

The Use Of Social Media For English Language Learning: An Exploratory Study Of EFL & Media Study University Students

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Abstract

The research depicts the concept that how social media has affected the ways of learning in the time of the pandemic around the globe. It also presents the idea that how this area of communication has become convenient, easy to handle and large source for learning. With learning, it has also played an important role in terms of the process of teaching. In the present scenario, it is to be noticed that the sites for social networking not only had great and deep influence on the structure of the society and the interaction and communication among the societies; but it also affected and altered the ways of learning in education sector. Learning of English language can be considered in particular. In this regard, the social media platforms have produced and created a kingdom of digital environment in the present time. It has observed that social media networking is now a global phenomenon. It is a global shift in the current time for grabbing knowledge with special reference to ELT. So, the present research aims to reach the various social media platforms for extracting the linguistic knowledge from the point of view of the university students, with special reference to ELT and Media studies perspective during the COVID-19 pandemic. The current examination study was directed at the degree of BS English Language and Media study. The example for testing involved 166 university students at University of Management and Technology, Lahore. To figure out the aftermaths of various web-based entertainment stages and person to person communication areas on having contribution of learning of English language in the year 2020 when everything got disorganized because of the pandemic. In this study, survey questionnaire technique was administered to find the impact of various social

media platforms on learning English language and media studies in the year of 2020. This helps to highlight the possible suggestions, outcomes and recommendations for future to improve e-learning and virtual learning of English language as well as media studies. The findings of the present investigation of examination contributed and helped in the space of virtual learning of English language during the time span of pandemic. The eventual outcomes affirmed that the utilization of online entertainment is critical, significant and positive for learning. It had a great impact on English language learning as the learners could learn and enhance their skills like reading, writing, listening and speaking. The variation in lexical knowledge, use of grammar and enhancement in communication skills by interacting socially on various platforms. The study helps to find number of implications for the benefit of the learners as the implications that are pedagogical with special reference to ELT and Media studies perspective. Number of pedagogical variations and reformations are proposed and suggested to make out better ways for teaching and learning at the same time. Another significant pedagogical implication is to create such training sessions that are beneficial for the learners and the instructors for the development of e-learning and e-teaching of English language. This would enhance the knowledge and skills for using social media applications and it would be a better way to instruct the use of technology in the modern era. This research contributes to provides perceptions for the development and construction of such policies that can help to assist the social media platforms for imparting language learning knowledge in an integrated way. This is as an instruction for the use of technology to learn whether in the context of English language learning and teaching or any other special context. Particularly in the time frame of pandemic, this should be also in focus that how the institutions develop and bring advancement in technology and the applications. A model should be presented to improve and enhance English language learning ways and processes. The model should be put forward as a guideline for all the ones who belong to education sector.

Keywords Social Media; English Language Learning; University Students

INTRODUCTION

The impact of social media on people's lifestyle is massive. Social Media platforms are influencing almost every aspect of one's life, be it data exchange, communication, business, knowledge and all other exclusive elements (Amin et al., 2020). The gradual unfolding of diverse social networking platforms has compelled the researchers belonging to various disciplines to look into the significance and effects of social media with respect to education and other aspects of life. With regard to this, the Language Learning experts and counsellors specifically, pursued to inquire into the impacts of these social forums in terms of ESL. The existing literature reported the results of an English proficiency test conducted on two different groups. The group who acquired learning through social networks showed improved results in the test as compared to those who were trained in person (Wamba and Carter, 2016). According to Statista (2020)'s report, there exist almost two trillion social media users globally. The advent of social media websites has encouraged entrepreneurs to develop a variety of platforms subjective to their use. These include Facebook,

Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat and Twitter, each serving a different purpose under the umbrella of social media. However, they all play a huge role in altering and modifying individual's various aspects of life.

