The Use of Social Media in English Language Learning

Dr. Amar L. Powar

Associate Professor, Shri Vijaysinha Yadav College, Peth Vadgaon Tal. Hatkanangale Dist. Kolhapur, (Maharashtra).
Email:
amarpowarshreyas14@gmail.com

Address for correspondence:
Dr. Amar L. Powar
Associate Professor, Shri Vijaysinha Yadav College, Peth Vadgaon Tal. Hatkanangale Dist. Kolhapur, (Maharashtra).
Email:
amarpowarshreyas14@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper examines English language learning and the learning opportunities provided by social media. These advanced platforms are very helpful for learning and enhancing English language skills. The study aims to understand the influence of social media platforms on new learners. Since English is a second language, learners already have a native-language background, and thus they tend to show less initial interest in English. However, the increasing use of social media has boosted their motivation to learn English. The research gathers data from selected samples on English learning through various social media platforms. Results indicate that learning English via social media helps develop skills such as listening, speaking, writing, and vocabulary. The study also reviews select social media samples to identify mistakes in English usage. Most participants regularly use YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram, which has improved their English learning. It was observed that many minor mistakes are still made.

Key Words: *advanced, platforms, social media, learning.*

Introduction:

Learning English as a second language can be challenging, especially when learners do not have access to an immersive English-speaking environment. Many second language learners naturally gravitate toward using their mother tongue, which can slow their progress in acquiring English skills.

However, the rise of the internet and the proliferation of social media platforms have created new opportunities for learners to engage with English outside the classroom. Watching English-language YouTube channels, such as Comedy Central, Funny or Die, East India Comedy, Mark Angel Comedy, and Lilly Singh, can expose learners to different accents, humour styles, and conversational language. Additionally, popular TV shows like Friends, The Big Bang Theory, Modern Family, Brooklyn 99, and The Good Place offer exposure to everyday vocabulary and cultural references.

Podcasts such as Stuff You Should Know, The English We Speak, and 6 Minute English from the BBC are excellent resources for improving listening skills and expanding vocabulary. English news channels and radio stations, as well as sports programs and National Geographic, also provide rich content for learners to practice comprehension and stay updated on global events.

Social media platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram can be leveraged for practicing writing and conversational skills through chatting and sharing content in English. By actively engaging with these resources, both teachers and learners can innovate and enhance the process of learning English as a second language. *Learning is " a bitter medicine that needs the sugar coating of entertainment to become palatable" (Resnick, 2004)* Now days there is much more demand for English professionals who have developed their communication competencies therefore, it is necessary to develop communication competencies among the students from rural areas. *"In recent years language researchers and practitioners have shifted their focus from developing individual linguistic skills to the use of language to achieve the speaker's objectives. This new area of focus, known as communicative competence, leads language teachers to seek task oriented activities that engage their students in creative language use" (Chen2005).* This research paper focused on learning the English language with the help of the social media platforms of selected samples. Even this research paper studied the mistakes in the use of the English language.

Aim And Scope of the Study:

The objective of the present research is to examine the evolving systems of English language learning. The advent of the internet has significantly transformed educational methods, particularly in English language acquisition. Students are increasingly less interested in traditional teaching approaches; as a result, social media now plays a crucial role in English language learning. The scope of this research is to investigate how social media platforms are used by selected participants to learn English.

Limitations Of the Present Study:

Some of the limitations of the present study are as follows-

- The findings of this research work are strictly limited to twenty-five selected subjects.
- The findings of this research work are limited to English communication abilities only.
- The findings of the researcher are based on the performance of the selected subjects in the communication activities.

Methodology Of Research:

The present research is an experimental study; in the beginning, the researcher studied the subject's communication and writing ability with the help of self-introduction, interviews, observations, and a questionnaire based on the use of social media platforms for English language learning, and the responses of the subjects were observed, studied, and analyzed.

1. **Self-Introduction:** The researchers facilitated a comprehensive self-introduction process among the subjects, encompassing various personal and academic dimensions. Each participant provided their name, discussed their family background, and articulated their purpose for participating in the study. They shared their level of engagement, educational background, ambitions, aims, and goals. Additionally, subjects offered a brief overview of their native place and college, and commented on their experiences with social media platforms. This multifaceted approach enabled the researchers to gain insights into the subjects' communication proficiency, as well as their ability to express themselves across a range of topics.
2. **Interviews:** The researcher conducted interviews with the subjects using a combination of pre-set questions, spontaneous inquiries, and open-ended conversations. Throughout the process, the researcher practiced active listening, took detailed notes, and recorded participants' responses to ensure accuracy and depth in data collection.
3. **Observations:** join the activity, conversation, and observe the subject's communication and note their responses.
4. **Questionnaires:** The questionnaires were designed to assess the subjects' communication abilities as influenced by their use of social media platforms. These instruments included sections on demographics, patterns and frequency of social media usage, platform preferences, challenges encountered, and opportunities for personal comments. Additional items addressed the time spent on social media, the types of content engaged with, levels of interaction, and self-reported confidence in English conversation following exposure to social media. This comprehensive approach enabled the researchers to evaluate the multifaceted impact of social media on communication proficiency.

