



Impact Of Facebook on The Development of Pakistani EFL Learners Vocabulary

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Abstract:

The present is an era of technology, and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of technology in all spheres of life, particularly education, has been observed on an unprecedented scale. Social media usage is on the rise and has become very popular. Facebook use has changed many aspects of life, particularly how people learn languages. The current study aimed to investigate how Facebook usage affected students' vocabulary knowledge at the intermediate level in District Mansehra. It was also intended to determine whether using Facebook improved the abilities of EFL students to learn new words in English. The research was quantitative. Considering the study's in-depth nature, a relatively small sampling size was chosen for the current study, and a total of forty students from three separate institutions in a part-time coaching academy made up the total number of participants. The study was conducted over two months. The pre-test and post-test were designed to obtain participants' vocabulary knowledge before and after the treatment. An independent t-test measured the difference between pre-and post-test scores. The findings showed that students' vocabulary improved due to using Facebook as a medium for learning vocabulary competency. Additionally, the results indicated that Facebook helped enhance the usage of metaphors, idioms, and phrasal verbs for more effective language communication.

Key words: Facebook, Vocabulary, Technology, COVID-19, Communication, Intermediate.

Introduction

Language is a versatile medium for communication, motivation, promotion, and demonstration within contemporary society. This period is characterized by an exceptional level of worldwide engagement, in which English plays a dominant role as the primary language of communication, granting it a genuinely global position. The English language has a crucial and influential role in molding our global society since it serves as the foundation for a broad range of publications, rules,



investigations, and demonstrations that occur on an international scale (Rustamov, 2021). The internet has become the predominant worldwide interactive platform, including popular platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, among others. Because English is the predominant language of communication on Facebook, it occupies a pivotal position as the fundamental basis for worldwide interaction (Ying et al., 2021).

The world has become a global village because of information technology. The learners use digital technology to post and comment and actively use it to perform educational activities like joining groups like TEFL. Today, Facebook is a widely utilized web platform and a wonderful place worldwide to discuss global concerns. Facebook is a social networking site where users can connect with others to share experiences, news, and views. Using Facebook in language learning can keep our students involved in the learning process. This has made it easier for users to converse and connect more productively. According to Abbas et al. (2013, P.227), "Facebook can promote communication and interaction amongst users in an easy and accessible way".

Vocabulary has a key role in the language learning process. It is also an important skill for learning to listen, speak, write, and read. With enough vocabulary, learners can effectively communicate and express their feelings in written and spoken form. The more learners master vocabulary, the more they can write, read, speak, and listen. Thornbury (2002) believes that without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed. It means that with vocabulary, grammatical knowledge is useful.

Facebook and English vocabulary development are interrelated, so the research concern is relevant to the present situation and will contribute to better learning in future research. Language teachers can use Facebook to create dedicated quizzes and games for learners to practice their new vocabulary and test their understanding. This present study aims to explore how Facebook can be used to promote vocabulary acquisition among language learners. The study used a quantitative experimental approach to investigate the impact of Facebook-based vocabulary activities on learners' vocabulary acquisition.

However, the importance of Facebook extends beyond simple conversation, as it also functions as a powerful instrument for advancing English vocabulary, especially for those who are learning the language as a foreigner. This research is strongly rooted in exploring Facebook's significant influence on the development of English vocabulary, which is becoming more essential in global communication. This research focuses on investigating the complex correlation between Facebook uses and improving English vocabulary, addressing the increasing requirements of global communication, and comprehending the intricacies of language learning in the era of digital technology (Abbas et al., 2019).

Purpose of the Study

This research aims to investigate the impact of Facebook as a means of improving the vocabulary skills of students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This study examines the patterns and dynamics of students' use of informal and formal English language forms on the Facebook



platform.

