



Exploring Online Interaction and Intercultural Experiences Through OmeTV for English Speaking Practice

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Abstract

This study explores the use of OmeTV as a digital platform to enhance English-speaking skills among Generation Z students by drawing on Bradley's (2013) theoretical framework of Web-Based Language Learning, Sociocultural Theory, Digital Participation, and Intercultural Communication. Previous research has shown that OmeTV improves learners' confidence and fluency, yet little is known about the actual interaction processes and intercultural experiences that occur during online communication. To address this gap, this study examines the types of interaction activities students engage in and the intercultural encounters they experience while practicing English on OmeTV. Using a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected from three university students through semi-structured interviews and analyzed thematically. The findings reveal that participants commonly engage in self-introductions, casual conversations, topic development, negotiation of meaning, and follow-up questioning, all of which reflect active participation in authentic communication. Additionally, students gain exposure to diverse accents, cultural perspectives, and daily-life sharing, which contributes to their intercultural awareness. However, discriminatory experiences also emerged, indicating that intercultural interactions in digital spaces can be both enriching and challenging.

Keywords: OmeTV, English Speaking Skills, Bradley, Intercultural

Introduction

Generation Z is a group that grew up amidst the rapid progress of the digital era, this is in line with research by (Dimock, 2019), Generation Z are those born between 1997 and 2012, a phase that saw more stable socioeconomic progress and rapid development in information technology. This demographic group has extensive access to technology and the internet, which fundamentally impacts how they interact, learn, and communicate. Their digital savvy and propensity to use interactive platforms for education, entertainment, and social interaction are key characteristics of this generation. In line with the demands of the era of global connectivity, English proficiency is a crucial skill for Gen Z for social integration, professional growth, and academic achievement (Baker, 2001). In the educational context, Gen Z specifically demonstrates a strong preference for interactive and technology-based learning methods.

This development is inseparable from the fact that the majority of students studying English today are from Generation Z, a generation highly familiar with digital technology. Speaking is considered a central component of English language learning, as communicative ability determines learners' competence in real-world

communication contexts. Communication is the essence of a language where it is part of productive skill that really matters in learning a second or foreign language (Syarifudin & Ariawan, 2021). English is the most used language online, with nearly 1 billion users typing and chatting in the language (Aziza, 2020). The ability to speak English can provide many benefits for everyone, such as in the fields of communication, social culture, academics, and technology. Not only that, the ability to speak English also allows a person to get to know other cultures and communicate with people from various countries (Rosilah & Maria Ulfa, 2024). However, many students face challenges in improving their speaking skills due to limited real-world interaction opportunities, speaking anxiety, and a lack of authentic communication environments. In response to these limitations, the integration of digital platforms has become a relevant alternative approach to support interactive language practice.

The rapid development of technology today has provided numerous benefits for the advancement of various social aspects, one of which is the ability to communicate quickly and easily by anyone, anytime, and anywhere. This phenomenon is clearly reflected in the current era, where a growing number of applications are designed to help students improve their English speaking skills (Aisyah, 2023). Many platforms, such as AI-based apps, virtual discussion boards, and educational social media, offer more flexible and authentic learning opportunities. Features like automated feedback, voice recordings, conversation simulations, and connections with native speakers allow users to practice intensively without the constraints of time and space. Furthermore, the interactive approach offered by digital apps makes the learning process more engaging and personalized, reducing speaking anxiety and boosting confidence. Ultimately, these apps provide learners with broader access to develop speaking skills in contexts relevant to today's global communication needs.

One digital platform that is increasingly being used to practice speaking skills is OmeTV, a random video chat service that allows users to connect with people from various countries. Ometv is a social media platform that offers online video conversations with random people from around the world (Tezar & Julianto, 2022). Through its live video-based communication feature, users can practice speaking English with diverse interlocutors, providing an authentic experience similar to a real-world conversation. OmeTV has the strongest relationship with confidence in Interactions (Syam et al., 2025). The spontaneous interactions that occur on OmeTV help learners adapt to a variety of accents, speaking styles, and conversation topics. Interestingly, various user experiences indicate that OmeTV has the strongest relationship with increased confidence in interactions because users are trained to speak spontaneously and face unexpected conversational situations. Furthermore, the unstructured conversational environment allows users to develop fluency, courage, and improvisational skills in speaking. Therefore,

OmeTV is one example of a digital platform that can be used as an alternative, effective speaking practice that is suited to the characteristics of today's learners.

