



Integrating Intercultural Communication on Social Media and Learning Materials Encourages Speaking EFL Motivation

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Abstract. Various tactics may be used to increase students' motivation to speak English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in the Indonesian context. The goal of this research is to increase Indonesian learners' motivation to speak EFL by promoting intercultural communication (IC) on social media and in learning materials. Quantitative techniques were used in this study. Forty students from a single-state institution participated in the study. They belong to five distinct ethnic groups. They were requested to complete a distributed questionnaire to obtain reliable data, which were then analyzed using the Four-Likert scale. The research also found a correlation between intercultural communication on social media and learning materials, and the motivation to speak English as a foreign language. Furthermore, the findings suggest that a technology-integrated language curriculum is important for the globalized world. In addition, learners' understanding of intercultural communication and crisis identity avoidance was highlighted in the empirical correlation. However, a research-based online survey or virtual narrative inquiry to gather thousands of intercultural viewpoints for future studies is recommended for a small number of study participants. Other studies, like the ability to listen, write, and read, are also important enough to be thought about. In this vein, the current study calls for further research on the role of EFL teachers in the design of curriculum EFL online intercultural competence-oriented activities.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication · Motivation · Speaking · Social Media · Technology

1 Introduction

The presence of digital mobile technology and social media has allowed instant contact with individuals and cultures that were previously remote and isolated. Global political, economic, and educational system dynamics highlight the growing importance of intercultural communication [1], and the study of intercultural communication (IC) is important because it provides tools to deal with religious issues, racial and ethnic conflicts, hate crimes, natural disasters, and a wide range of other problems that involve intercultural communication.

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Furthermore, IC has grown in importance, and materials should be aware of this because it is a scholarly research. In this sense, IC may be investigated in three ways: facts, human behavior and culture, and communication strategy. Similarly, [1] found three techniques for getting closer to IC: social science, interpretative, and critical approaches. The social approach involves knowing that communication is affected by culture. Anthropologists have taught us a lot about the interpretative method, with the last approach being the most important. It recognizes the importance of economic and political factors in culture and communication and says that power plays a role in every international meeting.

In light of the above-mentioned social sciences approach, IC has become a critical topic for both teachers and learners to study at schools [2]. According to their findings, as the world grows globally, IC is becoming more important in business and technical communication courses. They also emphasized the need to focus on intercultural communication and looked at how to do it effectively in popular business and technical communication textbooks. As a result, the goal of teaching IC as a subject in a textbook is to help people better understand the design considerations needed for IC.

EFL teachers or lecturers may inspire Indonesian learners to speak English as a foreign language by including intercultural elements in each unit of the speaking curriculum, similar to what [3] has done. They mentioned and discussed intercultural topics in each section of their books. They believe that by doing so, not only will English learners' spoken English improve but also their critical thinking, presentation skills, and intercultural awareness, and that English will become a tool for communication. Similarly, teachers should provide a range of significant intercultural materials [4] for excitable students for oral activities. This provides students with as many opportunities to communicate in the language as possible by creating a rich environment. Collaboration, real materials, alignments, and knowledge sharing are all parts of an environment that encourages motivation and advice.

Additionally, [5] suggested that students' online peers should shape their behavior, attitudes, and intercultural understanding. Her research has focused on social networking sites (SNS) and computer-mediated communication (CMC) technologies (e.g., YouTube and Facebook). She said that CMC and SNS technology aided sojourn learners' comprehension when studying abroad. Contrary to Chen's assertion and the findings of the previous two studies, we also considered learners' social media use, including Facebook and Instagram, as a useful tool for enhancing speaking EFL motivation. However, little information is available in the literature on the use of multicultural content on social media to encourage speaking motivation [5]. Urges online peer studies on the development of intercultural sensitivity. Therefore, the current research seeks to determine the extent to which intercultural communication presented in learning materials and on social media might increase learners' motivation to speak EFL in Indonesia. Additionally, the research does a good job of presenting ideas and recommending methods to inspire speaking EFL students.

IC is the study of communication and culture. It is based on two fundamental theories: silent language and the hidden dimension. Hall created a new area by laying the groundwork for this rigorous investigation of culture and communication in his books

The Silent Language (1959) and *The Hidden Dimension* (1966). For instance, [6] introduced the idea of proxemics and studied how people communicate via their personal space in *The Silent Language*. He identified four distance zones for human interaction: intimate, personal, social, and public, and recommended that readers choose the appropriate distance depending on the situation in his book *The Hidden Dimension*. He said that each ethnic group has its own standards for personal space and that effective communication requires an understanding of these variations.