There exist many studies on social media's impacts on education which measure its relevance in various fields. In Linguistic approach, the flow of relevant output on social media depicts tremendous language learning opportunities for all kinds of learners to interpret language and gain insights, as teenagers and adolescents are the frequent social media users who spend a major portion of their day interacting with social sites that involve all kinds of communication and language-based skills. (Al Jahromi, 2020). One of the shifts created by social media in terms of communication include the replacement of in person conversations by online chats, podcasts and other ways of communicating. Platforms like Zoom, Skype, Facetime and other types of video calling applications have caused substantial alterations in an individual's language skills. The advancement in technology has produced up to date gadgets aligning with extensive social media applications. It has benefited their users in having linguistic input at their fingertips and has also added to the construction of intelligible L2 output with special reference to ELT (Pikhart 2021). Social media has encapsulated the human kind inevitably, and the students are not adept to outdated educating techniques. Contextually, there does not exist much literature that investigates it's the impact on learning specifically in terms of English Language. However, this study seeks to recognize the influences of social media on English learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. In such manner, the ebb and flow concentrate on plans to address the accompanying exploration questions. How did online entertainment locales get influenced by ELT perspective during the (COVID-19) pandemic? To address this inquiry, the accompanying questions were shaped to control the elements of the review: In what way did Pakistani university BS students comprehend the effects of utilizing person to person communication destinations with special reference to the following points (mentioned below) during pandemic (COVID-19):

1. Number of Social Media Forums utilized?
2. Reasons for utilizing Social Networks?
3. Recurrence in utilizing web-based entertainment.
4. Pros and Cons of social media perspective?
5. Educational or informative instruments for the learners?
6. The proportion of using web-based entertainment for Learning English Language?
7. Improvement of Language abilities through web-based entertainment?
8. Social media impacts on contemplating ELT strategies for the learners?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Pakistani university students experienced unpredicted loss due to COVID-19. Due to these precautionary measures were taken but it affected student's social and educational life aspects

(Alghamdi, 2021). Due to COVID-19 pandemic people have learned how to maintain distance and it is having brought a radical change, therefore, the foreign language context is affected by social media as people have been used it more now (Pikhart and Botezat, 2021). Because of social separating in the ongoing circumstance of COVID-19, as a whole, all know about the expanded effect of online entertainment. Virtual entertainment destinations are involved overall now and its utilization in unknown dialect learning has become more gigantic and furthermore exploring about it is significant. (Artyushina and Sheypak, 2018; Ayers, 2020).

These days, there are 2.95 billion clients of online entertainment networks all around the world and the utilization of web-based entertainment is getting more appealing and open as youthful age is dependent via virtual entertainment. (Pikhart and Botezat, 2021) Today online entertainment has turned into a principal wellspring of connection, correspondence (Li and Croucher, 2020). Web-based entertainment incorporates web journals, talks, various locales, PC programming that assists the clients with sharing their own data and they can share their contemplations. Then again, long range informal communication locales that are utilized for language advancing likewise address the assortment of various channels of web-based entertainment that are intended for explicit purposes yet they are given to the point of learning an unknown dialect. It is proposed that English Language from now may be called as the principal worldwide language on the planet as it is as of now thought to be as true language in 60 nations. As English language is thought of as one of the most broadly communicated in and generally utilized language from one side of the planet to the other (Akinwamide, 2012).

New technologies are a source to have exposure to new literacies and it is also helpful to perceive foreign language in the world. New technologies will help to interact with the social utilities and influences the literary practices by the users or learners (Roelofse, 2013). New technologies cannot change the way people live but it can help to bring change in the way people think. Davies (2012, p. 21) said “texts of the new technologies have mutated into complex hybrid systems that have made new demands on reading and writing, viewing, social exchange, and communication”. Facebook is use as a social media site that demands an approach of combining different words and different written texts from different sites. WhatsApp is identified by researchers as it is useful for the learners. It contaminating affects the student's abilities for instance, "composing abilities". Virtual entertainment is a method for drawing in with individuals. (Coons, 2012, p. 44). Chomsky (2014) has expressed "Our language is continually, definitely, and normally changing, changing and turning out to be more versatile to its clients because of changes in our peers". Due to the quick improvement of virtual entertainment organization, it has made a segregating language framework that is significant for the social collaboration or correspondence (Attila, 2017).