The integration of OmeTV into English speaking practice offers a multifaceted set of benefits that extend beyond mere linguistic improvement, positioning the platform as both a pedagogical tool and an intercultural learning environment. These activities mirror the unpredictability of natural communication, OmeTV interactions are unscripted and dynamic, ranging from casual small talk to more formal exchanges, thus broadening their repertoire of communicative styles. By using Ome TV we can learn foreign languages or measure our language skills, which in this case is English language, because Ome TV can connect with users from various countries, also with local people from your country. Students can speak English fluently and quickly through features where students have to think of words with the correct pronunciation, answer questions from topics they have heard, practice with partners and record conversations with speaking partners. Practicing in a fun and practical way using this application will make students happy and more confident to speak English fluently (Harahap et al., 2024). Engaging in live conversations with others who are fluent in a particular language may provide several benefits, such as the opportunity to practice language skills in a genuine context, enhance pronunciation and accent, receive immediate feedback, bolster confidence and motivation, and refine listening abilities. OmeTV also connects learners with speakers from a wide array of cultural backgrounds, exposing them to varied accents, idiomatic expressions, and culturally embedded communication norms. Engaging in conversations with individuals from many origins and nations is valuable for acquiring knowledge of distinct cultural practices, customs, and viewpoints. Engaging in cross-cultural communication facilitates individuals' comprehension of diverse ways of life, cognitive processes, and societal conventions (Suryanto & Fitrawan, 2023).

Research by (Anggini & Salmiah, 2025) and (Rahman et al., 2023) have consistently shown that Ome TV is effective in improving learners' English speaking skills. Anggini & Salmiah (2025) found that Gen Z learners gain confidence, vocabulary, fluency, and authentic interaction through Ome TV, although challenges such as inappropriate content and unstable connections remain. Meanwhile, Rahman et al. (2023) quantitatively proved that Ome TV significantly improves speaking performance, especially accuracy, among high school students.

However, both studies mainly focus on skill improvement and learners' perceptions from a pedagogical standpoint. They do not explore users' personal experiences, their interactional processes, or the cultural dimension embedded in global communication through Ome TV. They briefly mention exposure to accents or diverse interlocutors, but do not analyze cross-cultural learning, cultural adaptation, or the cultural meanings behind the interactions.

Based on research gaps and reasons explained above, two research questions were formulated in this regard research:

1. What online interaction activities occur when students use Ome TV for English speaking practice?
2. What intercultural communication experiences are found in Ome TV speaking practice?

Literature Review

This study draws upon four theoretical perspectives adapted from Bradley, 2013), each of which provides a lens for understanding how OmeTV functions as a platform for language learning and intercultural communication. The Web-Based Language Learning theory emphasizes that digital environments foster language acquisition through collaborative and interactive activities, allowing learners to construct knowledge in authentic communicative contexts rather than through isolated drills. Complementing this, Sociocultural Theory highlights the centrality of social interaction, negotiation of meaning, and shared understanding in the development of language, suggesting that learners progress by engaging with others in dynamic exchanges. Bradley further underscores the concept of Digital Participation, where learners are not passive recipients but active contributors who manage conversation flow, perform turn-taking, and co-construct meaning as part of online collaborative learning. Finally, Intercultural Communication theory stresses the importance of exposure to diverse cultural backgrounds, accents, and communication styles, which enriches learners' pragmatic awareness and enhances their communicative competence. Within this theoretical framework, OmeTV operates as a web-based platform that embodies these principles by offering authentic, real-time interactions with speakers worldwide, enabling learners to practice English speaking, negotiate meaning across linguistic and cultural boundaries, actively participate in conversations, and experience intercultural exchange that aligns directly with Bradley's perspectives.

Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to explore Generation Z (English Study Program) at Trunojoyo Madura University's perceptions of using Ome TV to improve English-speaking skills. Qualitative research is a very useful research methodology because it is exploratory - its purpose is to discover new ideas and insights, or even generate new theories (Heigham & Croker, 2009). A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand

participants' experiences and the meaning they construct toward a social phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Three Generation Z university students who had prior experience practicing English via Ome TV were selected using purposive sampling to ensure their relevance to the research focus. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, in which the researcher acted as the main instrument to obtain flexible yet focused information. To ensure qualitative validity, member checking, documentation, and reflective interpretation were applied, aims to reduce bias and strengthen the credibility of findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Data were analyzed using the thematic analysis technique of (Miles et al., 2014) which consists of three systematic stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Findings were interpreted inductively to identify core themes related to participants' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using Ome TV. Through this procedure, the researcher was able to comprehensively describe students' experiences in authentic digital communication settings.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

Interaction Activities in Ome TV Communication

Self-introduction & casual talk

"Biasanya saya memperkenalkan diri, menanyakan nama dan asal, bertukar topik ringan seperti hobi, musik, atau aktivitas harian" - Informant 2

"Usually I introduce myself, ask for their name and where they are from, exchange light topics such as hobbies, music, or daily activities."

