Social media in the reading comprehension of students in high school

Redes sociales y la comprensión lectora en los estudiantes de colegios.

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Abstract

The use of social media has been increasing rapidly over the past few years. There has been a significant increase in the use of social networks by students and in educational society. The use of social networks has had a positive impact on society. With the help of the Internet, all social sites and various applications are available that can be easily accessed. They also allow users to chat and interact with each other and create, edit, and share new forms of textual, visual, and audio content. It has a vital influence on our lives as it helps a lot in all fields of life. As time goes by, and with the misuse of social networks, people have begun to have a negative impact when reading because the language has been altered thanks to the poor use of grammatical rules. Today, we are absorbed with unhealthy addictions in recent events through applications such as WhatsApp, Facebook and TikTok. A sample of Sixty-nine first-year high school students (between 15-17 years old), 6 English teachers. Different research methods were used, such as surveys and interviews, as well as mathematical-statistical procedures for collecting, organising and presenting data using tables. The data were collected and processed with the help of a quantitative questionnaire and the Academic Motivation Scale.

Keywords: Social networks, secondary students, reading comprehension, social networks.

Resumen

El uso de las redes sociales ha estado en aumento rápidamente durante los últimos años. Hay un gran aumento en el uso de las redes sociales por parte de los estudiantes o, podríamos decir, en la sociedad educativa. El uso de las redes sociales ha tenido un impacto positivo en la sociedad. Con la ayuda de

Internet, todos los sitios sociales y diversas aplicaciones están disponibles a las que se puede acceder fácilmente y también permiten a los usuarios conversar e interactuar entre sí, crear, editar y compartir nuevas formas de contenido textual, visual y de audio. Tiene una influencia vital en nuestra vida, ya que ayuda mucho en todos los campos de la vida. A medida que el tiempo pasa, y al mal uso de las redes sociales las personas han comenzado a tener un impacto negativo al momento de leer, porque el lenguaje ha sido alterado gracias al escaso uso de las reglas gramaticales, la sociedad actual estamos absortos y con adicciones poco saludables, en los últimos acontecimientos a través de aplicaciones como Watsapp, Facebook y Tiktok. Una muestra de Sesenta y nueve estudiantes de primero de bachillerato (entre 15-17 años), 6 profesores de inglés. Se utilizaron diferentes métodos de investigación, tales como la encuesta y la entrevista, así como los procedimientos matemáticos-estadísticos para la recopilación, organización y presentación de datos mediante tablas. Los datos se recolectaron y procesaron con la ayuda de un cuestionario cuantitativo y la Escala de Motivación Académica.

Keywords: Redes sociales, estudiantes secundarios, comprensión lectora, whatsapp, Facebook, tiktok,

Introduction

Social media platforms have rapidly transformed the way we communicate, share information, and engage with the world around us. As universal as these platforms have become, concerns have emerged regarding their potential effects on our ability to comprehend and engage with written content. This research aims to explore the multifaceted relationship between social media usage and reading comprehension. By examining various perspectives, theories, and empirical evidence, we can gain a deeper understanding of the effects of social media on this crucial cognitive process.

Erdogan (2017) explains that social media is one of the results of the development of software and hardware as a result of the innovative nature of computers. Social media platforms have revolutionised how we access and consume information. Traditional reading habits have been reshaped as short-form content, such as tweets and headlines, dominate our online experiences. Consequently, concerns have arisen about the potential impacts on our reading comprehension abilities. However, social media platforms also offer opportunities for instant access to a vast range of quality information, which can enhance our comprehension skills.

One argument suggests that social media usage contributes to a decrease in attention span, making it more challenging for individuals to engage in sustained reading. The constant arrival of notifications, rapid scrolling, and the addictive nature of these platforms have been blamed for a decline in profound reading experiences. Additionally, the cognitive overload resulting from the simultaneous exposure to diverse information sources on social media might inhibit our ability to understand and retain textual content effectively.

In recent years, technology has played an essential role in our lives; at its beginning, it was considered a luxury tool, but today, it is an imperative need. With this technology appeared social media, according to Mao (2014), which defined social media as a new technology and applications that use the internet; this kind of technology permits users Sumen (2021) to create and participate in various groups or interests.

