The Role of Social Networks in Learning English Language

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Abstract

We are living in the age of technology and Social Networks. These two devices play the most important role in life of people and all people from different classes and ages are seriously eager to use social media tools. Using Social Network became very common and hot among the new generation, especially students. The people can feel the impacts of social media in different aspects of life. In addition, it has effect as a learning platform in the life of students. As a source, students can use Social Networks to increase their knowledge and academic abilities. Nowadays, with many facilities, it has brought enormous changes in the societies and changed the wide world into a small village. Because of that, the researchers conducted the study about the role of Social Networks in learning English language.

The aim of this study is to investigate how the social network influences English language learning. In addition, how it motivates the students to use social network in learning and in what extend Social Network Sites (SNS) is useful for the students to improve English language. Therefore, this study was conducted in the center of Sar-e-pul Province of Afghanistan and the data has been collected through questioner. Just 80 students participated in this research paper. Among all the participants, (N= 46) of the students were male and (N= 34) of the participants were female. Particularly, (N= 40) of the students were from four public high schools and (N= 40) of the students were from a public university. The researchers of this study analyzed the data by applying descriptive statistic tools. The result of this research shows that social network has a significant role and provides many opportunities in the field of learning English language.

Keywords: Social Networks, Learning English Language, Role of Social Network

Introduction

People are living in the era of technology and every day they are experiencing new technologies, information, and lifestyle and so on. Nowadays digital Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, Yahoo, Messenger, What’s App, Instagram, Telegram, Gmail, Wiper, Skype, Imo, Google plus and etc) are surrounding us and they became very common among the young generations. In addition, the number of Social Networks websites saves regularly and are creating the learning opportunities for the students all over the world.

According to Mutum and Wang (2010), online websites and Social Networks sources can improve English language ability of learning because they send messages and receive comments on different things. In addition, Gaudeul and Peroni (2010) declared that social media facilitates the users to share their ideas with others and create relationship with others. Social Networks play major role in learning English language because they provides enough opportunities for the students to develop their skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening), (Khan, M. Ayaz & M. Faheem, 2016).

According to Erzurum and Tiryakioglu (2018), mostly, social network can distinct as an online service or area where social communiqué and relationships could prove, and individuals share information. Social Networks offer the user ability to share their visions, feelings, activities, events, and fields of interest. Based on the market research which was done by the British Council in 2007, showed 69% of learners around the world
stated that they learnt most effectively when socializing informally and they got enough opportunities in their leaning, that issue has mentioned in Dhanya G’s article (2016).

Recently, social network sites are risen which improved communication, interaction, collaboration and efforts of people. Moreover, social network environments offer possibilities for personal statements, generating interest groups, ensuring cooperation, and sharing information. As Gupta mentioned in her article that social media plays a significant role in the learners’ life. It is easier to access info, prepare info, share ideas and communicate with teachers or students to improve the education by social media.

Social Networks increase communication skills, enhance participation and social commitment, reinforce peer support, and ensure realization of education based on collaboration. Moreover, social networking sites can simply and inexpensively have used without a substantial support from universities, so that they could combine into educational process of students. Thus, after graduation from the university, students will have possibilities to re-access learning process over the Web and continue their studies.

Problem Area

The study focuses on the role of social networks in learning English language among the students of Sar-e-Pul Higher Education Institute and four high schools. The researchers have tried to find how they motivate the students to improve their English language and to distinguish the positive and negative influence of Social Networks in learning English language and in what extent social network is useful for learners.

Objective of the Study

The main objectives of the study were:

- To identify the role of Social Networks in learning English language
- To highlight the ideas of students regarding the use of Social Networks in learning English language
- To know the positive and negative effect of Social Networks in learning process

Key Questions

The following key questions have examined in the study:

1- What is the role of Social Networks in learning English language?
2- How the students use Social Networks as a tool for learning English?
3- Do Social Networks motivate students in learning English language?
4- What are the advantages and disadvantages of Social Networks on learning process?