"Biasanya sih cuma ngobrol biasa... kenalan dan tanya hobi." - Informant 3

"Usually, it's just casual conversation... getting acquainted and asking about hobbies."

Self-introductions and small talk were the most common initial steps taken by informants when interacting. They generally began conversations by introducing themselves, asking the other person's name, hometown, or basic background. Afterward, the topic evolved to light topics such as hobbies, music, or daily activities. These simple interactions helped break the ice and create an initial sense of comfort before moving on to deeper conversations. Respondents emphasized that these casual conversations served as a "warm-up," boosting their confidence and enabling them to maintain a more natural flow of communication. Thus, introductions and small talk sessions play a crucial role in building initial rapport and improving language fluency in real-life communication situations.

Topic development based on interest

"Kami bertukar topik ringan seperti hobi, musik..." - Informant 2

"We exchanged light topics such as hobbies, music..."

Conversation topics generally develop naturally based on each party's interests and passions. After brief introductions, participants tend to exchange stories about their hobbies, music, or favorite activities. Choosing topics relevant to their personal interests makes the conversation feel more lively, interactive, and flow more easily. Participants emphasized that when both parties share interests, conversations become longer and more in-depth, helping them practice language more comfortably and spontaneously. Thus, developing interest-based topics plays a crucial role in maintaining communication dynamics and increasing engagement during conversations.

Assessing conversation comfort

"Kayak berusaha nyeimbangin topic yang lagi dia bahas gitu." - Informant 1

"It's like trying to balance the topic he's discussing."

"Kalau orangnya enggak asik ya aku skip." - Informant 1

"If the person isn't cool, I'll skip them."

During the interaction process, the informants actively assessed the comfort level of the conversation to determine whether to continue the communication. They attempted to adapt to the topic being discussed by the other person, ensuring a balanced and uninterrupted conversation. However, when the interlocutor was perceived as unpleasant, unresponsive, or not creating a comfortable atmosphere, the informants tended to end the conversation and move on to someone else. This suggests that emotional comfort and interaction dynamics are crucial factors for the continuity of the conversation. Thus, a quick assessment of the "chemistry" in communication plays a significant role in maintaining an effective and enjoyable conversational flow.

Asking follow-up questions

"Saya mengajukan pertanyaan lanjutan." - Informant 2

"I am asking a follow-up question."

Asking follow-up questions is an important strategy used by informant 2 to maintain the flow of conversation and demonstrate interest in their conversation partner. After the initial topic is introduced, informants typically delve deeper by asking for additional details or following up on newly presented information. This technique not only helps extend the conversation but also creates a more dynamic, two-way interaction. By asking follow-up questions, informants can keep the conversation lively, build better connections, and improve their spontaneous language skills. This demonstrates the crucial role of follow-up questions in maintaining smooth communication and creating more meaningful conversations.

Intercultural Communication Experiences

Exposure to accents & cultural diversity

"Eee terus dari interaksi itu kita itu memiliki aksen atau latar belakang budaya yang berbeda. Biasanya aku itu belajar tentang perbedaan budaya, tradisi, dan cara pandang yang unik." - Informant 3

“Eee, then from that interaction, we have different accents or cultural backgrounds. Usually, I learn about cultural differences, traditions, and unique perspectives.”

Interactions with speakers from diverse backgrounds provided opportunities for informants to be exposed to diverse accents and cultural richness. They recognized that each individual brings unique ways of speaking, traditions, and perspectives that broaden their horizons during conversations. Informants revealed that through these interactions, they learned to recognize differences in accents while also understanding diverse cultural values, from traditions to specific perspectives. This direct exposure to linguistic and cultural variations not only improved their ability to understand English in a global context but also fostered a more open attitude toward diversity. Thus, these experiences contributed to the development of intercultural competencies, which are essential for cross-cultural communication.

Sharing perspectives about daily life

“Kadang mereka membagikan tradisi atau kehidupan dari negara mereka, sehingga saya bisa melihat perbedaan budaya secara langsung.” - Informant 2

“Sometimes they share traditions or aspects of life in their countries, so I can see cultural differences firsthand.”

Informant 2 revealed that conversations don't just stop at light topics, but often evolve into an exchange of views on daily life. Interlocutors often share stories about traditions, customs, or routines they experience in their respective countries, allowing informants to observe cultural differences firsthand through personal experience. This type of interaction provides an authentic glimpse into the lives of people from different parts of the world, while also broadening their understanding of social and cultural diversity. Thus, sharing perspectives on daily life becomes a crucial element that enriches intercultural understanding and makes conversations more meaningful and informative.