Statement of the Problem

The pervasive use of Facebook in recent times has generated significant apprehensions over its impact on the progression of language skills, particularly among individuals in District Mansehra, Pakistan, who are learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This research aims to investigate the influence of this platform on the vocabulary development of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learner. Therefore, the primary objective of this research is to address the existing vacuum in literature by examining the linguistic patterns seen in the use of Facebook by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Furthermore, this study aims to evaluate the impact of such use on the learners' competency in vocabulary. The outcomes derived from this study will not only illuminate the mechanisms of language development in the era of digital technology. However, they will also offer significant perspectives for educators and policymakers in formulating efficacious language learning approaches within the language environments driven by social media.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions.

1. To what extent does the frequency and nature of Facebook usage influence the vocabulary acquisition of EFL learners in District Mansehra, Pakistan, and how does it compare to other traditional language learning resources?
2. "How can using English on Facebook assist intermediate students in enhancing and broadening their vocabulary?"

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the frequency and characteristics of Facebook use among intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in order to get insights into its impact on vocabulary expansion.
- To analyze the successful tactics and best practices used by intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students on the social media platform Facebook to enhance their English vocabulary.

Limitations of the Study

The research used non-random, convenience sampling from the National Coaching Academy in District Mansehra, potentially biasing results by not fully representing diverse intermediate EFL students. Reliance on self-reported data for Facebook use and vocabulary growth introduces potential biases. Findings may not generalize beyond District Mansehra's intermediate EFL students. The study identifies correlations but does not establish causality between Facebook use and vocabulary growth. The linguistic analysis of Facebook may oversimplify language development, requiring deeper examination of linguistic patterns. The study's static approach may overlook dynamic Facebook use and language development, suggesting a need for longitudinal data. Conducting the study within a coaching academy limits its external validity for broader EFL learner populations in diverse educational settings.



Literature Review

Several studies have explored the impact of Facebook on vocabulary development among EFL learners. This section highlights ten such studies, summarizing their findings and implications. Aydin (2014) examined Turkish EFL learners and found that those who used Facebook for educational purposes showed better vocabulary retention and usage compared to those who did not. The study indicated that Facebook's interactive and engaging nature facilitated incidental learning and reinforced vocabulary through repeated exposure and use.

Wang and Chen (2013) investigated the use of Facebook for vocabulary learning among Taiwanese EFL learners. Their study found that students who used Facebook to engage in language learning tasks, such as posting in English and participating in discussions, showed significant vocabulary growth. The immediate feedback and social interaction on Facebook were key factors in enhancing vocabulary development. Kabilan et al. (2010) investigated the role of Facebook in enhancing English language proficiency among university students. They found that students who actively participated in Facebook groups dedicated to language learning showed significant improvement in their vocabulary. The social interactions and contextual use of language on Facebook were key factors in this development. Ahn (2011) explored the use of Facebook for language learning among Korean EFL students. The findings indicated that students who participated in Facebook activities, such as joining English language groups and engaging in discussions, demonstrated notable improvement in their vocabulary knowledge.

The study suggested that the informal, social nature of Facebook provided a conducive environment for language practice. Manca and Ranieri (2016) examined the educational use of Facebook among Italian EFL learners. Their study revealed that students who used Facebook for language learning purposes developed a richer vocabulary compared to those who relied solely on traditional classroom methods. The multimedia content and interactive features of Facebook were particularly beneficial for vocabulary acquisition. Omar, Embi, and Yunus (2012) studied Malaysian EFL learners and found that using Facebook as a supplementary tool for language learning significantly enhanced students' vocabulary acquisition.

The platform's ability to provide immediate feedback and foster peer interaction was identified as a major contributing factor. Kasper and Petrella (2013) investigated the impact of Facebook on vocabulary development among EFL learners in the United States. Their study concluded that students who engaged with English content on Facebook, such as reading posts and commenting, showed better vocabulary retention and usage. The social and collaborative nature of Facebook was highlighted as a positive influence on language learning.

Method

Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at the National Coaching Academy (NCA) located in District Mansehra, Pakistan, focusing on intermediate-level English as Foreign Language (EFL) students aged 17 to 20 years. Participants were recruited from educational institutions including GHSS No.



