

# “Impact of Social media on English language learning”

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## Abstract:

The sudden emergence in internet and the rise of social networking have transformed the way we communicate. Technology has enabled the extension of language learning in a more systematic manner. There is a significant impact on motivation for students who are given an opportunity to explore technological advances. It is important that teachers keep abreast of technological developments and are aware of the need to be harnessed and develop further to both engage learners and improve their English language skills.

Teachers now adhere to innovative practices in teaching- learning process and have changed their roles into ‘facilitators’. The role of teacher demands to promote more group tasks and stress- free learning environments. The social media tools help the language teachers to stay connected with their peers around the world and stay updated about their fields.

Social media thus far had wide-reaching impacts on the way people communicate in English. Various changes are evident in the way people write and speak English because of the changing nature of communication in social networking platforms. One of the most significant effects of social media on verbal and written English is the acquisition of vocabulary.

The other note worthy impact of social media is that it has also introduced a new vocabulary to English communication. Social media plays a dominant role in English language learning because it provides opportunities to learners to improve their writing, reading, and similarly, to read new texts and phrases to improve their vocabulary.

This paper highlights the impact of Social media on English language learning.

Keywords: Social media, Communication, language learning, skills.

## Introduction:

The incorporation of technology in English class room has completely changed the teaching learning process. With the emerging trends in technology, teachers are embracing and integrating technology to enable students to become more efficient in language acquisition. The conventional classroom teaching can be replaced by

social media networking sites. It provides teachers and students lots of creative and practical ideas to create a learner-friendly environment.

The internet has become one of the most important influences of the English language in recent times in not only appropriating existing vocabulary, but also has given life to a plethora of new words and phrases. Among a wide range of web-based technologies, social networking has dramatically dominated human life for about a decade.

Evidently, social media is a rich playground for experimenting, creating new words and it also provides a platform for people who aren't stifled by grammatical rules and syntax, because of the freedom to flout the usual maxims of conventional English Language and be innovative and creative. Language is, and has always been ever-evolving. Social networking sites have been the most effective tools for communication owing to the user-friendly and easy to access features.

Social media, for example Face book, Chat room, Twitter, Skype, We Chat and other sites to keep them updated with friends and current happenings around the world. The way we communicate is changing drastically and a host of new words are originating from social media.

For example '*blogosphere*' (the collective word for personal websites called blogs), '*troll*' (someone who creates conflict online by starting arguments or upsetting people) and buzzword (a word or phrase that is fashionable at a particular time or in a particular context).

Social Media has also created words of their own. Words like *Blog*, *Hashtag*, *Selfie*, and *Tweet*. These words have never existed before the invention of social media, but now with the introduction of social media they have become more prominent than ever. Even some acronyms, *OMG*, *TBT*, *DM*, and *LOL* have trickled from social media platforms to ordinary verbal and written English.

Another interesting phenomenon we have witnessed in the recent years is the reappropriation of existing words and words based on brands to refer primarily to their social media context. Reappropriation is the cultural process by which a group claims words that were previously used in a certain way and gives them a new meaning. In this way the people who engage with social media are quite literally creating new words and giving new meanings to existing words.

*Friended* and *unfriended* are two examples of words that have been given a new meaning due to their usage online. The word 'friend' and 'befriend' is from Old English originating in the 13th Century, but it has been given an entirely new meaning thanks to Face book (the process of adding or removing someone from your circle of friends). 'Like' and 'viral' are other popular examples of words that have had their meaning reappropriated by social media.

Another evolution in the language of social media is the usage of emojis and emoticons. Emoticons have been in use since the early days of the internet, before social media emerged. The usage of emoticons has been tracked back to the 19th century. The first usage of emoticons in the modern, digital age was by Professor Scott Fahlman in 1982.

### **Role of Social media in enhancing Language skills.**

Nowadays, language learning taking place in various forms such as email exchanges, chat lines, online projects and webinar. People across the world are using social networking websites such as, Face book, Twitter, Whats app, Blogs, Web chat, Skype etc for socialization; moreover many of them find these sites helpful in developing **LSRW** skills.

In addition to this we are also equipped to set specific homework assignments on social media, for example asking a student to write a response to a relevant post online. We can also make constructive use of messaging apps such as Whats app and set up social media forums on platforms such as Face book for students to practice their language skills online.

**1. Face book:** is a highly interactive virtual social communication tool and it has become increasingly popular on college campuses. Research results have indicated that Face book could be an effective platform for informal learning. Face book, a well-known social networking site launched in February, 2004 in the U.S., became popular around the world in the recent years.

Many students use Face book, a social networking service, as part of their daily lives. It can be used by the facilitator to share course resources, discussions, promote collaboration, improve relationships between students, incorporate an array of learning tools (such as videos, images, boards, chatting and private messaging).

With over 829 million daily users, according to Face book's newsroom, it has transformed our ability to stay in touch with those who would otherwise be out of reach, and it has allowed its users to have a closer tie with a growing number of people who share common interests and backgrounds, thus producing a social network far beyond anything we could have ever imagined.

