

Ways and Benefits of Integration of Social Media in Primary School English Learning in Malaysia: A Systematic Literature Review

Mohd Nor Ariffin Yusrizal, Khairul Azhar Jamaludin

Faculty of Education, National University of Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia

Email: p118742@siswa.ukm.edu.my, khairuljamaludin@ukm.edu.my

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Abstract

English is one of the essential subjects for today's learning. Learning that integrates elements to help students in understanding the basic rules or grammar of English language is advisable to be applied, including by integrating the use of social media. Many extensive researches on various aspects of online English language learning have been conducted in the past studies. However, there has been limited focus on integrating social media in primary school English language learning. Therefore, this study aims to examine the methods and advantages gained from the integration of social media in primary school English language learning. This systematic literature review incorporates five selected articles that underwent a selection and exclusion process based on the guidelines provided by PRISMA 2020. The study results indicate that informal methods are more commonly used for integrating social media into English language learning. Additionally, the study highlights the advantages gained by teachers and students through the integration of social media in English language learning.

Keywords: Social Media Benefits, Online Learning, English, Primary School

Introduction

English is an important language today. Currently, English is the lingua franca and the most widely spoken language worldwide, with 1.121 billion speakers globally according to the Lingua Language Centre Broward College website (Lingua, 2022). It is not surprising that English is emphasized for its significance in our education system. The Malaysian Education Development Plan 2013-2025 (PPPM 2013-2025) places a strong focus on English through the Second Shift of PPPM 2013-2025, ensuring that every student has a good proficiency in both Bahasa Malaysia and English while encouraging the learning of additional languages. In fact, English has been made a compulsory passing subject for the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) since 2016 (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). This underscores the importance of English in education.

Recognizing the importance of English, various initiatives and approaches have been introduced by educators to help students become proficient in using the English language. The 21st Century Education (PAK-21) is one of the latest approaches in the Malaysian education system, emphasizing various pedagogies and elements for teaching various

subjects. In PAK-21, technology and edutainment elements are encouraged for use by educators. The use of technology can assist students in better understanding concepts. Mustafa Haidari et al. (2020) state that teachers and students need to adapt to the technological advancements of today. With technology, learning a subject can be formal or informal and can be conducted online or in-person. Various learning mediums have also been introduced, especially with the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Terms such as Flipped Classroom, Hybrid Learning, or Online Classes have become increasingly familiar in the education community. It is clear that the choice of learning medium is closely related to social media, especially for informal learning.

Social media is a ubiquitous means of communication among students due to its accessibility and engaging features. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok are frequently used by students in their daily lives, including for learning purposes. However, the use of social media as a learning medium has garnered reactions from various stakeholders, both positive and negative. These reactions come from educators, parents, and the local community. In the past, social media was often associated with negative influences due to its primarily entertainment-oriented nature. However, today, social media provides various benefits in various aspects, including education. Online learning highlights the role of teachers as facilitators, helping them expand their perspectives on how to manipulate online learning platforms (e-learning) and create a conducive and enjoyable learning environment (Emily Lau Yen Yen & Maslawati Mohamad, 2020). In today's borderless world, information and guidance for learning English are easily accessible through social media platforms.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to seek and synthesize primary sources related to the Use of Social Media in Primary School English Language Learning. The research questions for this study are as follows:

- i. What methods do teachers use to integrate social media into English language learning in primary schools in Malaysia?
- ii. What are the advantages of using social media in primary school English language learning in Malaysia?

To address these research questions, this study will focus on two main aspects of using social media in primary school English language learning: Methods and Advantages. In detail, the study has the following objectives:

- i. To identify the methods of using social media in primary school English language learning in Malaysia.
- ii. To identify the advantages of using social media in primary school English language learning in Malaysia.

Literature Review

Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR)

The education system in our country has adopted a curriculum for Primary School English that is taken from abroad, which is the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR). CEFR was introduced in 2013 with the aim of strengthening the use and learning of the English language to its maximum potential. The implementation of CEFR into the Primary School English curriculum is to ensure that the English curriculum reaches international standards in language usage and provides a benchmark for global proficiency among students (Azurawati Wok Zaki & Ramiaida Darmi, 2021).