Indeed, Erdogan (2017) explains in his article that social media is used as comprehensive information of several network tools and technologies that emphasise the social characteristics of the internet; on the other hand, Thomas, Aicher (2015) social media are web-based applications and interactive platforms that facilitate the creation, discussion, modification and exchange of user-generated content.

The use of social media in high schools needs to be revised. On the one hand, using social media in class is considered a distraction. On the other hand, it can be used as an excellent tool to improve skills in a foreign language; Erdogan (2017) listed different uses, such as enabling interaction between teachers and students, creating materials, and allowing the students to share materials with their teachers.

As Tess (2013), cited by Mao (2014), the integration of social media in the classroom is an effective educational tool; the students can be in touch with the current trends and topics that they can find on the web. On the contrary, Sumen (2021) indicated that social media had created an addiction to the internet, especially for younger users.

Negative consequences of the use of social media:

- Negative effect on interpersonal relationships
- Increases levels of depression
- Paranoid thoughts
- Phobic anxiety
- Feelings of anger and hostility.

Thanks to the internet, social media has come into our lives, but like teachers, we have to know how to use it to our advantage. As a result, we use it to teach English, and the best way to utilise social media is with realia. Feruza (2021) defined realia as "words that denote special features of culture, everyday life, folklore and historical epochs of cultures, within they exist. In other words, realia is the use of vocabulary and situations in daily life.

Amumpuni & Rahmasari (2019) emphasise that realia are objects from real life that most of the time found in our environment and we could use in the classroom for different skills; thanks to realia, we can connect the students to the main topic of a lesson and create an enhancing reading skill. Patai (2017)

declared that the use of natural objects in the teaching-learning process is highly recommended because it helps students better understand the material. In other words, the use of realia creates a familiar environment where the students can get knowledge with things that they can see, hear, or touch directly. It makes the students more interested and makes it easier to understand the lesson.

The use of realia helps the students have a better mood. They feel clear because they use a familiar vocabulary. García-García, Moctezuma-Ramirez, Molla-Esparza, & López-Francés (2021) stated in "The Classroom Climate: The Mood, attitudes and Rules that People Share in the Classroom" like a teacher, the main objective is to make an interactive and inclusive environment through social media, where students were not afraid about grades but about their learning process.

Reading comprehension is an essential part of communication, but sometimes, we need to help to understand word comprehension completely. Pourhosein Gilakjani (2016) explains that it is the process of producing and making meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. In other words, reading comprehension is the process of creating meaning in the text; the purpose is to get an understanding of the text rather than to acquire meaning from individual words or sentences.

Materials and methods

Participants

This study was conducted through survey design. Creswell (2012) points out that survey designs are procedures in quantitative research in which you administer a survey or questionnaire to a small group of people to identify trends in attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics of a large group of people. Sixty-nine students participated in this study. They were randomly chosen from first-year students of Baccalaureate of Paulo Emilio Macias Sabando High School who are coursing the academic year 2023 – 2024.

Instruments

The data collection instrument, consisting of 3 stages, was used in the study to determine the social media using habits of the students. The first is the "Key Reading test – Cambridge English", where the reading comprehension of the participants was included in this section. The second section involves determining the frequency of the usage of 8 different social media tools. The "Frequency of Social Media Instruments Usage" (FSMIU) scale, consisting of 8 items, was developed to determine the students' social media usage levels. The "Purposes of Social Media Usage" (PSMU) scale, consisting of 20 items, was developed as the third scale of the study to determine the purposes of why students use social media.

The FSMIU scale was graded as 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Slightly, 4=Sometimes and 5=Frequently and an item pool of 8 items was created. The PSMU scale was graded as a 5-point Likert scale as "1=Totally Inappropriate, 2=Inappropriate, 3=Neither, 4=Appropriate and 5=Totally Appropriate", and an item pool of 22 items was created. Experts were consulted for their opinions after the scale items were ready. No changes were made after expert views, and the scale form was conducted on five high school students face-to-face; as a result, whether or not the items were clear was determined and set as a test implementation.

