategy, often referred to as Peer Teaching, encourages active learning, reinforces understanding, and develops students' communication and presentation skills. For example, students can create and present slides summarizing the topic to their peers using Google Slides or present live to classmates attending remotely through Google Meet.

Features of the suggested Strategies

The common feature across all these instructional strategies is that they use Google tools to promote interactive, collaborative, and communication-driven learning. Although each tool functions differently, the strategies share several core characteristics:

1. Digital collaboration: All strategies encourage students to work together through shared documents, discussions, or presentations.
2. Real-time interaction : Whether through Google Docs, Slides, or Meet, students engage immediately with teachers and peers.
3. Active participation : Learners are not passive; they contribute ideas, speak, write, orcreate content.
4. Teacher guidance and feedback : Google tools allow continuous monitoring commenting, and feedback to support learning.
5. Accessibility and flexibility : Every tool can be used anytime and from any device, supporting varied learning contexts.

6. Support for communication skills: Each strategy ultimately strengthens verbal expression, idea organisation, fluency, and confidence.
7. Integration of multimedia resources: Tools allow embedding videos, images, links, and audio to enrich learning experiences.

Conclusion

The review confirms the strong potential of Google tools as practical ICT resources for enhancing oral communication skills in undergraduate English teaching. These tools address essential instructional needs by supporting structured interaction, multimedia input, and collaborative knowledge building, all of which contribute to clearer, more confident student communication. Although their pedagogical value is widely acknowledged, many educators still require practical direction on how to integrate these tools purposefully for speaking-focused activities. The study emphasizes the importance of systematic implementation through strategies such as guided discussions, pronunciation practice, peer teaching, and continuous feedback. These strategies collectively encourage learner autonomy, as students take greater responsibility for preparing, presenting, and evaluating their own communication. They also promote active engagement and self-regulated learning, both of which are essential for sustained improvement in oral communication. These insights offer a foundation for informed instructional practice and provide useful guidance for strengthening communication-driven learning environments in higher education.

Outcomes of the Study

This review leads to three main outcomes. First, it maps how specific Google tools—such as Google Classroom, Google Sites and Google Meet—have been used to create tasks that

increase students' opportunities to speak, receive feedback and practise pronunciation in undergraduate EFL courses. Second, it brings together the main teaching strategies reported in the studies and offers a practical guide for teachers and programme designers who wish to plan speaking-focused activities using Google tools. Third, it identifies gaps in the existing research and calls for further classroom-based studies that examine long-term effects on learners' fluency, confidence and autonomy when these tools are systematically integrated into speaking instruction.

Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on the reviewed studies, Google tools can be systematically integrated into speaking-focused instruction by designing regular interactive tasks via Google Classroom, Google Meet, Google Sites, and other Google Workspace tools to scaffold preparation, practice, and reflection. Institutions can support such integration through targeted professional development and by aligning curricula and assessment with technology-mediated oral communication activities. Further classroom-based research is needed to document effective practices and context-sensitive models for using Google tools to enhance students' speaking skills

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