Encountering discrimination

“Pengalaman lintas budayanya tuh banyak sih. Tapi.. kebanyakan ya kalau di OME itu, kalau buat orang Madura tuh sering dirasisin. Makanya aku kalau ada orang nanya orang mana tuh seringnya bilang Jawa. Tapi Jawa pun juga enggak luput dari rasis ya. Kalau misalnya orang yang nanya tuh dari luar Jawa kayak Sumatera atau mana tuh suka ngerasis juga. Terus pernah ketemu ya sama orang Malaysia juga gitu. Yaudah cuman kayak agak ngerasis sih.” - Informant 1

“I have a lot of cross-cultural experiences. But... mostly at OME, Madurese people are often discriminated against. That's why when people ask me where I'm from, I usually say Java. But even Javanese people are not immune to racism. For example, people from outside Java, such as Sumatra or elsewhere, also discriminate. Then I also met someone from Malaysia who was like that. It was just a bit racist, though.”

Informant 1 also experienced another aspect of cross-cultural interactions: discrimination or unwelcome treatment related to ethnic identity. The informant explained that as a Madurese, he frequently received racist comments while interacting on the platform, leading him to sometimes choose to conceal his identity. This form of discrimination came not only from foreign users but also from fellow Indonesian users from other regions. This situation demonstrates that while the platform allows for broad cultural encounters, these experiences are not always positive. Exposure to these racist attitudes created discomfort and highlighted the importance of intercultural awareness and mutual respect in cross-cultural communication.

Discussions

The findings of the study indicate that students' communication activities through OmeTV align with Bradley's (2013) theoretical framework, particularly those related to Web-Based Language Learning, Sociocultural Theory, Digital Participation, and Intercultural Communication. Interactions ranging from introductions and casual conversations to developing topics based on interests demonstrate that users construct language learning through authentic, spontaneous and unstructured communication contexts, in accordance with the principles of Web-Based Language Learning, which emphasize the importance of the digital environment as a space for authentic and collaborative language practice. During the communication process, informants also engaged in negotiation of meaning, for example, when balancing conversation topics or asking follow-up questions, it reflects the principles of Sociocultural Theory, where language development emerges through social interaction and the collaborative construction of meaning. Furthermore, users' decisions to continue or stop conversations based on comfort and the quality of the interaction demonstrate that they act as active participants, not passive recipients, thus supporting the concept of Digital Participation in Bradley's view of technology-based learning. The research findings also reveal rich cross-cultural experiences, such as exposure to accents, perspectives, and traditions from various countries, which are at the core of Intercultural Communication and contribute to improving participants' pragmatic competence and cultural awareness. However, the negative experience of ethnic discrimination experienced by one informant shows that online interactions are not always positive, an aspect that has been under-recognized in previous research and is an important finding in the context of global communication. Overall, this study confirms the findings of Anggini & Salmiah (2025) and Rahman et al. (2023) regarding the effectiveness of OmeTV in improving speaking skills, but goes beyond that focus by providing a deeper understanding of the interaction process, negotiation dynamics, and the accompanying cultural dimensions. Thus, OmeTV proves to be not only a platform for language practice, but also a social space where learners develop cultural

sensitivity, communication competence, and digital participation as described in Bradley's theory.

Conclusion

OmeTV provides an authentic digital environment that effectively supports students' English-speaking practice while simultaneously fostering intercultural communication experiences. Through spontaneous interactions, learners engage in various communication processes such as self-introductions, casual conversations, topic development, negotiation of meaning, and strategic use of follow-up questions. These activities demonstrate that OmeTV operates in line with Bradley's theoretical framework, where language learning in web-based environments emerges through real-time interaction, social collaboration, and active digital participation. In addition to linguistic gains, students also encounter a wide range of cultural exposure, including diverse accents, traditions, and worldviews, which enhance their intercultural awareness. However, this study also reveals the presence of discriminatory experiences, indicating that digital communication platforms do not always guarantee positive intercultural encounters. This highlights the need for digital literacy, cultural sensitivity, and safe online communication practices.

The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how Generation Z engages in digital language learning beyond skill improvement, emphasizing the processes, dynamics, and cultural dimensions embedded in online interactions. Practically, this research implies that educators may consider integrating spontaneous digital interaction tools such as OmeTV into speaking courses, provided that proper guidance and ethical considerations are prioritized. The study is limited by its small number of participants and reliance on self-reported experiences, making further research with larger and more diverse samples necessary. Future studies may explore strategies for handling negative intercultural encounters, compare OmeTV with other digital platforms, or investigate how structured pedagogical support can maximize the benefits of spontaneous online interactions for language learning.

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