With the end goal of data and correspondence, individuals utilize online media or virtual entertainment as an instrument. Individuals of all ages or status utilize web-based entertainment as it is quite possibly the most popular stage. Kaplan and Haenlein (2016) state that internet-based media stages are a get-together of web applications that grant the development of various substances in the world. To be sure, various kinds of web-based media are accessible on the planet,

for instance, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, etc. Also, it is easy to seek after these kinds of online media unreservedly. On account of this explanation, by far most use these electronic media. These sorts of electronic media are habitually used by people, especially understudies, since they give them entertainment. Chou (2017) brings up that internet-based media have a couple of characteristics, for instance, instinct, stage quality, and data sharing framework. Thusly, through online media, students can do a lot of things. A large portion of the understudies know how to refresh their insight about study hall materials faster through electronic media in examination with different media like paper-based materials. Karim and Hasan (18) deduced in their review that an enormous number of students are happy with the web-based method of learning.

Baldwin (2012) said that the Social media is considered as a friend or an enemy for the language processing. He also stated the social media as a source for “spelling inconsistencies, the free-form adoption of new terms, and regular violations of English grammar norms,” he also referred to the “advantage of lexical normalization in the linguistic setting”. In this case Turairaj et al, (2015) researched that whether the social media networks “are making or marring academic English” and whether “the online code switching and inconsistent spelling affect non-native learner’s language learning process”.

More than this, online interactions are helpful for the speakers so that they can produce different linguistics exchanges (Mutum and Wang, 2010). In this context, communication anxiety has been minimized by social media that was very common among people. People are more comfortable in sharing their information behind the monitors. They create their new linguistic and personal identities on social media and exchange their information to have exposure (Blattner and Fiori, 2011). Social media has helped the learners to lower their anxiety and to get motivation and self-confidence. Second language learners are provided with no anxiety area that gives them enough confidence to learn a language creatively and quickly (Al Jahrami, 2019).

Studies prove that Social media enhance the language process through different applications like Facebook and Twitter (Slim and Hafedh (2019). Re-researches have examined that Social media as well as electronic media strengthen learner’s language skills such as vocabulary skills (Attila, 2017; Al Jahrami, 2019). Vocabulary on the social media networks has become a sensation because of using techniques such as compounding and coining for the production of words like “Face b book, Snap b chat and Blog b sphere” (Mason and Rennie, 2008). The other technique used “sound imitation” to produce words like Twitter which comes from the word Tweet. Social Media has affected the forms of many words. The names of different applications are used as verbs and adjectives. (For example, I will WhatsApp you the picture). Another method is the change of positive form of verbs into negative like, the noun friend to unfriend, like to unlike. There are multifaceted connotations of many lexicons that are changed on electronic and social media like the words on Instagram, Streak, Post) Social media focuses on Writing Skills than on speaking skills and is referred as “Text Speak”.

The utilization of shortenings, abbreviations, logograms and different paralinguistic highlights has made the composing more helpful simpler, quicker, freed, and strong. There is an effect on

spellings in view of the utilization of shortenings and logograms. The oral capability abilities are upgraded because of web-based entertainment (Lin et al., 2016). Lin et al., expressed that the students would require an arranged direction that comprises of guidelines so they can utilize online entertainment network all the more innovatively to work on their abilities of language mastering. Other than sure effect of virtual entertainment network on language mastering abilities, the analysts explored about the adverse consequence of the systems administration destinations on the second language students that might incorporate conflicting spelling and linguistic standards (Baldwin, 2012). "Language use on the Internet is frequently reprimanded as being less right and less sound than different types of language use, and as having upset contiguousness" (Lin et al. (2016, p. 143).

Tariq et al. (2012) led a concentrate on the impacts of virtual entertainment on Pakistani understudy's language growing experience. Facebook was considered as a negative learning hotspot for their understudies of Saudi (Akram and Albalawi (2016). Because of the careful steps that were taken during the COVID-19 have assisted the Saudi government with utilizing the WWW website and others long range informal communication destinations for other instructive and conservative intention. The fundamental goal of this examination is to explore the massive utilization of online entertainment network for gaining and learning the English language during the time span of Covid-19.

METHODOLOGY

The fundamental explanation or motivation behind this report is to research the impacts of various web-based entertainment destinations and projects on English language learning in the year 2020 during pandemic of COVID. It also pays attention to potential thoughts for the extra new development for the portrayal of virtual learning of English language.