Through the use of technology, people all around the world are linked to events taking place in remote regions of the world, and with people, we may never meet in person. You may send a Facebook message to a relatively stationed abroad, join a discussion board for one of your classes, send an email to your professor, and utilize Google Hangouts for a virtual team project in an online course on any given day. The impact of these new communication tools on cross-cultural communication is significant. We will concentrate on these five effects on cross-cultural communication: information about people and cultures; interaction with those who are unlike us; interaction with those who are like us and can serve as communities of support; identity, culture, and technology; and differential access to communication technology [7].

Technology has always been a valuable complement to textbooks, particularly when it comes to motivating students to talk. In certain nations, many language learners choose to use computers, televisions, or audiotapes over books when learning a language. For instance, both language learning materials and opportunities for linguistic interaction have been transmitted via platforms such as YouTube [8], Facebook, and other social networking sites [9], video blogs [10], WhatsApp [11, 12], and cell phones [13]. The experience advantages of multimodal depiction of English-speaking EFL are provided by these media, in addition to being motivational. The advantages include (1) chances to hear and see fluent language speakers converse, (2) opportunities to review language activities and experiences, (3) chances for remote interaction, (4) a match with the expectations of new generations of language learners, and (5) opportunities to make online pen pals from around the world.

This explanation is reinforced by [13], who suggests that social media, with its instant messaging, multimodal communication, and information sharing capabilities, provides platforms for engagement with peers and collaborative learning to help them improve their second language (SL) skills. Interaction with others is essential for the development of SL speaking skills. It is generally difficult for learners to build confidence in communicating confidently and fluently in a target language without sufficient interaction. A strong relationship exists between interaction and learning. Finding people who can interact with learners in the target language to benefit from knowledge practice is the best context for acquiring SL speaking skills. In [14], they used the social media platform WhatsApp to improve students' speaking skills by repeating and pronouncing it and presenting it in a few minutes with discussion activities. Similarly, [15] conducted a systematic evaluation from 2016 to 2021 and asserted that the majority of teachers used social media to increase students' speaking skills, such as WhatsApp [8, 16, 17], Facebook [8], YouTube [18], and Instagram [19]. Overall, the study found that students become more addicted to sharing their thoughts, experiences, expertise, and points of view on social media, which makes them more interested in public speaking.

IC in the learning materials provided great content to promote speaking EFL motivation. As [1] noted, as a student, it is necessary to understand what the social science approach reveals regarding other cultures and their communication styles. In addition, to be an effective teacher, s/he must know the subject, and hence, intercultural communication materials.

Another consideration is argued by [20], who pointed out that issues of interest to the target learners and topics that provide the prospect of learning something new are better materials processed to effectively teach EFL. Teachers concentrate on students, issues that provide opportunities to learn something new, and entertaining storytelling, global themes, and local allusions. In this vein, the chosen intercultural materials are the panacea for that need. The need to be negotiated with the existing materials by adding intercultural material and integrating it with social media is one of the teachers' intercultural competency requirements [21], who emphasized that the essential reasons for negotiating intercultural materials into teachers' speaking syllabi were caused by students' and teachers' cultural background distinctions [22, 23]. In addition, if the EFL teacher or lecturer did not have a guided teacher's handbook [20].

To grow better in the IC, there are six reasons for the complicated pattern of interaction: (1) self-awareness, (2) demographic change, (3) ethical, (4) economic, (5) technology, and (6) peace, which are detailed in the following explanation. Self-awareness is one of the reasons for studying IC; it is also a trip to another culture and reality that culminates in a journey back to one's own society. However, exaggeration tends to increase ethnocentrism. In terms of demographics and their changes, it encourages people to increase the chance of using intercultural knowledge in interaction. The behavior of individuals 'and communities' may be governed by these standards of conduct. These principles are often derived from community agreements on what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable conduct.

