



Impact of Social Media on English Language

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ABSTRACT

During recent times electronic devices such as computers and smart phones have facilitated millions of students in terms of communication and entertainment. The development of English language is accelerating with the growth of social networks. Social networking is the latest online communication tool that allows users to establish profiles and share information with other users. Internet has, without doubt, revolutionized English language by making misspelling and alien jargons the norm. However, the social networking sites could give a negative effect on the English proficiency due to the internet slang in the communication among each other because of the conveniences and efficiency. The present paper sets out to examine whether the usage of social networking sites bring significant impact on English language expertise. The paper investigates the influence of social media on student's writing and speaking, and also how it motivates students to improve their English, writing and speaking, and in what extend it is useful to develop vocabulary for the learner.

Key words: Internet, Social Networking Sites, Media, communication etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social networking sites are becoming popular among the young generation these days. Not only the youth but also the educators are connected in the social networking sites. These sites play a crucial role to connect the people all over the world and to communicate easily. The social media enable us to communicate with a much larger number of people on a global scale in a way that we only really used to be able to do on a local level. Of course, internet is an unconditional element that is wanted by almost everyone. The world has become closer among each other via the social networking sites such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and many more. The social media include web and mobile technology and are generally defined as forms of electronic communication as web sites for social networking and micro blogging through which users create online communities exchange information, ideas etc and other content such as video. There is no denying fact that social media has had extensive impacts on the way people communicate in English.

The usage of social network is beneficial for many things, but is it has negative side also. Majority of students, for instance use Facebook and Whatsapp as their favorite and most of the students usually spend three-four hours on social networking sites. They use social media for both academic and non-academic purposes. Some argue that the language used in social network is not necessarily correct, and it might affect other users. Their objection is mainly on the use of Internet slang. Internet slang refers to a set of different short forms (use of

acronyms) and language used by users such as LOL (laugh out loud), ROFL (roll on floor laugh), OMG (Oh my God), TTYL (talk to you later) AFK (away from keyboard) are just a few that demonstrate how social media speeds things up. Like acronyms there are Emoticons (a representation of a facial expression such as a smile or frown, formed by various combinations of keyboard characters). Some of the linguists argue that that this is a lazy form of writing, while some other show concern that excessive usage of internet slangs will radically affect traditional English vocabulary. On the other side, there are people too, who defend internet slangs.

Armed with internet and social media the students today can develop their English communication skills, can gain social confidence from online interaction increase their skill in technology and so on. Their newly formed community i. e. online community can be very diverse and expose them to many new view points, ideas, and opinions. No doubt, acquiring information can be fulfilled by students alone but a collaborative environment certainly helps students to work together in trying to achieve their aims. If the students are connected with their friends and teachers in the social networking sites they can formulate group discussions where they can exchange their ideas as well as they can share course related materials, information etc. They try to write in proper grammar structure, correct spelling and appropriate sentence structure and therefore it motivates them to improve their English language as well. The social media can help students to improve their writing and speaking as the students are able to learn new word/ idioms /phrase from their friends and they use can make use it in their formal writing and speaking (presentation) which enhance their writing and speaking.

Teachers can be very innovative while using social networking sites for teaching purpose and can make lessons interesting and varied. According to Gremu & Halse (2012) nowadays students are keen to use SNS for academic purpose. So the teachers can provide an opportunity to the students to learn informally by seeking, exploring and testing ideas with other students within their own social network. The teacher can open a discussion in social media where the teacher and the student can post different articles and can discuss indifferent issue. The teacher can recommend highly for using proper sentence structure, correct word and grammar. Harwood & Blackstone (2012) say social networking sites exhibit to the students that the class tutor is present and he/ she is observing what is happening on online. So they will be conscious about their writing and as a result it will enhance student's writing.

Social media plays an important role in vocabulary development of English learners. It facilitates the learners to learn new words and vocabulary suitable for them in the ability of English language learning. Besides, it is easy for English learners as compare to books reading and other text materials, and arouses the interest of English learners towards the English language learning. One of the most notable ways that social media has influenced the English language, is through the appropriation of existing vocabulary. Words that had existing meanings have now been given other meanings in an online context for example, the word "wall". Years ago the word "wall" meant you the ones in our house, or the ones outside in the street; but in a social media context the word "wall" refers to the homepage of your social media profile. A few other words which have been re-purposed for social media include: Tablet (used to refer to portable screens) Troll (an internet user who seeks attention by making outrageous or unreasonable comments about something or someone), Stream(ing), (transmission of data as a steady continuous flow) and Catfish (refers to an internet user who poses as someone other than themselves online). The internet thus, has become one of the influences of the English language in recent times, and along with appropriating existing vocabulary, it has given life to a plethora of new words and phrases like "unfriend", "selfie" "fleek" or "emoji" Dozens of recently-coined terms and phrases originated on social media. 'Selfie', for instance, was named word of the year by the Oxford English Dictionary in 2013. Two years later their "word of the year was the 'tears of joy emoji'. There are several more examples of social media slang making it into

dictionaries. Again it is not that much of importance that dictionary endorsed or not but certain words like 'hashtag', 'photobomb', 'lol' and 'emoji' are now in common parlance, It has wide usage on social media platforms. These words are concocted in many ways. Other social media words are new combinations of other words. Photobomb, for example, is a combination of the popular image format and the popular explosive. It came about due to the success of image-sharing platforms such as instagram.

While discussing social media's effect on the English language, it is pertinent here to mention one of the major linguistic changes it has made involves communication across different languages. Facebook, for example has a built-in translation function that tends to minimize linguistic barrier between users. Therefore it will not be an exaggeration in saying that due to use of social media or social networking sites the linguistic barriers have been bent, if not broken.

II. CONCLUSION

Undoubtedly, social media is a rich playground for experimenting, creating new words and repurposing old ones. It also provides a platform for people who are not inspired by grammatical rules and syntax. It provides the freedom to ignore the usual maxims of conventional English Language and be innovative, creative and forward thinking. Language is, and always has been ever-evolving. Although the developments and trends we witness in language over time are significant, the foundation of the English language remains as strong and reliable as it always has been. No doubt that social media has both positive and negative impacts on how people write and speak English. The demands for faster and convenient communication have increased the susceptibility to make spelling mistakes, use abbreviations, and improper use of informal language. New vocabulary framed in social media has also filtered down to daily verbal communication. Some words that were slang have even been integrated into mainstream English making it simpler to understand. Most importantly, at the same time, social media has also increased awareness to proper language use.

III. REFERENCES

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