FINDINGS / RESULTS

The results from this study were derived by the method of close ended questionnaire which consisted of by far questions of different types and had different lengths. The questions were designed by the researchers in order to gain multiple dimensions of answers that showed diversity of opinions regarding how language learning can be affected by social media.

It was revealed that social media had positive outcomes when it came to language learning and many students used it as language learning tool during COVID-19. Figure 2 shows the results of participants who responded positively as it shows that about an average of 86.75% people have had positive impact and influence from social media platform regarding language learning. However, 13.25% thought that it had negative influence on language learning.

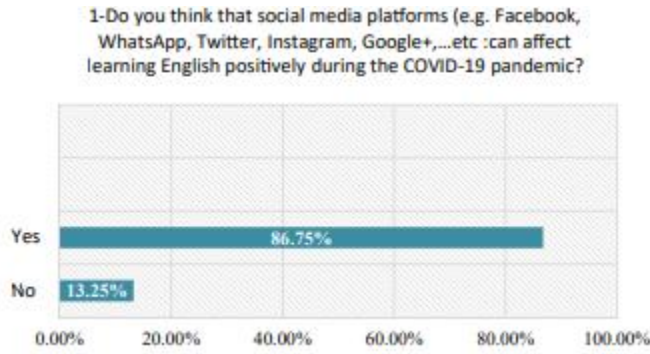


Figure 2. The effect of social media platforms on learning English

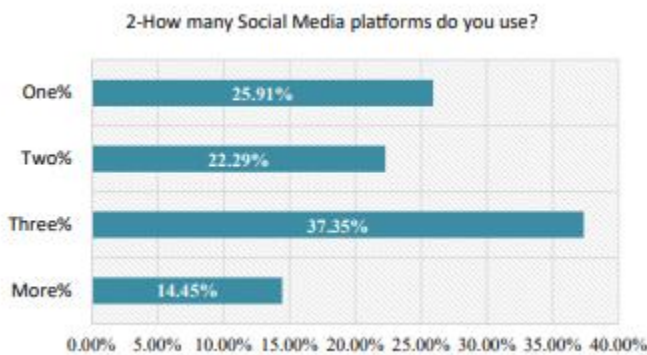


Figure 3. The use of social media

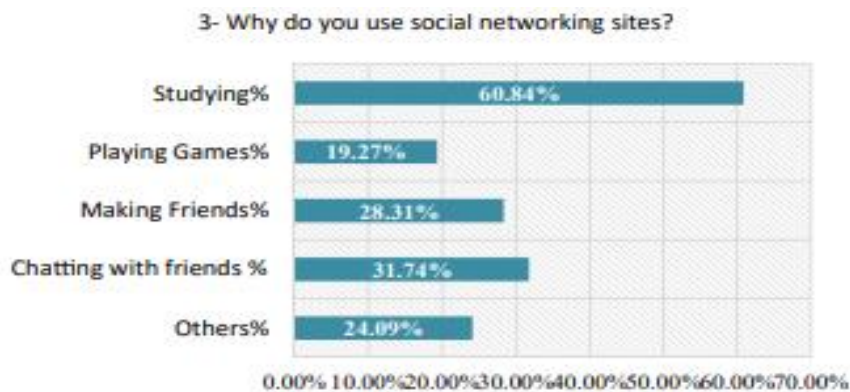


Figure 4. The incentives and motives for using social media stages

By keeping in view above figures, the concept regarding the influence of social media can be well comprehended. As Figure 2 and 3 showed data regarding how many platforms were used by the learners and it was revealed that 25.91% out of the total respondents used only one social media platform, 22.29% used two sites and 37.35% used three sites. However, 14.45% utilized more than three sites.