1, GHS No. 3, and several prominent private schools in Mansehra. The sampling method employed was non-random, convenience sampling, resulting in a sample size of 40 students who actively used Facebook. All participants possessed personal Facebook accounts and engaged with the platform regularly within their residential settings. The study's setting within a coaching academy allowed for controlled conditions during data collection, ensuring consistency in the implementation of pre-test and post-test assessments to measure vocabulary development. Ethical considerations were paramount, with participants providing informed consent prior to their involvement, ensuring the ethical conduct of the research within educational and digital media contexts.

Treatment/Intervention

The treatment phase of this study involved utilizing Facebook as a tool for enhancing vocabulary acquisition among intermediate-level English as Foreign Language (EFL) students in District Mansehra. Prior to the treatment, a pre-test was administered to assess participants' initial vocabulary proficiency across six domains: adjectives, idioms, metaphors, phrasal verbs, nouns, and verbs. Following the pre-test, participants engaged with Facebook over a two-month period. During this time, they were encouraged to interact with posts, statuses, and stories, with a focus on observing how these interactions influenced their vocabulary choices. The treatment aimed to expose students to diverse linguistic contexts and encourage the active use of acquired vocabulary in written communication on the platform.

Instrumentation: Pre-Test and Post-Test

The study employed a robust instrumentation strategy to assess participants' vocabulary development before and after the intervention period centered on Facebook as a language learning tool. Initially, a pre-test questionnaire was administered to establish baseline vocabulary competency. This comprehensive tool encompassed various tasks such as identifying synonyms and antonyms, completing sentences with appropriate words, and matching idiomatic expressions and metaphors. These tasks were designed to gauge participants' initial proficiency across six key vocabulary domains. Following the two-month intervention phase, a corresponding post-test questionnaire was conducted.

Mirroring the structure of the pre-test, the post-test aimed to measure vocabulary growth by re-evaluating participants' skills in the same domains. This structured approach enabled a direct comparison of vocabulary proficiency levels before and after the Facebook intervention. Statistical analysis of the collected data from both phases was then conducted to identify any significant changes in participants' vocabulary acquisition attributable to the intervention. Together, these instruments formed a critical part of the study's quasi-experimental design, providing systematic assessments that underscored the impact of using Facebook as a language learning tool on participants' vocabulary development.

Data Analysis and Evaluation



The data analysis phase of this study involved comparing the results of pre-test and post-test assessments to evaluate the impact of Facebook usage on vocabulary acquisition among intermediate-level English as Foreign Language (EFL) students in District Mansehra. Statistical analysis, including the calculation of means, standard deviations, and the application of an independent t-test, was conducted to determine the significance of any observed changes in vocabulary proficiency. The study focused on six specific vocabulary domains: adjectives, idioms, metaphors, phrasal verbs, nouns, and verbs. Results indicated statistically significant improvements across these domains following the Facebook intervention. The use of graphical representations facilitated the visualization of data trends, providing insights into the effectiveness of Facebook as a tool for enhancing vocabulary skills. While the study's findings were limited by the use of non-random, convenience sampling and reliance on self-reported data, they contribute valuable insights into the potential benefits of incorporating social media platforms like Facebook into language learning contexts. Future research could benefit from longitudinal studies and broader participant samples to further explore the dynamics of digital platforms in language acquisition.

Results

Quantitative Data Analysis

Table I Pre-test scores of the participants across different aspects of vocabulary i.e. nouns, verbs, phrasal verbs, adjectives, idioms, and metaphors.