The best knowledge for choosing and integrating IC into the EFL curriculum and materials design was pioneered by Tomlinson's contribution [23]. They highlighted that EFL teaching was successfully supported by providing better materials and feasibility. For this reason, they added a few criteria and principles for choosing materials. They are expected to (1) establish student confidence and encourage learners to engage with the material rather than just passively taking it, which are two important goals. (2) communicate using the target language; (3) plan with the knowledge that the benefits of education are often not immediately felt; (4) consider that different learners have different learning preferences and emotional attitudes. (5) It helps students to have a solid base as well as adaptable and positive attitudes about the target language, their instructors, their classmates, and the tools they are utilizing. (6) Making a difference is a priority of eight. Other priorities include making students feel comfortable, ensuring that what is taught is considered useful and relevant by students, and promoting and mandating student self-investment.

The implementation of feasible IC materials to stimulate speaking EFL motivation is rooted in [24]'s theory. He confirmed his commitment to learning improvement by considering a comprehensible note on the board, conducting awareness-raising activities before communicative tasks, allowing a person to reflect on new items encountered when reading, and clarifying issues that arise in the context of communication activities or



Fig. 1. Intercultural themes adopted from [28] p.118.

material stimulation. As a result, learners were forced to speak proactively rather than passively [25, 26].

In a similar vein, [27] highlighted communicative language teaching as forcing “honest communication” and “genuine” teaching materials. Course materials focusing on oral language development are increasingly positioned to provide real-life communication. The nature and scope of contemporary instructional materials were examined in terms of the representations of spoken interaction. For example, [28] in each unit of their book entitled “Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking,” they always provided various themes from different places. In their assumption, besides exploring spoken English learners [29], the materials have the potential to cultivate their critical thinking through intercultural knowledge, as in the example in Fig. 1.

Furthermore, EFL teachers and learners from various cultural backgrounds should be able to communicate with classroom members from different cultures. For this reason, IC has grown more vital as a result of globalization since it is very handy when we travel or speak with people from different areas or nations. If we are not cautious, we may insult people from various cultures. Misusing words or speaking in specific ways might lead to misunderstandings and make another person feel uneasy. Effective intercultural communication occurs if both parties seek to comprehend one another’s differences. Understanding that every culture is unique allows us to learn and discover how to effectively connect with people from diverse cultures. We tend to feel the most accurate if we are not conscious of this, and we do not want to accept different civilizations. The theoretical concept is illustrated in Fig. 2.

2 Methods

The participants came from five different cultural backgrounds. They primarily used three social media platforms, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram (82.5%).

Hypothesis 1a: There is a positive relationship between social media intercultural communication and EFL motivation. Hypothesis 1b: There is a positive relationship between the intercultural communication in learning materials and EFL motivation.

Hypothesis 2: There is no relationship between intercultural communication on social media, learning materials, and EFL speaking motivation.

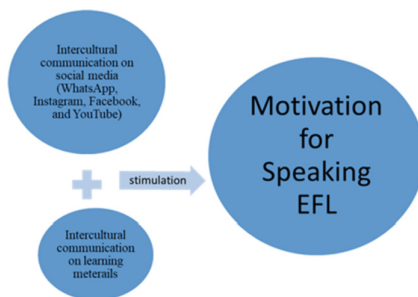


Fig. 2. Conceptual framework

1) Techniques for Data Collection and Analysis

The study was designed using a quantitative descriptive approach and a questionnaire was used as the instrument. To ensure that the instruments used were adopted, we adopted them from [28]. In this vein, in our assumption, all the questionnaire items in their book have been validated by the authority experts, so they have the feasibility of being used directly. The measurement scale for the measurement items was a four-point Likert scale: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, and (4) strongly agree. The questionnaire was narrowed down to nine dimensions. The interpretive approach consists of six items. For example, “communication has an important part in cultural adaptation.” Second, interest in spoken English was measured by four items, e.g., ‘I am interested in how English is used in social media conversations’; third, ethnocentrism included ten items; ‘I respect the values and practices of other cultures’; and fourth, travel orientation included three items. I want to travel globally; therefore, learning English is important. Fifth, integrativeness in three items and sixth, in four items, is intercultural awareness or sensitivity. Do you like English films? Seventh, attitude toward the FL community in four items: “Do you like those who reside in English speaking areas?” The eighth item, linguistics confidence, consisted of four items. I am certain that if I put in more work, I will be able to perfect English. The last is assimilation, which consists of ten items. As a consequence of internationalization, I believe there is a risk that Indonesians will lose the significance of Indonesian culture. In [30], the WhatsApp Group (WAG) application tool boosts data-sharing efficiency and conversation quality. As a result of this influence and the study’s objectives, data were collected using the student-used social media tool WhatsApp voice calling. Before that, we made an appointment in written communication through WhatsApp chat. It aimed to confirm their readiness to fill out the questionnaire without pressure or hesitation [30, 31]. After obtaining the participants’ agreement, we distributed a link to connect with the intended Google form to be filled out. We allowed them to complete two working days. After that, we cross-checked whether all participants had completed it. Therefore, all data gathered were as expected. We return to the WAG to thank all participants for their contributions and participation. We recognized that the participants’ contributions were part of what made the study successful. Now, the data are ready for analysis. The dataset was analyzed descriptively using the SPSS application assistant.