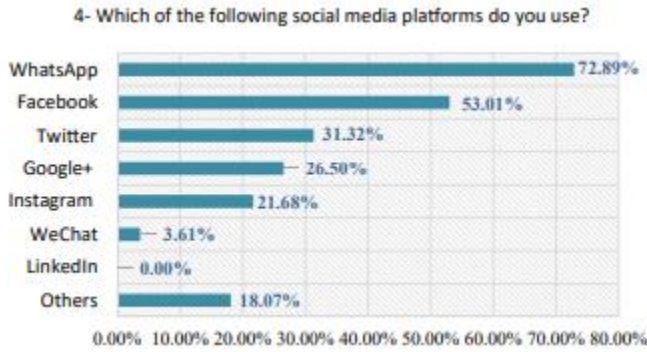


Figure 5. The social platforms (frequently used)

Figure 5 revealed that the most used social networking site is WhatsApp and almost 72.89% of university students used this site on regular basis. Facebook with the average of 53.01% is the second-best site used. However only 31.32% used twitter, 26.50% used google and 21.68% used Instagram. The study showed that WeChat was the least popular and only 3.61% used it and no one used LinkedIn.

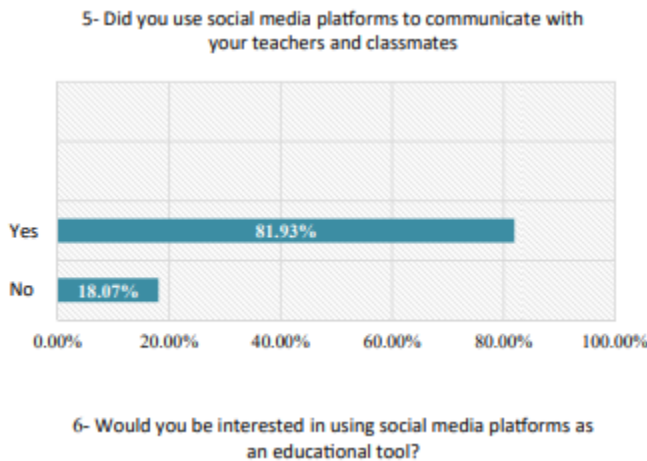


Figure 6. Social media platforms (used as a communication tool)

Figure 6 specifically shows communication during the time of COVID. It shows that 81.92% prefer social media for learning purposes as it provided them opportunity to students to remain in touch with their peers and teachers. However, 18.07% of students believed that social media didn't go along their studies.

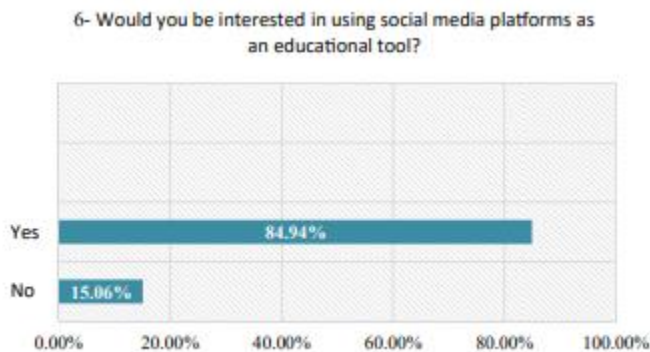


Figure 7. Using social media platforms as an educational tool

Figure 7 shows student’s perception towards these sites in the time of COVID. Results revealed that 84.94% considered it beneficial to use social media as it added in to their knowledge. However, 15.06% had contrastive views.

The above results demonstrate that most of the students are keen on involving virtual entertainment with center as an instructive apparatus and that practically 51.20 and 18.08% of the understudies utilize web-based entertainment to learn English language at higher rates "great" and "amazing" separately. Additionally, it is likewise pronounced that just 21.09% of the understudies rate the utilization of web-based entertainment on learning English language during the COVID-19 pandemic as "normal", one more 7.23% rate it as "poor" and just 2.40% rate involving virtual entertainment in learning English as "extremely poor".