Sample Selection:

For the present study, twenty-five subjects were chosen, comprising fifteen female and ten male students. All participants were second-year students enrolled in B.A., B.Com, and B.Sc. programs at a college in the Kolhapur district. These subjects attended two lectures per week for the Ability Enhancement Compulsory Course in English (AEC). The sample was selected randomly to ensure representation in the research.

Objectives Of The Research:

In the current era, English communication skills have become crucial for both job seekers and undergraduate students, particularly as many students struggle with effective communication. This challenge is especially pronounced among students from rural areas, where acquiring proficiency in English can be difficult. Social media platforms play a significant role in creating an English-language environment and fostering English culture, even for learners in rural regions.

The objectives of the present research are as follows:

- To identify the social media platforms used for English communication.
- To explore challenges faced while using English on social media.
- To analyze the impact of social media on English language skills.
- To collect suggestions for improving English via social media.

Data Analysis:

A total of twenty-five subjects, all second-year undergraduate students from Arts, Commerce, and Science streams, were selected for the study. Initially, participants were asked to introduce themselves using a fixed format covering personal information, family background, goals, ambitions, and their thoughts about their native place, college, and local area. Over 40% of the subjects were able to introduce themselves very effectively, while 7% managed an introduction but not as effectively. Another 33% could only mention their name and qualification.

In the study's second phase, which involved a research interview schedule, 33% of the subjects expressed a preference for both pre-set and open-ended questions. The remainder struggled to perform effectively in the interview schedule. Observational data revealed that 20% of the subjects were able to communicate across different research sample designs.

Finally, all participants completed a questionnaire focused mainly on the use of social media platforms and their role in English language acquisition. Notably, 90% of the subjects stated that social media is helpful for those interested in learning English. The subjects reported using a variety of social media platforms, and almost all had access to Android phones with high-speed internet connectivity

Findings:
1. Almost all subjects use smartphones with high-speed internet access.
2. More than 90% of subjects are active and habitual users of social media platforms.
3. Social media has contributed to the development of reading and writing skills among the subjects.
4. English has become more approachable and friendly for students through the use of social media.
5. Social media platforms are now a major educational tool for learning the English language.
6. While subjects performed well in self-introduction, their overall communication skills were less effective.
7. In summary, social media helps with English language learning, but there is a continued need to focus on grammar, vocabulary, and the accurate use of English.

Conclusion:
The researcher observed that the subjects' performance improved, as social media platforms proved helpful for English communication and language learning in the selected samples. The participants became habitual users of smartphones and social media platforms, significantly influencing their English learning, particularly in writing and speaking. Previously, their learning depended entirely on formal classroom instruction, and English learning was not a prominent part of their educational culture. In short, social media platforms have transformed the environment for English language learning. However, it was also found that frequent use of social media raises concerns about the accuracy of English in vocabulary building, grammar, and pronunciation.

Annexure I
Table No 01 Results of Self-introduction and Interviews

Test of the Subjects						
Sr. No.	Subject's Participation in Interviews	No.	%	Subject's self-introduction	No.	%
01	Confident in the interview	07	28 %	Self-Introduction Activity Participated	18	72 %
02	Response to the preset questions.	14	56 %	Subjects spoke for more than five minutes	12	48 %
03	Response to the spontaneous enquiries.	07	28 %	Almost covers all points of self-introduction	03	12 %
04	Open-ended questions.	04	16 %	Fluency in presentation	04	16 %

Annexure II
Table No 02 Results of questionnaire regarding Social media platforms.

Test of the Subjects						
Sr. No.	Subject's Participation in Interviews	No.	%	Subject's self-introduction	No.	%
01	Social media use	24	96 %	Preferences in social media	18	72 %
02	How many platforms are used	23	92 %	Impact and suggestion	15	60 %
03	Challenges for using Social media.	19	76%	Language Use and Habits	11	44 %
04	Frequency, time for using social media	21	84 %	Outcome and perception	14	56 %

Conflicts of interest
The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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