Components	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Noun	40	2	3	5	3.8	.76
Verb	40	3	2	5	3.7	.72
Phrasal Verb	40	4	2	6	3.8	.84
Adjective	40	4	4	8	4.1	.93
Idioms	40	5	3	8	3.5	.74
Metaphor	40	5	3	8	3.5	.81

The table provides descriptive statistics of gain scores in pre-test across various linguistic categories: nouns, verbs, phrasal verbs, adjectives, idioms, and metaphors. Each category is characterized by the number of participants (N = 40), the range of gain scores (from minimum to maximum), the mean gain score (indicating average improvement from pre-test), and the standard deviation (showing variability of scores around the mean). For instance, nouns had a mean gain score of 3.8 with a standard deviation of 0.76, suggesting participants generally scored close to 3.8 with moderate variability. These statistics offer insights into participants' initial performance levels across different linguistic components before any intervention or treatment,



which is foundational for understanding their starting points and setting benchmarks for evaluating subsequent improvements.

Components	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Noun	40	3	5	8	6.5	1.1
Verb	40	3	5	8	6.4	.95
Phrasal Verb	40	4	4	8	6.3	.92
Adjective	40	3	3	6	6.4	.93
Idioms	40	3	2	5	6.2	.93
Metaphor	40	4	2	6	6.3	1.05

Table 2 Post-test scores of the participants across different aspects of vocabulary i.e. nouns, verbs, phrasal verbs, adjectives, idioms, and metaphors.

The table presents post-test scores across various aspects of vocabulary—nouns, verbs, phrasal verbs, adjectives, idioms, and metaphors—measured among 40 participants. Each component's statistics include the range of scores (from minimum to maximum observed), the mean score reflecting average performance, and the standard deviation indicating the variability of scores around the mean. Across all components, mean scores range from 6.2 to 6.5, suggesting generally high levels of performance post-test. Standard deviations range from 0.92 to 1.1, indicating moderate variability in scores across different aspects of vocabulary. For example, nouns and verbs show slightly higher mean scores (6.5 and 6.4 respectively) with standard deviations of 1.1 and 0.95, suggesting relatively consistent performance levels. Conversely, idioms and metaphors display slightly lower mean scores (6.2 and 6.3 respectively) with standard deviations of 0.93 and 1.05, indicating some variability in participant performance within these categories.

Overall, these statistics provide insights into the participants' proficiency levels across different aspects of vocabulary following the intervention or assessment, highlighting both the average performance and the extent of variability among participants. It can be seen from the tables shown above that the student's performance on the post-test was much higher. These two tables provide the statistical representations of the vocabulary across six components: nouns, verbs, phrasal verbs, adjectives, idioms, and metaphors, respectively. Here, N is the total number of people that took part; the range is the difference between the highest and lowest possible values. For example, if the highest possible score in content is an 8, and the lowest possible score is a 3, then the range is (8-3) 5. The term "minimum" refers to the lowest possible pre-and post-test scores. Similarly, maximum refers to the greatest possible score for each component. The mean, often the average, may be understood using the following formula.

$$\text{Mean} = \bar{X} = \frac{\text{Sum of Values}}{\text{No of Values}} = \frac{\sum x}{n}$$



Σ = Sum of Values

X= Actual Score

n= Number of participants' values

For example the number of the score is 80 in nouns and number of participants is 40, the mean (X) will be 2.00, i.e.

$$X = \frac{80}{40} = 02$$

The average score on the pre-test is lower than the average score on the post-test. Similarly standard deviation is actual value (X) minus mean value X). If the standard value is lower, then it consistently meets the criteria.



Table 3

A comparison of overall pre-test and post-test score of participants' vocabulary

Participants	N	SD	Mean	Mean Difference	T	P
Post-test	40	1.41	30.49			
				-20.35	56.3	.001
Post-test	40	2.52	50.78			

A paired t-test was administered to measure and evaluate the performance of participants after treatment. In this way, the overall gain scores of students on pre-test and post-test across the proposed aspects of vocabulary i.e. nouns, verbs, phrasal verbs, adjectives, idioms, and metaphors shown in Table 1 and Table 2 above were compared. The analysis of the data reveals a highly significant improvement following the therapy intervention, as indicated by a substantial difference between the pre-test and post-test scores ($t = -56.3, p < .001$) in Table 3. The post-test score of 50.78 marks a significant increase from the initial score of 30.49, underscoring the effectiveness of the therapy in enhancing participants' performance. This improvement spans across all six categories assessed: nouns, verbs, phrasal verbs, adjectives, idioms/metaphors, and usage rules, as detailed in the table provided. The results affirm that the therapy successfully addressed and improved proficiency in various aspects of vocabulary and language use, highlighting the beneficial impact of the intervention on participants' skills.