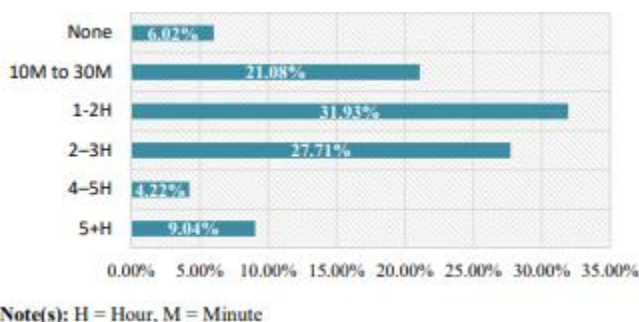


Figure 8. Time consumption (on social media podiums)

Taking into account time spent on these destinations Figure 8 shows that main 6.02% understudies didn't completely utilized web-based entertainment on their ordinary day. 21.08% burned through 10-30 mins and a considerable lot of the understudies 31.93% spend around one to two hours on informal communication locales during their customary day, while 27.71% spend from 2 to 3 h of their time. It is likewise revealed that 4.22% of the members spend somewhere in the range of 4 and 5 h on person to person communication locales, and just 9.04% of the members spend in excess of 5 h on informal communication destinations every day.

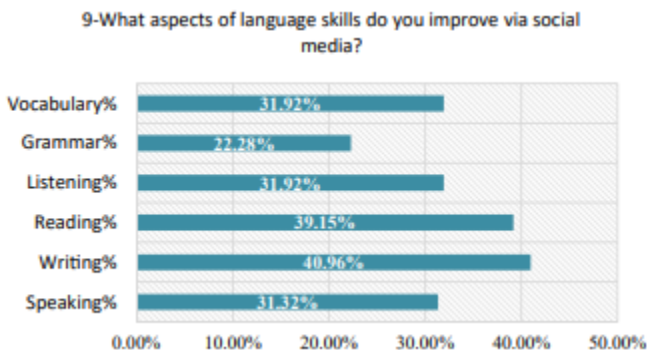


Figure 10. Linguistic skills (improved by the use of social media)

The different parts of language learning that could be learnt by means of web-based entertainment destinations are uncovered in figure 10. Figure 10 showed that 40.96% of the understudies further developed their composing expertise, 39.15% better their understanding ability, third expertise is tuning in and jargon as 31.92%. Be that as it may, talking expertise was improved with a level of 31.32% and just 22.28% of students got hold on their punctuation.

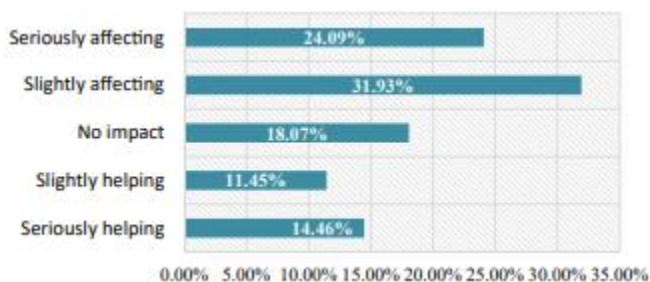


Figure 11. Educational social sites for students' studies

The effect of social media is discussed in the last question and figure 11 reveals that 24.09% were seriously affected and 31.93% had slight impact on their overall performance and progress. However, 18.07% had taken no influence and 14.46% strongly agreed on positive impact of social media for learning and on the other hand 11.45 believed that it can slightly help them in learning.

DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

CONCLUSION

The students can follow their scholastic advancement or acquire data about it from anyplace in the globe. Twitter, for instance, permits clients to get data that is more participatory in nature by joining pictures and recordings. Cell phones are an illustration of versatile innovation that empowers understudies to partake in and share data on any permitted web-based entertainment webpage. Every day, the globe shrinks, and everyone, especially L2 learners, must be linked. Social media is growing more and more important to it. Instead of having to go out of their way to get information, users are provided it. Individuals are also linked through social networking in terms of personal ties. Educational support can also be aided by social networking. As indicated

in question 3, 60.84 percent of L2 learners use social media platforms for studying and education, while the rest use them for other purposes such as talking with friends, making new contacts, playing games, and so on.

The type of information sought influences the type of involvement a user wants from various social network. The usage of multiple platforms is determined by the goals of the users. Participants in the research who want to enhance their English language abilities can use WhatsApp to communicate, share various sorts of text content, activities, and even form groups for various courses. Although the informal tone of Facebook was unpleasant, it was useful for social and L2 identity development for people wishing to enhance their communication abilities. Google may be used in the classroom to help pupils study more effectively. Twitter and Instagram have gained in popularity as well and are now considered crucial tools for everyday communication.

