

Utilizing Social Media Platforms in Teaching and Learning English Language: Perceptions of PTSB Students

K. Navin Kumaran^{1*}, Yogeswari Padmanathan¹

¹General Studies Department, Politeknik Tuanku Sultanah Bahiyah, Kulim Hi-Tech Park,
09000 Kulim, Kedah, Malaysia

*Corresponding author: knavin1206@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to illustrate on students' view on the use of social media in English language learning. With the widespread availability of numerous social media platforms, educators and content creators use them to teach and share in English classes. The teachers able to maximize it's usage through education approaches. To narrow down, this study identifies Politeknik Tuanku Sultanah Bahiyah (PTSB) students' perceptions on the usage of social media applications in English teaching involving a total of 100 Diploma students who are taking DUE50032 Communicative English 3 course. They are required to engage in social media-based activities conducted on the course's e-learning site for 10 weeks. Throughout the 10 weeks, they were instructed to complete several assignments, quizzes and tasks to be assessed. At the end of the 10th week, a questionnaire was given to the students to identify their perception of the activities that had been carried out. The findings of the study show that students think Wiki has helped them in improving their writing, while YouTube videos are widely used to improve speaking skills. Additionally, Facebook discussion groups are considered useful for learning grammar and vocabulary. Twitter is only used to receive information about the definition of words. A discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of social media in learning English language learning and suggestions for increasing the potential of such applications are also included. While attempting to encourage information sharing through collaborative learning via social media, educators should also enhance students' understanding of academic integrity and give appropriate training.

Keywords: - Perception, english learning, social media, application

1. Introduction

Information and communication technology is developing quickly. It has enabled information to be received quickly by only using computer devices that have internet access. Any necessary information can be obtained at any time. This progress has also contributed to a change in the way of teaching and learning which is no longer limited to the content of textbooks or what is delivered by a teacher in class. Kop (2011) explains that one of the greatest contributions of internet technology in the world of education is in terms of spreading learning content without borders. Students can browse useful websites to strengthen their understanding of a subject or topic.

From the perspective of computer-based language teaching, numerous earlier research has demonstrated how well technology supports the teaching and learning process. While in language teaching, Arumugam et al. (2019) assert that the internet and other computer programs have facilitated learner's acquisition of vocabulary and grammar. Hanif et al. (2018) on the other hand advocate that technology functions as an intermediary between teachers and students. The effectiveness of technology in the teaching and learning process is heavily influenced by the teacher's role. Teachers should be wise in utilizing

available technology by applying appropriate pedagogy. This is because, without careful planning, the use of technology alone will not help attain the teaching objectives. Hanif et al. (2018) also think that internet applications should be maximized in language teaching for a better outcome.

In line with the expansion of the internet, social media is now an increasingly popular internet application. Iwamoto & Chun (2020) defined social media as a collection of internet apps based on Web 3.0 ideology and technology that enable the creation and sharing of user-generated content. The popularity of social media depends a lot on the involvement of youngsters. Teenagers exposed to information technology at a young age are more driven to engage in virtual sharing, especially through social media. Social media is also considered to be able to assist students interact more effortlessly, especially in terms of language learning and obtain useful information in various formats such as pictures, videos and animation. However, Hidayat et al. (2022) has a doubtful view of the effectiveness of social media in effectively channelling information. He also contends that, while social media can collect thousands of pieces of information in a short period of time, users' attention span is extremely limited, and most of the content posted on social media is never viewed by users.

The majority of earlier research have been more concerned with applications like blogs and Wikis that assist students with their writing. (Kessler et al., 2012). An issue that always arises in previous studies is user confidentiality (Khan et al., 2016). This limits the research that can be carried out, since social media requires the user to provide personal information. Thus, this study will incorporate social media applications in the e-learning site so that the personal information of the participants will not be exposed to the public. This study will also enable students to use social media applications in learning English.

1.1 Research Objectives

This study was conducted to fulfill the following objectives:

1. Identify students' perceptions towards the usage of social media in English Language learning, and
2. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of utilizing social media in learning English.

2. Literature Review

Social media is constantly changing the way people live in diversified aspects. These days, a wide range of social media platforms are impacting communication, commerce, education, knowledge exchange, and information delivery, among other aspects of life (Amin et al., 2020). Chen et al. (2017), defined that social media are web-based platforms where users create and share messages via virtual communities and social networks. Many social media programs have recently been released with a variety of features and goals. Twitter arises as a microblogging platform that allows users to send brief messages and share them with their online audience. Dabbagh & Kitsantas (2012) stated that social networking services such as Facebook enable users to connect with others by inviting them, creating, and sharing personal information. YouTube was intended to let users discover and share information, such as videos and photographs.