Literature Review

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, “Social “as the word sounds, says, or contains activities in which people put on time talking to each other, or performance pleasant things. “Network” is the joining parts together to contract movement or communication with other parts. “Social Networking” is thus, the save of personal and business connection especially online. It is also the application of growing the number of one’s social links by making connections through individuals. Moreover, Tantarangsee (2015) stated that Social Networks as online media supporting clients to conjoin with one another online through a few web applications letting clients to create, disseminate, share and utilize an assortment of substance counting writings, pictures, video, melodies, etc. Social Systems appears an energetic part in changing people’s life style. Social Systems contains social organizing destinations and blogs where people can effortlessly connect with each other (Siddiqui & Singh, 2019). SNS is connected platform where people can create their own profile and can collaborate with the people all over the world (Belal, 2014). As Boyd and Ellison, (2007) declared that SNS are web-based administrations that authority users to form individual profile inside a secured organize, and share individual or open data with other existing users around the world. Kumar et al, (2013), also mentioned that the nature and nomenclature of these connections might differ from site to site.
Finally, Social Networks has been mainly definite to the various relatively inexpensive and widely accessible electronic tools that allow anyone to dispense and entry information, collaborate on a common effort, or construct relationship (Asad, Mamun, & Clement, 2012). According to Ortiz-Ospina (September 18, 2019), Facebook as largest social media platform is used by 2.4 billion users in the world. At all near about 3.5 billion people are using Social Networks all over the world.

Like other countries the social media covering Afghanistan space, people are very eager to use the Social Networks especially the new generation. Based on the report, which has written in website of (https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/afghanistan), near about 13% of people is using Social Networks (70.09% Facebook, 11.93% Twitter, 5.37% Instagram and 4.21% YouTube) in Afghanistan.

In addition, everything, which we using in our daily life, has its own positive and negative effects. According to Raut and Patil (2016), Social Networks changed the world into a smaller place, now we have more information, more knowledge, and have better opportunities to use them.

Lad, (2017) asserted in his research that if you are using SNS then you could consider on positive roles, which can help you to be success in your works:

The following positive impact of Social Networks on education:

1. New Skills: Social Networks explains students’ talents they will necessity to continue in the business world. Being capable to make and maintain connections to many people in many industries is an integral part of developing a career or building a business.

2. Quality Education: It has also improved the rate and quality of collaboration for students. They are better competent to connect with each other, segment information quickly, which can increase efficiency and aid them study and how to work well in groups.

3. Enhance Creativeness: The simplicity and speed with which users can upload pictures, videos or stories has resulted in a greater amount of sharing of creative works. Being capable to catch instant feedback from friends and family on their creative outlets assistances students improve and advance their artistic abilities and can afford much needed confidence or aid them.

4. Social Networks provides the ways, students efficiently help each other regarding to class projects, group projects or homework assignments.

5. Many of the students who do not take an interest consistently in class might feel that they can express their thoughts easily on Social Networks.

6. Teachers may post on Social Networks about class activities, school events and homework assignments that will be very useful.

7. It has seen that Social Networks marketing has been increasing in career option. Social Networks marketing makes young workers to convert successful marketers. (Siddiqui & Singh, 2019).

According to Raut and Patil (2016), the prime negative effect of Social Networks is addiction constantly checking Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn other Social Networks apps. This addiction could negatively affect other valued activities like concentrating studies, taking active part in sports, real life communication and ignoring ground realities.

There are some negative effects of Social Networks:

1. The ubiquity of Social Frameworks, and the speed at which information has dispersed, has made a careless approach towards fitting spelling and etymological utilize. These diminish students’ capacity to effectively sort in without depending on a computer’s spell check highlight.

2. Numerous understudies depend on the availability of data on Social Systems and the net to supply answers. Which means a decreased center on learning and holding data?

3. Our capacity to hold data has diminished, and the eagerness to spend more time investigating and looking up great data has decreased, due the reality that we were utilized to the ease of openness to data on Social Systems.