Different sites, as YouTube, permit students to watch films to all the more likely comprehend a point or take a gander at photos to assist them with envisioning a thought; all things considered, "words usually can't do a picture justice." Brick (2011) distinguished it as a critical advantage of utilizing informal communication destinations, close by ongoing input. Live meetings on committed Instagram or Facebook pages for L2 students, like Instagram stories with maxim, phrasal action word, or other lexical-related tests, or live meetings where students are welcome to record words for which they need to gain proficiency with the elocution, can likewise give moment input and constant discussion.

It is presently not questionable that innovation, for example, virtual entertainment and different systems administration destinations, ought to be a piece of the instructive cycle; in any case, how it squeezes into it, as well as how and how much teachers and students ought to utilize it, ought to be conveyed through a multidisciplinary strategic structure. L2 students feel that, among the numerous possible advantages of utilizing online entertainment, it could be utilized as a superb correspondence and instructing device. Numerous L2 understudies use this medium to foster their gifts since it gives an assortment of conceivable outcomes. Interpersonal organizations, in contrast to customary media, don't have a foreordained example for how much data should be shared or where the cutoff ought to be drawn. Therefore, youngsters might have the option to concentrate on social media as a learning destination. Comparative discoveries were seen by Sitthirak (2012), who recognized the instructive effect of virtual entertainment on etymological perspectives.

Virtual entertainment, as indicated by Mutum and Wang (2010) and Blattner and Fiori (2011), is a more straightforward and smoother strategy for correspondence. To put it another way, direct co-operations in conversation gatherings, works out, discussions, recordings, and different gadgets on phonetic informal organizations cover a wide scope of language registers while boosting the advantages of informal organizations, whether it's their part in conveying instructive results, working with strong connections, character development, or a feeling of having a place and versatility. It is sensible to expect that the rising prominence of different virtual entertainment stages, as well as the developing number of clients in different regions of the planet, affects second language procurement, regardless of whether it is essentially through the consistent progression of

photographs and message that we access consistently. All images, in the larger context of globalization, contribute to the formation of a global culture in addition to improving language abilities.

The continuous Covid-19 eruption has made different troubles as well as could be expected risks, likewise similarly as with some other emergency situation. Extended electronic amusement capability as an enlightening device - guaranteeing that all students can utilize progressed media to secure capacities and essentially see, take apart, and produce information - may overcome these hardships and limit dangers, ensuring the inestimable advantages for the two students and teachers. Question 7 and 8 rehashed the responses to the past requests on the particular impacts of virtual diversion on the update of various language acquiring limits from L2 understudies. According to the survey, 69.28% of unremitting clients of long reach casual correspondence objections for learning assessed them as a respectable or palatable instrument for additional creating language capacities, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

This connects with the completions of Li's (2017) research. Students' comfort level with online class setup, structure, level of association among students and staff, quality and measure of class content, and all-around contribution in electronic class transport, according to Li, all effect the overall learning experience and conclude the web-based strategy for tutoring's authoritative accomplishment or dissatisfaction. Electronic diversion, as shown by Haque and Al-Salem (2019), is a suitable system for students to acquire a collection of vernaculars. Students' examinations of their ability to convey in English in all areas, including scrutinizing, making, tuning in, and talking, are decidedly associated with the repeat with which they utilize English-language online amusement material. In this way, students focusing on English as a Second Language (ESL) ought to include electronic diversion as a learning gadget. As demonstrated by Slim and Hafedh (2019), paying little brain to get older or direction, online socialization appears to influence the improvement of an upheld language assortment determinedly. The estimations suggest that respondents have ideal impressions of the effects of electronic diversion use on their L2 composing in view of the last request (see Figure 11). Better making style, quality, and sum, as well as additional created English language obtainment, were among the revelations. Online affiliations through electronic amusement associations and other web based social events, as shown by Al Jahromi (2019) and Li (2017), assist L2 understudies with updating their forming precision and multifaceted nature.

