THE ROLE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING PLATFORMS TO ENHANCE WRITING SKILLS IN ADULT LEARNERS IN EFL

Berdibekova Magrurabonu Ulugbek kizi
1st year postgraduate of Foreign languages department of Jizzakh State Pedagogical University

Annotation: *This article illustrates the role of social networking platforms to enhance writing skills in adult learners in English as a foreign language.*

Keywords: *social media, writing, hashtags, technology, motivation, online applications, software tools, interactive platform, media richness.*

Social media can be a great tool for English writing. This is because it offers learners the opportunity to use the language in a more informal setting.

Social media can provide students with an opportunity to engage with native speakers and practice writing in real-time. This can also give students access to a breadth of language from different dialects and regional varieties of English. Additionally, social media can give them access to a variety of topics, allowing them to write about their interests.

Furthermore, social media can help to motivate and encourage English learners. For instance, writing online can give them the opportunity to receive instant feedback on their writing from friends, peers, and other users. Additionally, the use of hashtags and other social media tools can help to draw attention to their writing and increase their audience.

Social media have been used for teaching and learning for quite some time. Social media as a learning platform making it possible for students to do self-study, exchange ideas, give comments, and submit the assignments in order to improve their grammar knowledge and writing ability.

English writing and technology integration

Using technology in English writing is an excellent way for learners to practice and improve their writing skills. Technology such as online applications and software tools can help learners identify and correct grammar mistakes and check their word usage. Also, social media can be used to write in a more informal style, engage with native English speakers, and also get feedback from other users. There are also websites that can be used to find writing prompts which can help learners practice their writing skills.

Academic sources have shown that students actively participate in a wide range of digital literacy activities outside the classroom, such as emailing and publishing. The potential of social media integration is to help students with English writing learning in classroom settings. Using social media can help writers hone their words in response to criticism and comments from others and establish their authenticity as writers. A case in

point was the study of two Chinese immigrant adolescents who found it difficult to communicate in English with peers at school but improved their confidence and language skills by conversing in English with peers of Chinese heritage. Both students developed their distinctive online personas as bilingual writers in online forums. Black investigated the involvement of young English language learners in fanfiction.net, a public online community that many teenagers and adults use as a venue for sharing their fictitious writing on well-known novels, cartoons, comics, games, or movies. Their findings confirm the connections between the social and interactive nature of writing among users of the platform.

Social media is a web-based service that allows individuals to construct public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share the information, and view their list of connections within the system (Boyd & Ellison). According to Kaplan & Haenlein, social media is a group of internet-based application's that build on the ideological and technological foundations and allow the exchange of user-granted content. As technology tools such as social media have vast changes, defining social media has become a challenge and keep evolving according to time. Kusnierek supported the social media definition by Kaplan & Haenlein that defined the same concept but he added a point where social media depends on mobile and web-based technologies to create a highly interactive platform for the users can share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content. Meanwhile, Kamel expanded the definition of social media as computer-mediated tools and applications that give space to create, share, or exchange information, ideas, pictures, and videos virtually and without barriers.

Social media is likely to emerge almost every day with more advanced features. Due to this, Kaplan & Haelein conclude there is no systematic way to categorize types of social media. However, they have proposed a systematic classification based on a set of theories in the media research field (social presence and media richness) and social processes (self-presentation and self-discourse). Social presence is related to acoustic, visual, and physical contact between two people, whereas, media richness refers to the amount of information that the media allow to transmit in a given time interval. While self-presentation and self-discourse is an impression and the combination of inclination to develop interactions with others. Thelwall proposed social media can be classified according to their purposes which are socializing, networking, and navigation. Socializing SNS is designed for social communication among members such as Facebook or Instagram, while networking SNS are functioning for non-social interpersonal communication such as LinkedIn, and navigation SNS are likely to help users find a particular type of information such as Flickr and YouTube. This has been supported by Manca & Ranieri which they classified social media according to purposes but only into three categories which are educational, professional or research, and social interaction.

