

Students' Perceptions of Social Networking Sites for English Language Learning: A Study in an Indonesian Higher Education Context

Anna Riana Suryanti Tambunan¹, Winda Setia Sari¹, & Rasmitadila²

¹ Universitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia

² Universitas Djuanda Bogor, Indonesia

Correspondence: Anna Riana Suryanti Tambunan, Universitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia.

Received: August 20, 2022

Accepted: September 23, 2022

Online Published: September 30, 2022

doi:10.5430/wjel.v12n8p86

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n8p86>

Abstract

This study explores the use of Social Networking Sites (SNS) as a performance-enhancing method of teaching and learning of English in the classroom via cell phones and mobile devices, as well as its effect on students' motivation to learn. A survey was disseminated to 176 students. The analysis showcases that *Instagram* is the most useful learning tool that students enjoy, and its use on mobile devices has the potential to become a significant teaching tool in the classroom. Because the most popular social networking sites, such as Instagram, are predominantly accessible via mobile devices, this is the case. Given that students currently utilize social networking sites to boost their learning informally, their acknowledgment of social networking sites as learning tools demonstrates their understanding of the learning potential given by technology.

Keywords: Instagram, learning motivation, social networking sites

1. Introduction

In several sectors, the technology of the twenty-first century has supplanted old methods and improved learning. As a result, technology has a significant impact on the evolution of educational practices. The social networking site is a technology that students frequently use in their daily lives. Consequently, there is a growing academic interest in the role that social networking sites may serve as a supplementary tool in classroom teaching and learning contexts (Tandoc, Ferrucci, & Duffy, 2015). A great deal of research has been conducted worldwide on technology in education in general and social networking sites in particular. Due to the fact that social networking sites have become the most prevalent and sophisticated method of communication, social networking sites have become the most pervasive and influential medium of communication (Morris-Kay, 2009). It promotes many forms of collaborative communication and student learning.

In recent decades, social networking sites have dominated information and communication technologies. Similarly, discussions on technology deployment in education are increasingly focusing on social networking sites because of their potential to enhance learning and the attainment of educational objectives. The revolution in information communication technology and its underlying principles ushered in a new era marked by the heavy use of computing technologies (Brenner, 2013; Matney & Borland, 2009). In the latter quarter of the twenty-first century, advancements in information communication technology accelerated, with numerous futurists and scholars forecasting the widespread adoption of information technologies.

Students typically regard social media as a venue for social interaction and communication. In addition, students utilize social networking sites as a subset of social networking sites and mobile phones as the most prevalent device to access social networking sites. In terms of their opinions about the significance of social networking sites for learning, the statistics indicate that students cannot only identify the learning benefits of social networking sites, but also make informal use of them (Brenner, 2013; Matney & Borland, 2009). Consequently, social networking sites that support network learning reveal that the qualities and behaviours of social media platforms, including debate, user-generated content, sharing, and interconnection, make them compatible with network learning. Given their predominantly socially oriented knowledge of this technology, it is believed that educational interventions can assist students in appreciating the learning opportunities that social media provider.

This study indicates that social networking sites will serve as a communication alternative for students. Since 91.3% of students own smartphones, they are digital natives and have access to Wi-Fi, making it simple for them to converse via social networking sites. In a similar spirit, social networking sites can also be utilized to communicate with students after school. They are able to form discussion groups for their classes or homework/projects. Children will be able to communicate with both their peers and teachers using this way. The rapid and effective form of contact will also permit after-class help, if required. This shows the idea of supplementing the learning environment with social networking services (Tandoc, Ferrucci, & Duffy, 2015). People utilize social networking sites as a way of communication due to the need of rapid communication in current culture. As ownership of mobile devices (smartphones, tablets, wearables, etc.) increases, it is increasingly easier for individuals to disseminate information via social networks, which might affect their

online popularity. Additionally, students study the news and get feedback on current events. Students use social networks to convey their feelings, which can be gathered from their status updates. This allows them to frequently update their expertise and respond in accordance with the prevailing trends. A lot of studies have demonstrated that 21st-century students are distinct from their predecessors (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Students today have a wide range of technological knowledge utilizing social media, mobile learning, social networking, and computer technology (Boyd, 2008). Regularly, today's students use blogs, email, Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, text messages, and a variety of other social networks (Lenhart, 2012). Mobile devices are designed with portable computer capabilities in mind.

Others view social networking in the classroom as disruptive (Prensky, 2001) and ineffective as a method of instruction, despite many educators employing it in their classes. However, research studies concur that social media and mobile devices are a terrific way of teaching that facilitates learning, which is sadly absent in today's schools (Junco, Merson, & Salter, 2010).