These disclosures could similarly be associated with the impact of authorial and social presence, as well as electronic diversion upheld conspicuous confirmation rehearses, due to additional created language data and result on these stages versus less extraordinary homeroom conditions (Chen, 2013). Likewise, L2 understudies who perceived virtual diversion's beneficial outcome on their English learning reported extended L2 grasping limits. This is in light of the fact that the language and listening ability of the L2 students have gotten to a higher level. Thurairaj et al. (2015) and Slim and Hafedh (2016) came to undefined results as Mutum and Wang (2010). (2019). online student correspondence, of course, addresses a huge subject that the mind boggling bigger

piece of makers address: the nonacademic goals of student virtual diversion use. Talking, language, and enunciation limits were surveyed as the most un-enhanced the grounds that the vast majority of the students used formed based online diversion associations like WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram. Ordinary electronic scrutinizing and forming, on the other hand, according to Al Jahrami (2019), can grow L2 understudies' syntactic limit in regards to semantic accuracy.

All things considered, the survey produced a gander at the results of electronic diversion stages on English getting the hang of during the Covid-19 episode through the eyes of Saudi students. Saudi L2 understudies feel that long reach casual correspondence objections could help them with additional fostering their L2 ability, especially to the extent that what they mean for L2 making, language expansion, and correspondence limits, as demonstrated by the revelations. They in like manner ensured that they used a combination of online diversion objections, including WhatsApp, Facebook, Google, Twitter, and others, and that they thought about virtual amusement as an enlightening and concentrated gadget. It is OK to assume that online amusement can help the headway of English language limits considering these disclosures.

LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

The findings of this study suggest and indicate quick pedagogical reforms, and multiple implications can be proposed in this regard. Student-centered teaching can be achieved by implementing social media that will enhance the syntactic and lexical complexity by exchanging information and collaboration. L2 teachers, particularly must use social media to amplify their teaching strategies by interactive and creative activities like online debates and discussion forums. Another important aspect is to instill the computer and social media literacy among the students and teachers by conducting different training session, seminars and workshops for English language teaching and learning. Moreover, linguistic competence can also be achieved by using social media networks with acumen. Furthermore, benefits of e-learning can be shared with the students and teachers via awareness campaigns in order to enhance their trust and interest on computer assisted Language Learning (e-learning) and to enable them to acclimate the paradigm shift.

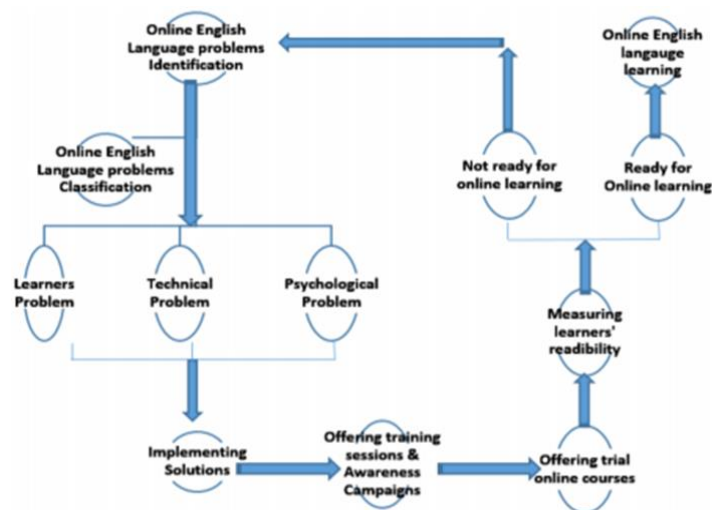


Figure 12. The systematic process for improving online English language learning dispensation

Admittedly, more research is required to study the impact of using digital media on the mental and emotional health of the students. This paper serves as a starting point and will lead us to further research into this very topic, particularly pre and post COVID-19 era. Indeed, English Language students need assistance and guidance in online learning. The above-mentioned model will serve as a guideline to facilitate and guide them as shown in Figure 12 with special reference to English language learning skills with the help of social media.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

The author clearly acclaims that there is no conflict of interest among coauthors. There exists no conflict of interest with the current organisation and no unethical practices were followed during the study.

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