The influence of these social media sites and platforms on our language, then, is a true phenomenon. It has managed to alter our vocabulary, increase the number of communications we have every day and the speed at which we have them, and leave us feeling a newfound responsibility to remain connected with the world at large.

**2. Twitter** - Twitter is one of the popular micro-blogging applications which allows its users to share ideas and information via short texts. The use of Twitter is not merely for general communication, but has been effectively used in a wide range of professions.

Twitter can be used between students and teachers, students and students and teachers and teachers in educational scenario It can be used among the participants from the class, institution or from any geographical area. It is believed to be one of the best teaching and learning activities, the use of Twitter has stretched the practice of discussion beyond the classroom limitation.

There is a 140 character limit on twitter. Students will learn to write and read in short sentences. This will help in a greater way in practicing writing and reading skills on a regular basis. Using Twitter every day helps students learning new words and trends constantly.

**EFL/ESL:** Tweets about learning and teaching English as a second or foreign language.

**#eal:** Tweets about English being used as an additional language

**#ellchat:** English language learning chat platform

**#grammar:** Tweets related to English grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.

**#TESOL:** Teachers of English to speakers of other languages/ Teachers of English as a Second Language Association

**#twinglish:** for learners of English

Twitter can also be a backchannel discussion tool, as some students are quite introvert and shy in the classroom, but are found to be outspoken online. Also, due to time constraints, each student cannot be given a chance to share their idea in the classroom. In this situation, Twitter is a good choice to address this problem.

Twitter can be used to develop Listening, speaking, reading and writing skills among learners.

**Listening:** This skill can also be integrated with writing and speaking. There are plenty of twitted video or audio texts available that can be utilized for this activity, where students can listen to a particular text and write a summary. This can be followed by teacher's and other students' feedback.

**Speaking:** Speaking skill can also be developed though Twitter. Many activities can be assigned to students. Similarly, while the class is going on, live-tweet can be used to make the students to interact with competent speakers of English from other countries. This is especially helpful to the students who need assistance and help them improve their language.

**Reading:** Students can be encouraged to develop reading habits and they can practice reading skills on Twitter. The theory of multiple intelligences suggests that different learners have different intelligences and they have unique learning abilities, for example, some students are good at learning though pictorial representation while some are good at verbal description.

**Writing:** Writing can also be developed through Twitter. For this, reading and writing can be integrated. As the students are asked to read written texts and write a similar sort of text and post it.

**3. YouTube:** It is one of the most popular websites and a vast resource for educational content Teachers can create a YouTube account and ask each of the students to record a video blog, of their hobbies, thoughts or opinions on new stories. Lessons can be enhanced with the right video.

Something visual and entertaining that speaks to the subject you're teaching breaks up the monotony of a lecture, brings some fun into the lesson, and keeps the students more engaged and interested in the subject. For showing videos in the classroom all it takes is some searching and browsing on the website to see what videos are already out there on the subject you're teaching.

Some people learn better by watching than reading, so providing video alternatives to the reading homework assigned could really pay off for some students. Create playlists, either to supplement the other work you assign or as an alternative, and simply send the link to the students for viewing. We can record class lectures and save them for future viewing. YouTube can become a storehouse for saving and sharing any lectures we record.

**4. Blog:** The word 'Blog' is a shortened version of 'weblog', which is a platform to engage in a discussion, exchange and express ideas and thoughts on various topics, promote and expand business etc. There is an increased demand in blogs as it is one of the most important medium of communication and a potential tool to unleash creativity.

Blogs can effectively facilitate language learning in terms of expressing ideas and establishing arguments. Blogging also gives a feeling of contentment in learners as they upload their posts and receive comments and feedback from their peers and teachers.

Blogs allow the learners to express their thoughts and feelings at their own pace and time and also aid in creating content. The only element that drives the attention of the reader is content. Blogs can effectively facilitate language teaching and learning especially in terms of learners' language complexity, grammatical correctness, and fluency. Blogging also helps in writing clearly and concisely, editing and proof reading. It also gives insights into nuances of writing.

Blog writing not only helps in sharing feelings and opinions but also paves way to diverse learning. For example if learners want to write a blog on any topic which is close to their heart ranging from sports to lifestyle, they explore and try to use the right vocabulary. When learners are encouraged to write for a purpose they become conscious to produce fluent language which is considered to be a potential tool for developing linguistic skills.

Blogs can also be designed to provide class notes, guidelines on learning, learning materials, and interactive exercises. They also enable forum discussions between students and teachers, and among students. Blogging can also be used as a tool in enabling students to write captivating and inspirational lines on any topic.

**Conclusion:** The increasing advancement of the information technology has had a significant influence on every aspect of life in this era. Social media has made learning accessible to everyone. It plays a significant role in motivating learners to explore technological advances and transform them into finding new avenues. Hence, Social media has undeniably changed the way we speak and write English.

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