4. The more time understudies spend on social locales; the less time they spend socializing in individual. Since of the need of body signals and other nonverbal prompts, like tone and emphasis social organizing
destinations are not a satisfactory substitution for face-to-face communication. Understudies who spend an incredible bargain of time on social organizing are less able to communicate in individual.

5. Understudies are having a harder time getting to communicate confront to confront with individuals, and are losing their individuals skills, due to that they are investing increasingly time talking from behind a screen.

6. Decreases Learning: Nowadays, students depend on the openness of data on Social Systems particularly and the internet in general to supply answers, this may decrease center on learning and holding data.

Research Methodology

The study conducted in order to analyze social networks role in learning English language in the center of Sar-e-pul province of Afghanistan. 40 students of department of English in Sar-e-pul Higher Education Institute and 40 students from the 4 high schools participated in this study. The data has been collected via distributing of self-made questionnaire as a research instrument. Then the collected data analyzed statistically in order to find out the reliable result of the study.

Data Collection Procedure

For collecting primary data, researchers designed and used the questionnaire method and then met students from the four public high schools and one institute. The questionnaire distributed to the students of tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades in the high schools and students of first, second, third and fourth classes of Department of English Language and Literature in Sar-e-Pul Higher Education Institute. The aim of managing the questionnaire is to investigate the role of social networks in learning English language among English language learners. After distribution of the questionnaire, all of them were collected.

Data Analysis

In this part, the researchers have tried to analyze and interpret the collected primary data, from 80 participants in high schools and an institute. The researchers have analyzed the data statistically by the usage of tables and graphs in order to show the percentage of the participant’s responses. It is mentionable that out of 80 participants, 46 of them were male and 34 of them were female.

Table: 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Social Networks offer you enough opportunities to promote yourself and your activities in learning English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Social Networks offer you enough opportunities to promote yourself and your activities in learning English.

![Bar chart showing the distribution of responses to the statement.](image-url)
The above table shows that 36 (45%) of students “Agreed” 31(39%) of the respondents “strongly agreed”, 3 (4%) of them “disagreed”, 1 (1%) of respondents “strongly disagreed”, and the 9 (11%) of participants were “neutral” with the statement. Totally, it shows that 75% of respondents agreed with the statement, but 5% of them disagreed.

Table: 2

<table>
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<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Social Networks are the useful learning tools.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the responses from 80 participants about the statement, 33 (41%) of students “Agreed” 24 (30%) of them “strongly agreed”, 7 (9%) of respondents “disagreed”, 3 (4%) of them “strongly disagreed”, and 13 (16%) of participants were “neutral” with the statement. In general, majority of respondents (71%) agreed with the statement but 13% of participants disagreed.

Table: 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Networks motivate you to communicate in English language.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above graph highlighted that out of 80 respondents about the statement, 31 (39%) of students “Agreed” 17 (21%) of the participants “strongly agreed”, 10 (12%) of participants “disagreed” 3 (4%) of them “strongly disagreed”, and 19 (24%) of respondents were “neutral” with the statement. It shows that 60% of participants agreed with the statement, but 16% of participants disagreed.
Table: 4

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<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>You mostly use Social Networks for interesting and wasting time not for learning.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above numbers indicated that 13 (16%) of students “Agreed” 6 (8%) of the participants “strongly agreed”, 28 (35%) of respondents “disagreed”, 14 (17%) of them “strongly disagreed” and the 19 (24%) of respondents were “neutral” with the statement. The analyzing of the above data indicated that 52% of participants disagreed with the statement but 24% of participants agreed.

Table: 5

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<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>English speakers’ friends on Social Networks effect on your English learning practice.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above numeric revealed that 34 (42%) of students “Agreed” 34 (43%) of the them “strongly agreed”, 4 (15%) of participants “disagreed” 0 (0%) of participants “strongly disagreed”, and 8 (10%) of participants were “neutral” with the statement. In result, 85% of respondents agreed with the statements but 5% of them disagreed.