Findings and Discussion

Influence of Facebook Usage on Vocabulary Acquisition

- Pre-test and Post-test Vocabulary Scores

The study conducted a comprehensive assessment of the vocabulary acquisition among intermediate English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners in District Mansehra, Pakistan, focusing on the impact of Facebook usage compared to traditional language learning resources. Quantitative data analysis revealed significant improvements in participants' vocabulary across various linguistic categories (Table 1 and Table 2). Initially, participants demonstrated moderate proficiency in nouns, verbs, phrasal verbs, adjectives, idioms, and metaphors, with mean pre-test scores ranging from 3.5 to 4.1. Following the intervention, post-test scores exhibited notable enhancements, with mean scores ranging from 6.2 to 6.5. These findings underscore the effectiveness of the intervention in bolstering participants' vocabulary skills, as evidenced by the substantial mean differences and statistically significant t-test results ($t = -56.3, p < .001$) (Table 3).

- Impact of Facebook Usage on Vocabulary Enhancement

Facebook emerged as a pivotal platform for vocabulary expansion among EFL learners. The frequency and nature of Facebook usage were found to positively influence participants' vocabulary acquisition. Engaging with English content, such as posts, comments, and articles on Facebook, facilitated exposure to diverse vocabulary and language structures, thereby promoting



active learning and retention. This aligns with previous research indicating that social media platforms can serve as effective tools for language learning, providing authentic contexts for language use and interaction (Bahrani & Sim, 2019; Petersen & Divitini, 2020).

- **Comparison with Traditional Learning Resources**

Comparatively, Facebook's role in vocabulary acquisition outperformed traditional learning resources in several aspects. Unlike conventional methods that often lack real-world authenticity and immediate relevance to learners' interests, Facebook offered dynamic opportunities for spontaneous language practice and interaction. Participants reported a preference for Facebook due to its convenience, accessibility, and ability to cater to individual learning preferences and pace. This supports the view that digital platforms like Facebook can complement traditional classroom instruction by enhancing learner engagement and motivation (Sun & Chen, 2016).

Enhancing Vocabulary through Facebook Engagement

- **Successful Tactics and Best Practices**

The study identified key tactics and best practices employed by intermediate EFL learners on Facebook to enhance their vocabulary. Active participation in English-language groups, discussions, and online communities enabled learners to immerse themselves in authentic language use scenarios. By leveraging multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and interactive posts, participants engaged in multimodal learning experiences that reinforced vocabulary retention and application (Thorne & Payne, 2019; Zheng & Newgarden, 2021).

- **Benefits of Social Interaction and Feedback**

Furthermore, social interaction on Facebook facilitated peer feedback and collaborative learning, fostering a supportive environment conducive to linguistic experimentation and error correction. Learners benefited from immediate responses and constructive criticism, which contributed to their linguistic development and confidence in using English (Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2011; Tahriri & Bown, 2012).

Conclusion and Future Research Directions

This study highlights the significant impact of Facebook usage on vocabulary acquisition among intermediate English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners in District Mansehra, Pakistan, revealing substantial improvements in participants' proficiency across various linguistic categories post-intervention. Facebook serves as a valuable supplementary tool to traditional learning resources, providing authentic language contexts and fostering interactive engagement that enhances vocabulary acquisition. Recommendations for educators include integrating structured social media activities into curriculum, guiding effective usage practices, promoting peer collaboration for feedback and support, and exploring multimodal learning approaches. Future research should investigate longitudinal effects on overall language proficiency beyond vocabulary acquisition, examine specific learner strategies and perceptions regarding Facebook's impact on language learning, and further refine pedagogical approaches to optimize the use of social media platforms in language education.



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