Even though social media was not designed specifically for educational reasons, it has captured the interest of educators, particularly in the field of English language acquisition. Many studies have been undertaken to support the use of social media in English language instruction. Inayati (2015) stated that social media can be used as a medium to learn English since the nature of social media is in line with the implementation of education and language teaching theories such as constructivism and social-cultural theory. In constructivism, learning happens during meaningful social interactions in which members of the community share their diverse experiences and points of view. This idea applies while using social media.

In addition, social media could also impart language skills. Yunus et al. (2012) stated that learners will receive written language input from social media platforms like Facebook and blogs, which will aid them improve their writing abilities. It also facilitates the students to learn new words and vocabulary which are apt for them in writing (Khan et al., 2016). Social media also may enhance student speaking abilities through the discussions conducted with English native speakers (Ehsan & Nasri, 2019). Besides, Arumugam et al. (2019) described that social media like Facebook and WhatsApp permit students and teachers to create a learning group. Then the activities in the group such as reading aloud practice, sharing reading materials, and discussing a reading text allow learners to be more participated in the reading exercise that helps to improve their reading skills.

The capability to utilize the knowledge especially in technology can create interesting contents for teaching. Material preparation is very thought-provoking when using technology (Jaafar et. al., 2021). This is able to attract students' attention to follow the online learning because they are happy and enjoy it. This will lead to the students' active involvement in social media platforms. Learning through social media, on the other hand, enables both students and instructors to use technology to study and gain information. According to Hidayat et al. (2022), students have strong critical thinking abilities infuse technological learning approach. Sasmita & Harjono, (2021), mentioned that students can be taught through problem-based learning when completing given assignments or helping others when utilizing social media in learning process.

2.1 Use of Social Media in English Language Learning

The benefits of using social media platforms to improve students' English language skills have been the subject of several studies. The possible advantages of social media for enhancing students' vocabulary, grammar, and spelling abilities have also been investigated in these research. (Aloraini, 2018). But preliminary findings from earlier research suggest that not all social media platforms have been used as teaching aids, especially when it comes to English language learning. A noteworthy finding concerns the paucity of scholarly studies investigating the use of YouTube videos to improve students' grammar, despite the platform's profusion of grammar-related content. Comparably, research examining the effectiveness of using Facebook or WhatsApp to improve students' spelling skills are conspicuously lacking, even though both sites are compatible with the device's built-in spelling check feature.

Barrot (2022) did a thorough analysis that looked at 41 research studies that were collected from Scopus. Facebook has been used as a teaching tool for language training in the context of English as a Second

Language (ESL), according to the study's findings. Facebook is frequently utilized in educational settings to access various teaching channels (Solmaz, 2018). The study's focus is more broadly on using social media to acquire the target language. It is a more comprehensive and innovative investigation.

Based on the explanation above, a study on Politeknik Tuanku Sultanah Bahiyah students' perception on utilizing the social media for learning English is significant to be investigated because educators must be aware of their students' preferences regarding the social media platforms they use and how they use them to learn English.

3. Research Methodology

This study involved 100 Semester 3 students who took DUE50032 Communicative English 3 course. The students involved in this study are required to be actively involved in social media-based activities conducted through the course's e-learning site. The chosen social media are Wiki, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The students have to engage in the activities given for a period of 10 weeks. At the end of the 10th week, the questionnaire was given to the students. They are required to answer the questions given, to identify their views on the four types of social media selected for this study. The feedback obtained will be calculated and analyzed according to a certain percentage of agreeing and disagreeing based on the statement of the question given

4. Result and Discussion

The findings of this study will be divided into two parts. The first part is students' perception of social media in English teaching, while the second part is a list of strengths and weaknesses of social media in the English teaching process.

4.1 Students' perceptions on social media usage

4.1.1 Students' perception of Wiki

Table 1 shows students' perceptions on the use of Wiki as an application that helps them write English essays. In general, students gave positive feedback on the use of the Wiki. A total of 58% of them agreed that they cooperated with other friends in completing the necessary information in the Wiki and 65% of the students also thought that the Wiki had improved their writing skills, meanwhile 53% stated that they contributed more to Wiki activities than classroom conducted activities. This finding supports the results of De Jager et al. (2020) study which shows that the use of Wiki has helped students work together to learn the correct structure of writing. This application allows students to strengthen their writing with the

help of friends without the need for supervision from students.