The third section was an interview with the English teachers, who expressed the importance of using reading to learn a foreign language and how it helps students learn fast. —er and effective way.

Data Analysis

A descriptive analysis was conducted to determine how frequently students use Social Media Instruments and the reasons why they use social media. A t-test analysis was performed to determine whether social media types and the purposes why students use them differ according to gender. A correlation analysis was conducted to determine whether there is a relationship between social media types and the degree of using them.

Findings

Reading comprehension level

The students were evaluated on their reading comprehension level according to CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Language) (Pre-A1 = Starter, A1 = Elementary, A2 = Pre-intermediate, B1 = Intermediate, B2= Upper Intermediate), as noted above. The results of the analysis concerning reading comprehension level are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Reading Comprehension Level

Level	%
Pre-A1	57
A1	35
A2	7

According to the results of the analysis, students have a reading comprehension level. The most common level is Pre-A1.

Frequency of Social Media Instrument Usage CI

The students stated their level of using the eight types of social media instruments through a 5-point scale (1=Never, 5=I Use it Frequently), as noted above. Analysis results concerning the Social Media usage level are given in Table 2**.**

Table 2: Frequency of Social Media Usage.

Social Media	N	R	S	SO	F
Facebook	6	22	26	21	25
Instagram	16	25	19	25	15
Tiktok	4	10	13	21	52
YouTube	3	16	16	38	27
Twitch	56	24	12	3	5
Pinterest	50	16	13	8	13
Twitter	59	24	10	6	1
Blogs	82	7	6	5	0

According to the results of the analysis, students have a media usage level. The most common and frequently used instrument is TikTok 52%, followed by YouTube 27%, and Facebook 25%, which is used sometimes. Other social media are used rarely. The most seldom-used instruments are Twitter and Blogs.

Purpose of Social Media Usage

Descriptive and gender-based analysis results of the data concerning the 20-item scale, which was conducted to determine the purposes why students use social media, are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Purposes of Social Media Usage

Purpose	Percentage
Educational	57
Entertainment	69
Social interaction	25

The highest mean for the students' social media usage purposes was entertainment, 69%. This is followed by education, 57%. Students have a low level of social media usage concerning social interaction, 25%.

Reading habits in the classroom

According to the teachers' interview, they did an excellent job trying to introduce reading habits in the classroom. Still, they found two big problems: the student's English level and the lack of reading habits in Spanish. Those problems together make the teacher's job difficult. Within the interview applied to the teachers, they were asked if 1. they consider reading important in the classroom, with almost one hundred per cent positive responses; Another question was 2. the ways to promote the habit of reading in students, each teacher has different ways to promote reading, such as homework, comics, etc.; 3. the hours dedicated to reading in the classroom are used between 1 or 2 hours per week; 4. If, as teachers, they promote a specific type of literary genre to promote reading, the kind of genre is left to their free choice so that they can read for pleasure; 5. Yes, graded readings are used according to the student's

level, of course, because there will be better understanding for the student; 6 why students need to have a taste for reading, because this way the language is enriched and students can express themselves better.

Discussion

This study determined high school students' social media usage levels and purposes. With this respect, the social media usage scale and its purposes were developed. To create the scales, the Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted on the data collected from 69 high school students. It was observed that both scales had a three-factor structure.

With respect to the internal consistencies of the scales, the reliability analysis results were observed to be at a sufficient level. There are various definitions in the literature about the types of social media Looy, (2016); Schau and Gilly, (2003). The factor analysis results on social media types in this study were not included in any category within the literature. It was observed that in the factor analyses, there is a factorisation on the students' degrees of social media usage.

For example, TikTok and Facebook, along with a social media type. Thus, instead of using the Frequency of Social Media Usage scale directly on various cultures, it would be beneficial to conduct another factor analysis on it and to consider this while preparing the measurement instruments.