Additional research indicates that prohibiting social media and mobile devices will reduce learning opportunities and global networking (Lee, Ahn, & Kim, 2014). However, in the twenty-first century, traditional classroom instruction does not increase student achievement and learning (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012). Students may therefore fall behind in terms of modern technology. According to the study, using social networking sites on mobile devices might boost student motivation in the classroom. Therefore, technology in the classroom should be regarded an intrinsic part of education (Marshall, Lefringhausen, & Ferenczi, 2015). This study aimed to evaluate students' perspectives on using social networking sites via cell phones or mobile technology, as well as their perceptions of the possibility of adopting social networking sites to improve their learning. Additionally, the research investigates if social networking sites on mobile devices enhances teaching and learning in schools. In addition, this study examines lecturers' use and implementation of social networking sites via mobile devices in higher education courses.

The use of Social Networking Sites in Classrooms

New and exciting opportunities might emerge when social media and educational methods are merged. Many educators and teachers are strongly interested in integrating social media into their classroom instruction (Marwick, 2008). This is because social media can increase student engagement and motivation. According to the findings of the survey, there are numerous educators who are adamantly opposed to using social media as a teaching tool. However, excluding social media from the curriculum currently disconnects kids from the technology of the actual world (Mihailidis, 2014).

In addition, teachers who believed that the usage of social media enabled students' participation and collaboration in the classrooms. According to the research, using social media as a technological tool does not result in distraction. Social media stimulates and enables students to interact in the actual world, as opposed to an artificial one. Therefore, the combination of academic and social networking provides the chance for digital citizenship in the 21st century (Krutka, Manca, Galvin, & Greenhow, 2019).

The use of Mobile Devices in Classrooms

In the majority of emerging nations, mobile networks outnumber Internet networks. The cost of cellular service has also decreased significantly. Conversely, mobile phone ownership is equivalent to other everyday necessities. As telecommunications companies continue to advance technology for mobile services, they are able to supply individuals with superior services at reasonable pricing. Consequently, a cell phone is preferred over a computer due to its inexpensive price and portability.

However, many educators say that the usage of mobile phones for mobile learning in the classroom creates distractions. However, the use of cell phones as educational tools can enhance student learning and enable access to global resources (Lenhart et al., 2010).

Therefore, it is crucial to shift from traditional to digital teaching methods and integrate technology in the classroom in order to enhance student teaching and learning (Nilson, 2010). Because the use of social networking sites on mobile devices significantly enhances teaching and learning for students.

Care should be used when integrating social networking sites into the learning process. This field inspires a great deal of research, and the findings of numerous scientists are discussed. In order for social networking sites to be utilized as educational tools and incorporated into the learning process (AlJeraisy, Mohammad, Fayyumi, and Alrashideh, 2015; Helou and Rahim, 2014), additional research is required to determine their value as a learning environment (Maqableh, Rajab, Quteshat, Masa'deh, Khatib, and Karajeh, 2015). Consequently, this study aimed to comprehend students' viewpoints regarding the utilization of social networking sites in the learning process.

2. Method

This study aims to determine which social networking website is utilized by students as well as their perceptions regarding the employment of social networking websites in the learning process. In order to achieve this objective, the researcher devised a three-part questionnaire; the first part was designed to collect demographic data, and the second part was intended to determine the most popular social networking website used by students for different purposes and the frequency of SNS usage, and the third part highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of using SNSs from the students' perspective.

In order to reach a broader sample, the questionnaire was created using Google form survey, and the link to the questionnaire was sent using social media such as WhatsApp. The questionnaire was given to students in the English department for one month. One hundred seventy-eight students responded to the survey; 162 replies are complete and were used for further study. The acquired data have been evaluated for more insight.

3. Data Collection

A survey was conducted using a questionnaire that was primarily divided into two components. The goal of the survey was to collect information on students' existing social network sites usage, as well as their plans and interest in using social network sites for educational reasons. Students were given surveys to complete in order to gauge their level of satisfaction with the course. One hundred sixty-two students participated in the study. There were 38 males and 124 females in the data set. The student's age ranges from 17 to 41. Students spent less than one hour on social network sites, between one and two hours, between two and three hours, and between three and four hours, respectively. Only 9.9% and 9.5% of students spent 4-5 and 5-6 hours studying, respectively. However, 18.3% of students spent more than 6 hours per week on social network sites.

Survey responses

After the student survey was administered, its results were examined. It was found that all seventy responses were valid because students answered all questions and engaged throughout the semester. The summary of student replies to the survey is presented in Table 1. 50 (23.5%) of the 38 participants were male, whilst 124 (76.5%) were female. 80.86 percent of the students were between 17 and 21, while the remaining 10.14 percent were older. 14.8% of students spent less than 1 hour, 17.6% of the students spent 1-2 hours, 13.7% of students spent 2-3 hours and 16.2% of students spent less than 3-4 hours on social network sites, respectively. Only 9.9% and 9.5% of students spent 4-5 and 5-6 hours studying, respectively. However, 18.3% of students spent more than 6 hours per week on social networking sites.