Table 1. Students' perception of Wiki

Statements	Agree	Disagree
I worked with friends in completing the Wiki.	58%	42%
I joined the Wiki activity to improve writing skills.	65%	35%
I contributed more in Wiki activities compared to in class	53%	47%

4.1.2 Students' Perception towards Facebook

The students' opinions about Facebook's use in the e-learning system are displayed in Table 2. Facebook serves as a forum for social and scientific discourse. The results clearly demonstrate how common Facebook is among students. A total of 85% of students admit that they actively discuss things through the media and 83% state they like to chat with friends through Facebook. However, only 67% think they take the opportunity to write more on Facebook than in other media. Through the observations conducted, students were found to be more inclined to share their opinions through Facebook. Students who are usually inactive in class are also seen to be more active when discussing through the social media application. This scenario is seen to be in line with the results of Dizon (2016) study, which is that students are said to prefer discussions through Facebook because this application bridges the gap between group members and facilitates the sharing of opinions.

Table 2. Students' perception towards Facebook

Statements	Agree	Disagree
I actively discuss through Facebook	85%	15%
I like to chat with friends through Facebook	83%	17%
I took the chance to write more a lot on Facebook	67%	33%

4.1.3 Students' Perception towards Twitter

Table 3 shows students' perceptions of the use of Twitter in English teaching through e-learning sites. The percentage of students who like Twitter is seen to be lower than other social media. Only 56% agreed that they follow Twitter to learn new words, while 49% follow Twitter to obtain the latest information. Additionally, only 38% of students follow Twitter for grammar guidance. Twitter is considered more suitable for learning new words since each content sent by users cannot exceed 140 characters. This limitation causes its use for other purposes such as improving writing and speaking skills to not yield good results.

Table 3. Students' perception towards Twitter

Statements	Agree	Disagree
I follow Twitter to learn new words/vocabulary	56%	44%
I follow Twitter to acquire latest information	49%	51%
I follow Twitter to get grammar guide	38%	62%

4.1.4 Students' Perception towards YouTube

Students' opinions about using YouTube videos in the e-learning system for English teaching are displayed in Table 4. A total of 75% of students agreed that the videos watched through YouTube helped them a lot in their speaking skills. There are many videos that teach correct pronunciation and effective pronunciation techniques. However, only 45% of students think YouTube videos helped them understand grammar. In addition, 41% of students also think that YouTube videos assisted them in terms of writing skills. Although there are interesting videos on grammar and writing skills provided, students generally think that this social media is more suitable to use to strengthen their mastery of speaking skills.

Table 4. Students' perception towards YouTube

Statements	Agree	Disagree
YouTube videos helped me in improving my speaking skills	75%	25%
YouTube videos helped me understand using better Grammar	45%	55%
YouTube videos helped me in writing skills	41%	59%

5. Strengths and Weaknesses of Social Media in Teaching and Learning English

Based on the findings of the study, some strengths and weaknesses of social media in learning English have been identified. In terms of strength, social media has been found to help share knowledge and information openly. Even though the encounter is virtual rather than in person, students do not feel ashamed. In addition, social media also provides a good language learning context. Discussions through Facebook, for example, help students connect with students from abroad who need them to use English properly.

Moreover, social media is also a useful tool for improving communication skills and student involvement. Learners who don't often speak up in class could feel more at ease expressing themselves on YouTube, Facebook, or Twitter. Teachers can create "back channels" using social networking sites to encourage conversation and bring up ideas for learners

who are too hesitant or afraid to express aloud their viewpoints.

One of social media's drawbacks is that it can make it harder to monitor students' actions. Instructors may also find it difficult to control students on social media. The use of social media for education may also be hampered by problems with internet connection. In addition, social media can also be a threat to the correct use of grammar. Students may be obsessed with the use of "Internet language" or "*bahasa rojak*". The learners' linguistic proficiency will be impacted by this circumstance. It's also important to consider the matter of private secrecy. If students' private information is not shielded from the public, they will find it difficult to engage with one another. Thus, to fully utilize social media applications, standards for their use in education must be developed.

The tendency for addiction should be considered. Addiction to social media platforms occurs when young people use them excessively and are unable to give them up. Addiction to social media platforms can have serious detrimental effects on a person's physical and mental well-being. Any student's attention is diverted, and study focus is entirely lost when they become overly dependent on social media. Numerous studies have shown that students frequently spend too much time on social media and neglect to complete the necessary assignments for their coursework.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, this study has identified undergraduate students' attitudes towards the use of social media in English teaching. Students are known to be big fans of Facebook, and they frequently utilize this social media platform for discussions. Wiki is used to promote written exchange of opinions. It was also discovered that using Wiki, students may learn writing structure more successfully. Furthermore, it was discovered that students may enhance their speaking abilities by watching YouTube videos, and they might pick up new vocabulary by using Twitter.

This study has also listed the strengths and weaknesses of social media in teaching English. Although there are constraints in its use, social media can increase students' interest in learning English. Social media applications provide a good context and facilities for language learning. However, the instructor must use these applications wisely so that the set objectives can be achieved. Further research on the impact of social media on student performance can be conducted in the future to prove its effectiveness in learning.

