



MICROLEARNING STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract: This article examines the role and effectiveness of microlearning strategies in English Language Teaching (ELT). The study analyzes the theoretical foundations of microlearning, its pedagogical advantages, and its practical applications in developing language skills such as vocabulary acquisition, speaking, reading, and grammar learning. Special attention is paid to the integration of digital technologies, mobile learning applications, and artificial intelligence in microlearning environments. The findings indicate that microlearning contributes to reducing cognitive load, increasing learner motivation, improving knowledge retention, and fostering autonomous learning. The article concludes that microlearning serves as an effective complementary approach to traditional language instruction and has significant potential for enhancing English language education in contemporary digital contexts.

Keywords: microlearning, English language learning, cognitive load, vocabulary retention.

The rapid development of digital technologies and the transformation of educational paradigms have significantly influenced contemporary English Language Teaching (ELT). One of the most promising innovations in this field is microlearning, which refers to the delivery of educational content through short, focused, and manageable learning units. Unlike traditional instructional models that require extended periods of concentration, microlearning emphasizes concise learning experiences that can be completed within a few minutes while maintaining specific learning objectives.

The theoretical foundations of microlearning can be traced to the works of Theo Hug, who conceptualized learning as a process that should correspond to the fragmented information consumption patterns of modern learners. According to Hug, microlearning promotes lifelong learning by providing learners with easily accessible knowledge chunks that can be integrated into everyday activities. In language education, this approach is particularly valuable because language acquisition occurs gradually through repeated exposure, practice, and reinforcement.



One of the primary advantages of microlearning in ELT is its ability to reduce cognitive overload. Cognitive Load Theory suggests that learners possess limited working memory capacity. When excessive information is presented simultaneously, learning efficiency decreases. Microlearning addresses this issue by dividing complex linguistic structures into smaller instructional units, allowing learners to focus on one concept at a time. For example, instead of teaching all English conditional sentences in a single lesson, instructors can create separate microlearning modules dedicated to the zero, first, second, and third conditional forms. Such segmentation enables learners to process grammatical structures more effectively and retain information for longer periods.

Vocabulary acquisition represents another area where microlearning demonstrates considerable effectiveness. Traditional vocabulary instruction often requires learners to memorize long word lists, which may lead to rapid forgetting. Microlearning strategies, however, employ short learning sessions supported by spaced repetition and retrieval practice. Mobile applications such as Duolingo, Quizlet, and Memrise exemplify this approach by presenting learners with five-to-ten-minute vocabulary exercises, flashcards, and interactive quizzes. Research indicates that repeated exposure to lexical items in small doses significantly improves long-term retention and recall. For instance, learners studying academic vocabulary may receive daily micro-lessons introducing five new words, followed by contextual exercises and immediate feedback. Such a strategy encourages continuous engagement while minimizing learner fatigue.

Microlearning is equally beneficial for developing speaking skills. In conventional classrooms, students often have limited opportunities to practice oral communication due to time constraints. Through microlearning, speaking activities can be distributed across multiple short sessions. Learners may record one-minute responses to discussion prompts, summarize short videos, or participate in asynchronous voice discussions using digital platforms. A microlearning-based speaking task might require students to describe their daily routine in one minute, receive automated or teacher-generated feedback, and then repeat the activity using improved language structures. This iterative process promotes fluency development through frequent and low-pressure practice.

Reading comprehension instruction can also benefit from microlearning methodologies. Rather than assigning lengthy texts, teachers can provide short authentic passages accompanied by targeted comprehension questions. Research conducted on microlearning platforms for English reading revealed that learners demonstrated higher levels of motivation and engagement due to



the flexibility and interactivity of short reading tasks. For example, students may analyze a 150-word news article, identify key vocabulary items, and answer inferential questions within a ten-minute learning session. Such activities encourage active reading while accommodating the limited attention spans characteristic of contemporary learners.

Furthermore, microlearning supports learner autonomy and self-regulated learning. Modern language learners increasingly prefer personalized educational experiences that can be accessed anytime and anywhere. Digital microlearning environments empower students to determine the pace, sequence, and frequency of their learning activities. For example, university students preparing for IELTS examinations may independently access microlearning modules focusing on specific skills such as paraphrasing, collocations, or listening strategies. This flexibility aligns with constructivist perspectives, which emphasize the active role of learners in knowledge construction.

The integration of multimedia elements constitutes another significant strength of microlearning. Short instructional videos, infographics, podcasts, interactive quizzes, and social media content can all serve as microlearning resources. In pronunciation teaching, a two-minute video demonstrating the articulation of problematic English sounds may prove more effective than a lengthy lecture. Similarly, grammar concepts can be introduced through animated explanations followed by immediate practice activities. Such multimodal content enhances learner engagement by appealing to various learning preferences and increasing the authenticity of language input.

Despite its advantages, microlearning should not be viewed as a complete replacement for comprehensive language instruction. Scholars argue that while microlearning is highly effective for introducing concepts, reinforcing knowledge, and promoting continuous practice, more complex communicative competencies often require extended learning experiences. Therefore, the most effective pedagogical model appears to be a blended approach in which microlearning complements traditional classroom instruction. For example, students may complete vocabulary micro-lessons before class, participate in communicative tasks during face-to-face sessions, and subsequently engage in microlearning review activities to consolidate knowledge.

Recent studies have also highlighted the growing role of artificial intelligence in enhancing microlearning environments. AI-powered systems can personalize learning content according to learners' proficiency levels, learning preferences, and performance data. Adaptive microlearning platforms recommend specific exercises, vocabulary items, or pronunciation tasks based on individual needs, thereby increasing learning efficiency and motivation. Such developments suggest that the future of English language teaching will



increasingly involve the integration of microlearning and intelligent educational technologies.

Overall, the evidence indicates that microlearning offers substantial pedagogical benefits for English language teaching. Its capacity to reduce cognitive load, enhance learner motivation, facilitate vocabulary acquisition, improve speaking practice, and support autonomous learning makes it a valuable instructional strategy in contemporary ELT. As digital technologies continue to evolve, microlearning is likely to play an increasingly significant role in shaping effective and learner-centered language education.

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