3 Results and Discussion

1) Hypothesis 1a

We assert that there is a link between intercultural communication on social media and learners' motivation to speak English as a foreign language. They were motivated to speak EFL in an excellent way when they wanted to know more about it. The interpretive approach consisted of six items. For example, "communication has an important part in cultural adaptation." Second, interest in spoken English was measured by four items, e.g., 'I am interested in how English is used in social media conversations'; third, ethnocentrism included ten items; 'I respect the values and practices of other cultures'; and fourth, travel orientation included three items. I want to travel globally; therefore, learning English is important for my social media friends. Its correlation was shown by Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.92$, mean = .358; and standard deviation = 0.76. Nevertheless, the Pearson's correlation coefficient was $p > 0.01$; two-tailed test of significance ($F\text{-count} > F\text{-table}$).

2) Hypothesis 1b

The correlation analysis was conducted in response to Hypothesis 1b. The hypothesis was explored using an integrative approach: intercultural awareness or sensitivity, linguistic confidence, and assimilation factors. Statistically, the correlation was Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.78$, mean = .338, and standard deviation = 0.66. Nevertheless, the Pearson's correlation coefficient was $p > 0.01$; two-tailed test of significance ($F\text{-count} > F\text{-table}$). Regarding the significance of both correlations above, we declare a significant correlation between intercultural communication on social media and learning materials and learners' speaking EFL motivation. However, Hypothesis 2 was rejected.

To stimulate a great deal of speaking EFL motivation, intercultural communication was insightfully embedded into learning materials, referring to the integrative approach. Integrative intercultural communication is an empirically cultivated desire to do and learn more culturally (Fig. 1). The materials in the picture were aimed at students' critical thinking, listening skills, presentation skills, and spoken English ability elaboration.

By focusing on the research results, we claim that integrated language curricula and intercultural communication are essential in the rapid technological era in particular. This should be done while students are still at their current school level, preparing to be adapted to the next school level or whatever they will be doing in the future. For example, college graduates must be prepared to face intercultural challenges in the workplace. This was a consequence of the standardization of curriculum and material design. They reinforced that the chosen material should allow students to utilize the target language for communicative reasons. In doing so, IC materials encourage learners to speak more.

We have a school of thought that notes the significance of intercultural communication among Indonesians in a globalized society as well as the need for greater study in this area. Intercultural communication in the classroom will assist students in dealing with people of different ethnic origins. Cultural awareness has received much attention and support from many organizations and governments, and the development of cross-cultural educational techniques and systems has followed suit. A cursory review of the

existing literature on this issue reveals that much work has been done recently. Consequently, the most essential purpose of foreign language instruction is to assist students in breaking free from the confines of their native tongue and culture. It should also be mentioned that, when one has a strong understanding of one's own culture, there is a chance of improving one's foreign culture. According to his paper, language learning may be simple if students can connect their learning aspects to their everyday lives, and intercultural learning can help improve their linguistic competency by comparing and contrasting their lives. It is difficult to teach about different cultures and languages because teachers do not have enough time, teaching tools, or even knowledge of different cultures.

Different cultures have become interesting topics of discussion in spoken EFL. Designated intercultural or cross-cultural material via social media generates intercultural reactions such as perspective, attitude, and value, which dig students' interest in debating deeply [32], and learners are more motivated to explore and develop their spoken language skills when social media buddies discuss different themes related to the learner's cultural background. This was in line with good learners' characteristics: they would be more motivated by any opportunity [34]. Learning motivation to speak EFL was more interesting and challenging because there was something new to discuss, such as strange food, customs, living styles, and anything that touched on cultural sensitivity. Furthermore, various intercultural communication materials typically provoke the neuronal brain to speak up, explain, verify, confirm, and even refute.