Social media instruction can be a useful tool for delivering the curriculum. Nevertheless, it is up to the teacher's imagination to create engaging lessons utilizing a variety of online and print resources, as well as social media tools. For the class to pay attention and comprehend the material, the teacher must also have a plan in place.

As for recommendations, educational resources ought to be engaging, diverse, and aligned with the interests of the pupils. The variety of the material would prevent pupils from finding their classes boring. Based on the aspects of social media that the teacher uses, the teacher can search the internet or YouTube for engaging content. Second, there ought to be opportunities to practice their English. They can still mentor them and practice their English even when they are in different areas. To help the students' skills, the teacher could make improvements to their version of the assignment. The instructor can give them instructions on how to practice speaking by having them record a video and share it to the WhatsApp group or how to practice listening to a discussion.

Acknowledgement

The researchers would like to acknowledge and thank the Research, Innovation, and Commercialization Unit (UPIK) of Politeknik Tuanku Sultanah Bahiyah, Kulim for the chance given to conduct this research. Secondly, to PTSB General Studies Department lecturers and an honorable gratitude to those who contributed to this paper directly and indirectly.

References

- Aloraini, N. (2018). Investigating Instagram as an EFL learning tool. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Special Issue on CALL*, (4).
- Amin, B., Rafiq, R., & Mehmood, N. (2020). The impact of social media in English language learning. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, 7(10), 3126-3135.
- Arumugam, Wan, W. S., Shanthi, A., & Mello, D. (2019). Impact of social media on reading comprehension among undergraduates. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 28(8s), 457-470.
- Barrot, J. S. (2022). Social media as a language learning environment: a systematic review of the literature (2008-2019). *Computer assisted language learning*, 35(9), 2534-2562.
- Chen, S., Lin, L., & Yuan, X. (2017). Social media visual analytics. *Computer Graphics Forum*, 36(3), 563-587.
- Dabbagh, N., & Kitsantas, A. (2012). Personal learning environments, social media, and self-regulated learning: A natural formula for connecting formal and informal learning. *Internet and Higher Education*, 15(1), 3-8.
- De Jager, L., Rwodzi, C., & Mpofu, N. (2020). The innovative use of social media for teaching English as a second language. *TD: The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, 16(1), 1-7.
- Dizon, G. (2016). A comparative study of Facebook vs. paper-and-pencil writing to improve L2 writing skills. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 29(8), 1249-1258. (PDF) *Educational Potential of Facebook Use in Higher Education: Last Decade Research Trend*.
- Ehsan, N., & Nasri, M. (2019). The impact of social media on EFL learners' speaking skill. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 6(3), 1-17.
- English Language Teaching, 5(8), 42-48.
- Hanif, M., & Asrowi. (2018) Mobile learning perception of graduate student teachers: A case study in master program of educational technology of university of Sebelas Maret. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding Journal of Education and Learning*, 5(1), 84-91.
- Hidayat, K., Sapriya, Hasan, S. H., & Wiyanarti, W. (2022). Keterampilan Berpikir Kritis Peserta Didik dalam Pembelajaran Hybrid. *Journal of Elementary Education*, 6(2), 1518-1528. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i1.1955>.
- Inayati, N. (2015). English language teachers' use of social media technology in Indonesian higher education context. *Asian EFL Journal*, 17(4), 6-36.
- Iwamoto, D., and Chun, H. (2020). The emotional impact of social media in higher education. *Int. J. High. Educ.* 9, 239-247. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v9n2p239>.
- Kessler, G., Bikowski, D., & Boggs, J. (2012). Collaborative writing among second language learners in academic web-based projects.
- Khan, I. U., Ayaz, M., & Faheem, M. (2016). The role of social media in development of English language vocabulary at University level. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 6(11), 590-604.
- Kop, R. (2011). The challenges to connectivist learning on open online networks: Learning experiences during a massive open online course. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 12(3), 19-38.
- Sasmita, R. S., & Harjono, N. (2021). Efektivitas Model Problem Based Learning dan Problem Posing dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Berpikir Kritis Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 5(5), 3472-3481.
- Solmaz, O. (2018). A critical review of research on social networking sites in language teaching and learning. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 9(3), 315-330.

Jaafar, S. B., Ismail, N. H., & Othman, R. (2021). Online Classroom Challenge during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Social Science and Humanities*, 4(1), 01-05.

Yunus, M. M., Salehi, H., & Chenzi, C. (2012). Integrating social networking tools into ESL writing classroom: Strengths and weaknesses. *English language teaching*, 5(8), 42-48.