It was observed in the study that TikTok was the most frequently used social media by students, second by Facebook and third by Twitch. TikTok is a social setting where multimedia content can be uploaded and watched. Facebook is a category that can be referred to as content societies Safko and Brake, (2009). As it enables a video-sharing setting and body language in the communication process, TikTok offers more communication than content providers such as text, sound and photographs Looy, (2016). Facebook enables you to send private messages. They are the most commonly used social networks. It was observed that the most common social media utilised by students was settings that provide a social network. This finding of the study is similar to the studies conducted by Lenhart et al. (2010), Moran, Seaman and Tinti Kane (2011) and Şener (2009).

In a study performed by Michaelidou, Siamagka, and Christodoulides (2011), it was stated that Facebook is the most popular social media platform, followed by Twitter and then LinkedIn. A difference in social media usage was observed with respect to gender. The difference is in Tiktol, Facebook, YouTube and Discussion Form, which are mainly used. No differences were observed in other social media types. The difference is in favour of males. Results of most of the studies in the literature on the gender effect in social media usage Eyrich, Padman and Sweetser, (2008) are parallel with the results of this study. In addition, Lenhart et al. (2010) state that females use Twitter more than males. Şener (2009) did not observe any difference in using Facebook with respect to gender.
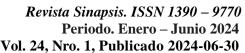
Results of the analysis conducted to determine the reason why students use social media indicate that they use it firstly for educational purposes and secondly for entertainment. Using social media for social interaction was at a low level but could have been at a higher level. This is thought to be a state resulting from culture. Kennedy (2009) underlines that social media usage differs according to culture. While Japanese teenagers don't prefer Facebook because it isn't found secure, it was observed that it is used in Mexico to keep in touch with friends and make new friendships. Research in the literature by Goodwin, Kennedy and Vetere (2010), Grosseck, Bran and Tiru (2011), and Selwyn (2009) underline that social media such as Facebook and YouTube are effectively used in learning teaching processes and that they support peer interaction along with informal learning. No differences were observed in students using social media for educational and entertainment purposes. However, there is a difference in favour of males who use it for social interaction. Male students carry out activities such as making friends, presenting themselves to others, knowing new people, becoming members of groups, and reading comments more than female students. While there is a difference in the mostly and sometimes used social media by students, there is no difference in rarely or never used social media. The findings of this study, which was conducted concerning student purposes of utilising social media, are similar to the studies carried out in the field of Li, Bernoff, Pflaum, and Glass (2007).

Conclusions

While students mostly use social media for educational purposes, YouTube was observed to have the highest mean. The correlation between these two variables is the highest. YouTube has the highest correlation in use for educational purposes, and Twitter has the highest correlation in use for social interaction. With this respect, students use social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and discussion forms for their learning processes, along with social interaction and entertainment. With this respect, the results of this study support the results of the survey carried out by Kamiloğlu and Yurttaş (2014) on high school students. With regard to the social dimension of social media, self-presentation/self-expression is a type of social interaction referring to people's desire to control other people's impressions of themselves.

This is the desire to affect others to gain their appreciation. This is the work of a person to create a modest image of themselves Schau and Gilly, (2003). Individuals open themselves while presenting themselves to others. They do this through their feelings, emotions and desires. With this respect, social media can be considered to serve students in socialising and acquiring information. YouTube, which is regarded as a content society, and Facebook, which is viewed as a social network website Looy, (2016), have the potential to contribute to learning and teaching processes. For example, in their studies, Barbour and Plough (2009), de Villiers (2010) and Hew and Cheung (2013) emphasised that students mostly used Facebook in their learning processes and that using Facebook in the learning-teaching process increases satisfaction in the learning process and is linked to achievement. Moran et al. (2011)

carried out a study on university students. They stated that the use of social media for educational purposes was shallow, but online videos were used for educational purposes.

Study results indicate that high school students use social media frequently for educational and entertainment purposes and less frequently for social interaction. It can be advantageous if teachers consider student tendencies and use social media effectively in the learning-teaching process. This way, they can guide them in utilising social media effectively and also in creating effective strategies against adverse effects. This study contains a limited variable, such as high school students' social media usage levels and purposes. Conducting studies on different educational levels by taking various variables such as student expectations and barriers into account will contribute both to the field and also to the effective use of learning-teaching processes.

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