Table: 6

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<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Students use Social Network just for learning.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above responses show that 12 (15%) of students “Agreed” 6 (8%) of the participants “strongly agreed”, 34 (42%) of them “disagreed” 16 (20%) “Strongly disagreed”, and 12 (15%) of participants were “neutral” with the statement. The analyzing of the above statement illustrates that 62% of participants disagreed but 23% of participants disagreed with the statement.

Table: 7

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<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Social Networks disturb you while learning English language.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above chart or graph shows the reply of 80 participants about the statement, 17 (21%) of students “Agreed” 10 (13%) of the participants “strongly agreed”, 24 (30%) of participants “disagreed” and 10 (12%) of participants “strongly disagreed”, and the remaining 19 (15%) of participants are “neutral” with the statement. The analyzing of the above statement finds that 42% of participants disagreed with the statements which social network disturb students during their learning process but 30% of participants agreed with the statement.

Table: 8

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<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Social Networks have negative impact while learning English language.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table or graph indicates that 14 (18%) of participants “Agreed” 6 (8%) of them “strongly agreed”, 28 (35%) of participants “disagreed” 18 (22%) “Strongly disagreed”, and the 14 (17%) of participants were “neutral” with the statement.

Based on the total percentage, 57% of participants disagreed with the statement but 26% of participants agreed.

Table: 9

<table>
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<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Through SNS, you can learn English informally.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above chart or graph shows the responses of 80 participants about the statement, 35 (44%) of students “Agreed” 11 (14%) of the participants “strongly agreed”, 18 (22%) of them “disagreed” 5 (6%) of participants “strongly disagreed”, and the 11 (14%) of participants were “neutral” with the statement.

The analyzing of the above statement shows that 58% of participants agreed but 28% of participants disagreed with the statement.

Findings

After analyzing of the collected data, the researchers got the result of the investigation. Based on the findings, most of students believe that social networks play the most important role in learning field especially, English language. As the findings shows that majority of the students have used SNS in order to get information during their studying in the class. Also, they thought that SNS is a useful learning tools; as it is represented most of the students have used the SNS to communicate with other in English; the university level students are joined with their friends by using the SNS and they can formulate group discussions where they can exchange their ideas, thoughts, course related materials or information. Based on the findings, social network creates many
opportunities like learning, communication, sharing ideas, getting information. Beside the positive effects, some of respondents pointed out to the negative effects like: SNS disturbs them while learning or studying and they use, SNS generally for interesting and waste their times. The findings also highlight that a little percentage of students accept that SNS does not have good effect on four skills of learning English language, specially, on writing and grammar skills. When they chat with their friends, they do not consider on the spelling of words and grammatical structures.

Conclusion

To conclude, Social Networks as communication device play the most significant role in order to connect the people from every corner of the world. They have changed the wide geography of the current world into a small village. Social networking sites can be a great way to stay in touch with a large group of people. Nowadays, Social Networks have touched in the hearts of new generation especially students and they surrounded their life.

In this study, the researchers observed and tried to found out the impacts of Social Networks during learning process among the school’s and university students of Sar-e-Pul province. The findings show that learners are every eager to use social networks in learning English language. In addition, by the help of this technology, students can make some group chat with their classmates and friends to practice English language better than the class; they said that SNS is useful tool in learning and social networks provide many opportunities in the field of learning English language. Nevertheless, Social Networks have their own negative impact and disturb the students while learning or studying. For instance, when they are interested to study, socials networks turn to entertainment aids like playing a song, watching films, chatting with friends, downloading games, posting photos. However, if they know the correct and useful ways of SNS usage definitely they can be successful in getting the positive impact of SNS in the field of communications and learning English language.

As the outcome of this research has shown that by using Social Networks students can get learning capacity better. Moreover, Social Networks accelerate the process of learning English language in the world.

References


Gupta, Priyanka (2015), Importance of Social Media in Higher Education. Retrieved 1/27/20 from https://edtechreview.in