Therefore, there are significant benefits associated with the application of social media in delivering educational outcomes, facilitate supportive relationship, identify formation, and promoting self-esteem (Collin, Rahilly, Richardson, & Third). Social media have been recognized to shift the role of educators from a gatekeeper to a facilitator, provide learners with educational information, support social interaction and educational communication, contribute a platform for expressing ideas, support collaborative learning and support reflective learning. These studies were supported by a focus group of research which revealed that social media could be applied to spread announcement or information, provide comprehend communication, encourage discussion, motivate people to share ideas, enable restudying, and provide self-evaluation.

Integrating technology into English writing is an effective way to help learners practice and improve their writing skills. Technology tools such as online applications and software can help learners identify and correct grammar and spelling mistakes. They can also assist learners with word usage and the accuracy of their writing.

Social media can be used in education as a tool to engage with native English speakers and get feedback from other users in a more informal style. This can help learners improve their writing skills, and it may be less intimidating than a more traditional, classroom-type setting. Additionally, websites can be used to find writing prompts and other activities to help learners practice their writing.

Blogs

A blog (from the term, 'weblog') is a self-published, web-based collection of writing and (sometimes) photos. Blogs differ greatly in focus, sophistication (of topics and language) and popularity. The culture of blogging calls for regular updates, exchange of comments, and (usually) short posts.

Blogs offer a hugely exciting platform for learners to express themselves in a new language. The fact that posts are generally short, and that new content is added frequently, make them attractive and exciting for classroom adaptation

You can use them in the following ways:

1) Building a class blog, where students can take it in turns to write posts on topics of interest. Other students can then add comments. The teacher will probably need to moderate, as comment threads can sometimes become heated and if you are representing an educational institution, this could become a tricky issue.

2) Creating lessons based on blogs. I once devised a reading task taking four types of blog- one academic, one on the life of an ambulance driver, one personal blog and another on current affairs. I had students skim read each blog and answer thematic questions. They then exchanged their opinions on each blog and decided which one seemed most interesting. We then had a language analysis task, with samples of text from each blog. Students examined differences in style (i.e. formality), lexis and tone, before focusing on the personal blog, which used more colloquial language. After a

matching task where some key phrases were identified, students were set the task of writing a blog entry on something they had done that week.

3)   Having students start their own blogs. For this to work, they will probably need support, as blogging is a habit that has to be kept up consistently and it takes time to get good at it. Teachers can do this by examining the discourse features of personal blogs and producing a structured lesson that enables learners to mimic these features in their own writing. Common discourse features of personal blogs are:

• Short posts
• Informal or colloquial language
• First person perspective
• Contemporary topics
• Taking on the form of a dialogue with readers (especially in comment threads).

Finally, social media can be an interesting and engaging way to practice English writing. This can help students to stay motivated and continue their language learning journey.

Overall, social media can be an excellent tool for English writing. It can help students practice their writing skills in a more informal and engaging way.

REFERENCES:

1.   Collin, P., Rahilly, K., Richardson, I., & Third, A. (2011). The Benefits of Social Networking Services: A Literature Review. Melbourne: Cooperative Research Centre for Young People, Technology and Wellbeing.

2.   Kamel, S. (2016). Electronic Commerce Challenges and Opportunities in Egypt. In Encyclopedia of E-Commerce Development, Implementation, and Management (pp. 1229- 1240). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-9787-4.ch088

3.   L. Yan. A Study on WeChat-based collaborative learning in college English writing. Engl. Lang. Teach., 12 (6) (2019), pp. 1-9, 10.5539/elt.v12n6p1

4.   M.A. Safonova, A.A. Safonov. Transformation of academic writing in the digital age. Vysshee Obrazovanie v Rossii, 30 (2) (2021), pp. 144-153, 10.31992/0869-3617-2021-30-2-144-153

5.   R. Al-Jarf. Blogging about current global events in the EFL writing classroom: effects on skill improvement, global awareness and attitudes. British Journal of Teacher Education and Pedagogy, 1 (1) (2022), pp. 74-82, 10.32996/bjtep.2022.1.1.8

6.   R. Cremades, J.L. Onieva-López, E. Maqueda-Cuenca, J.J. Ramírez-Leiton. The influence of mobile instant messaging in language education: perceptions of current and future teachers. Interact. Learn. Environ., 29 (5) (2021), pp. 7333-7742, 10.1080/10494820.2019.1612451

7.   https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/integrating-ict/articles/using-social-media-classroom