As a result, cross-intercultural information energizes learners to communicate well through their desire to know more, clarify, confirm, introduce their own cultures, agree, and even disagree with their social media-mates' perceptions. Several studies have examined the methods and tactics for incorporating cultural education into English-language schools, such as role-playing, cultural storytelling, and cultural festivities as cultural education in the classroom.

Another insightful comparison is that IC materials in textbooks have been successfully employed through social science and integrative approaches to boost linguistic confidence. Thus far, IC materials have interacted, as predicted, in terms of communication and behavioral effectiveness such as having a strong sense of self and self-worth, being adaptable to their attitudes and actions (tolerance for ambiguity and empathy), and being sophisticated and fluid in their categorization of others. With this approach, the context in which communication occurs is critical. Informal settings with support from and equitable representation of diverse groups are most favorable. To summarize, the integrative method necessitates people's openness to new knowledge and recognition of alternate interpretations. Of course, depending on the cultural setting, these principles may act differently, and the theory expects cultural variations. Individualistic orientations, for example, may emphasize independence in self-concepts and communities, and self-esteem may become more significant in relationships. Individualists may be more interested in grouping them according to their similarities.

Overall, grounded in distance theory, teachers and learners as inheritor cultures can promote social media together. It was confirmed by [1] in their book, it was confirmed that social media and online communication can be a cultural space for obtaining and sharing intercultural knowledge. For example, in ethnic culture (traditions, customs,

beliefs, and behaviors), knowledge and sentiments about belonging to a certain ethnic group. Ethnic identity are generally defined by a common sense of origin and history, which may connect ethnic groupings to civilizations in Asia, Europe, Latin America, and other parts of the world. On the other hand, some individuals continue to have unfavorable opinions regarding the usage of new digital technologies. Many materials utilized with new technologies, according to some, are expensive because they require regular equipment. Others see new technologies as simply textbook exercises carried out in less effective ways, dehumanizing language learning, and diminishing human contact, because they are motivated by technological capabilities rather than pedagogical ideals. Most objections seem to be about how new technologies are used, not how they can be used. In the future, materials that are more affordable, kind, moral, and effective can be made with the help of technology [35].

4 Conclusion

In summary, with the emergence of intercultural communication on learning materials, as mentioned in the findings and discussed earlier, social media has been rigorously beneficial as a famous platform in the millennial and globalization generations. Accordingly, learners at every school level require communication skills to be culturally and technologically literate. On the other hand, the mentioned learners are expected to act responsibly and efficiently during international encounters, demonstrating intercultural competence as an essential attribute in an increasingly globalized society. It is critical to discover effective methods to assist people in improving their intercultural competences. As a result, the two most common forms of current therapy are overseas immersion and educational interventions. Culture-based teaching materials, classroom activities, teaching methodologies, and integrated intercultural programs have been identified as the four subtypes of pedagogical interventions. Immersion abroad had a greater impact on IC improvement than did other types of interventions. Furthermore, it was also found that the link between intervention and IC development was affected by the grade level.

In addition, learners, as agents of globalization, should be trained to act locally and think globally. Avoiding misunderstanding themes, utilizing nonverbal language effectively, and clarifying, affirming, and negotiating are helpful expectations. Recognizing that all students become members of society after they finish school, it is important to teach them about other cultures and how to interact with them. Another consideration, through explanation, is endorsing online instruction to avoid culture shock, crisis identity, and emotional intelligence beyond pedagogic culture. This implies that intercultural communication conflicts can be reduced through the use of technology in the rapidly changing globalization.

Apart from the abundant IC materials on social media and learning materials, we recognize the small number of participants and types of instruments we call a limitation. It is strongly recommended that future research adopt a research-based online survey or a virtual narrative inquiry. In addition, since IC materials are part of a text-based learning approach, it is necessary to examine and evaluate the learner's variation in outcome and level. Finally, we make an empirical knowledge claim from this study that exploring and transferring intercultural materials through social media is vital. The

more students interact with their social peers, the more motivated they are to speak in English. Their intercultural communication competence has also increased. In this regard, the more creative students are in enriching intercultural materials on social media, the more confidently they speak English. Given the importance of material things and intercultural interactions, both intercultural communication and technology should focus on studying the material parts of these exchanges. In this vein, the current study calls for further research on the role of EFL teachers in the design of curriculum EFL online intercultural competence-oriented activities.

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