Table. 1 The demographic profile of the participants

Measure and items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	124	76.5
Male	38	23.5
Age		
17-21	131	80.86
22-26	26	16.05
27-31	3	1.85
32-36	1	0.62
37-41	1	0.62
Social Networking Usage/week		
1 day per week	24	15
2 day per week	12	7.5
3 day per week	15	9.4
4 day per week	9	5.6
5 day per week	16	10
6 day per week	8	5
7 day per week	76	47.5
The frequency use of SNS(s) in a day		
10 minutes	27	16.9
20 minutes	30	18.8
30 minutes	38	23.8
40 minutes	18	11.3
50 minutes	3	1.9
60 minutes	11	6.9
More than an hour	33	20.6

The second section of the survey focused on students' perceptions of SNS usage in language acquisition. In the second portion of the survey, students are asked a total of four questions. The questions are based on the educational use of social networking sites as a tool for teaching and learning. Questions that are asked depending on classroom subject and student-teacher coordination. These questions include:

- Why do you like to learn English through social network sites or not? Explain!
- Why do you use social network sites to help you with your academic homework? Explain!
- What is the most used social network site for you to learn English? Explain why?
- What are the disadvantages of using social network sites in learning English for you? Please elaborate your answer.

4. Findings

According to the findings of theme analysis, students enjoy learning English through social networking sites in the following ways:

1. Need Factor
2. Building relationships, such as: accessibility to the world of work, knowledge enhancement, and the convenience/efficiency factor

3. Diversity factor and speed of information
4. Match factor with personal learning style
5. Display attractiveness factor (social networking sites)

Concerning the use of social networking sites for their academic homework, students stated that social networking sites are a solution for completing tasks such as completeness of information, ease of accessing information, ease of sharing information, completeness of applications, and quickness of accessing information.

Social networking sites include Google, YouTube, Reddit, Duolingo, Cake, Instagram, Facebook, Brainly, Twitter, Busuu, Discord, Memrise, Telegram, Tumblr, Tiktok, and Cake, were used by the pupils, according to the findings. Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are the top three platforms.

Students cited a variety of reasons for their use of social networking sites, including diversity of content/material, complete features, conformity to the needs (need to increase knowledge and need to build interpersonal relationships), ease of use, ease of access, ease of understanding, compatibility with learning style, and an attractive view.

Interestingly, the students also identified the drawbacks of social networking platforms. They discovered that the interest in reading books (printed) is declining, that there is a risk of eye damage, that time management is failing, that there is no justification for the truth, either the information or the learning material, that there is an increase in spending for internet data quota, that social media creates addiction and dependence, and that it makes people less motivated to mobilize.

5. Discussion

This study aimed to determine whether social networking sites could be utilized to keep students in higher education colleges motivated, connected, and informed about class topics, as well as to foster a stronger feeling of community among students.

According to the survey, social networking sites can be considered an integrated model for student motivation of learning; it has interaction benefit, which means that students can be motivated to learn as a result of the benefit from improved interaction; communication benefit, which is crucial for improving student learning motivation and facilitating student learning; social relationship benefit. The advantage of involvement has the greatest impact on the learning motivation of students. Social networking services, which are not limited by place, time, or space, provide students with greater access flexibility.

In addition, the survey revealed that many students agreed with the benefits of using social networking sites for educational purposes, as evidenced by their questionnaire responses. The advantages of using social networking sites for educational reasons are listed below.

- The usage of social networking sites promotes communication amongst classmates;
- The use of social networking sites enhances communication between lecturer and students;
- The use of social networking sites improves classroom discussion.
- The usage of social networking sites enhances the distribution of course materials and content;
- The usage of social networking sites promotes the communication of course, class, and university announcements;
- The usage of social networking sites facilitates the formation of academic groups (communities) comprised of individuals with similar interests and demands;
- Social networking sites are suitable venues for exchanging course-related material;
- The use of social networking sites increases group collaboration among students;
- Social networking sites provide the means to share a vast array of information and learning materials;
- Social networking sites offer abundant multimedia materials and media support to enhance the educational experience.

6. Conclusion

The present study uncovers that digital pupils of today must be given with the internationally prevalent 21st century educational essentials. The kids must be exposed to the cutting-edge education technology prevalent throughout their history. Additionally, employing social networking sites in the classroom increases student enthusiasm and participation. Social networking sites include a variety of communication tools, including blogs, collaborative projects, content communities, and virtual worlds or virtual gaming worlds. These platform channels provide limitless options for communication, interaction, socialization, and sharing. Understanding user behaviour for technology acceptance or adaption is a crucial and difficult task. Social networking sites have altered the entire landscape of information distribution. In university classes, technology from the twenty-first century must be reflected. Teachers must remain abreast of the most recent advancements in educational networking. The technology of the twenty-first century enhances learning and has supplanted traditional approaches in a variety of fields. Technologies play a significant role in the development of educational methods. As social networking sites have become the most popular and advanced form of communication, they have surpassed all other methods. Specifically, it facilitates multiple forms of communication and collaborative learning among students. Students have positive opinions toward using social networking sites because they view them as the future. Using mobile devices to access social networking sites in the classroom will thereby engage students.

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to thank the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, which has funded research as a part of Research Grants of Higher Education National Competitive Basic Research (PDKN) (2022). Thank you also to the Directorate of Research and Service of Universitas Negeri Medan, which supported the research.

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