Since the introduction of CEFR, several issues in its implementation have been identified. Norshaidatul Md Nawawi et al. (2021), in their study, stated that contextualizing the content of the CEFR curriculum is one of the major challenges. This is because the content used in CEFR textbooks often lacks relevance to the daily lives of Malaysians. In another study, findings showed that teachers exhibited reluctance to fully implement CEFR due to their lack of understanding and competence in CEFR (Rhessma Nawai & Nur Ehsan Mohd Said, 2020). This reluctance stems from a lack of understanding of the implementation and content of the CEFR curriculum. Nevertheless, this issue does not hinder teachers from effectively delivering the content of the CEFR curriculum to students. English teachers need to have broad creativity to think outside the box to help students understand the context of CEFR learning.

Social Media as a Medium for Learning English

Learning today doesn't only happen within the confines of a classroom. Learning can occur anywhere, in line with the current developments in information technology. Social media is one of the mediums that can be used as a platform for learning, whether it's for formal or informal education. Nur Farah Adiba Badrul Hisham & Faridah Mydin Kutty (2021) explain that the use of social media can be considered a form of informal learning due to its use outside of formal learning hours and its availability for learning at any time, using various means of communication and instruction. There are many examples of social media that can be used as learning platforms, whether formally or informally, including WhatsApp, Twitter, Edmodo, and Facebook, which are among the social media platforms frequently used by interested students (Arslaan Javaeed et. al., 2020).

In Malaysia, the use of social media as a medium for learning has gained recognition and been put into practice, especially since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. During the implementation of Movement Control Orders (MCO), the education system in Malaysia underwent significant changes. Students and teachers had to adapt to using gadgets and the internet for online learning. This situation has indeed transformed the educational practices in the country, and initially, it was challenging to adapt and had an impact on all parties involved, especially educators and students who were at home (Ainul Afzan binti Ramli & Ishak Bin Haji Abd Rahman, 2021). Various applications and methods were developed and introduced by educators from all walks of life to facilitate the learning process. These applications and methods were further utilized through the integration of social media into the learning process. Findings from studies conducted by Afendi Hamat & Haslinda Abu Hassan (2019) indicate that social media is the best medium for learning and mastering languages compared to traditional methods.

It must be acknowledged that social media provides opportunities for students to boost their self-confidence and use social media platforms for self-directed learning (Teoh Ci Xin & Melor Md. Yunus, 2019). A study shows that students typically have at least one social media platform they use to help them learn English more easily (Afendi Hamat & Haslinda Abu Hassan, 2019).

Methodology Of The Study

Systematic Literature Review Methodology

This study is conducted using the Systematic Literature Review Methodology. According to Kitchenham (2004), Systematic Literature Review involves the development of a review protocol that focuses on the methods and steps to address the research questions. This

methodology also requires explicit criteria for the selection and exclusion of articles to be reviewed. The Systematic Literature Review comprises three main phases: Planning, Execution, and Reporting (Kitchenham, 2004). Each phase involves several key elements, namely (1) identifying the research objectives, (2) developing the review protocol, (3) introducing the study, (4) selecting primary studies, (5) assessing the quality of the studies, (6) data selection and exclusion, (7) data synthesis, and (8) reporting.

3.1 Review Protocol

According to Kitchenham (2004), the research protocol focuses on the methods to be used in addressing the research questions. The elements of the developed protocol include the study's rationale, research questions, the strategy to be employed in the study, criteria for data selection and exclusion, procedures, and a checklist for assessing the quality of studies and data synthesis. The rationale for the study and research questions have been explained in the previous section. The strategy, criteria for data selection and exclusion, procedures, and the checklist for assessing studies and data synthesis will be discussed in the following section.

Systematic Search Strategy

In this systematic review, four databases, namely Scopus, Taylor & Francis Online, Sage Online, and Google Scholar, were utilized to select journal articles relevant to this systematic literature review. This strategy employed three aspects: Identification, Screening, and Eligibility. This approach was used to obtain a systematic, balanced, and unbiased sample for this study. The selected journal articles were filtered based on language and publication year. The chosen languages were English and Malay, while the publication years ranged from 2017 to 2022. This was done to obtain the most recent journal articles in the chosen field.

Criteria for Selection and Exclusion of Articles

To ensure that the selected data aligns with the research questions and objectives, specific criteria need to be applied. The primary purpose of applying these criteria for the selection and exclusion of data is to ensure that the selection of past studies in this review is consistent and relevant to the planned review study (Yunis Ali Ahmed et al., 2018). Table 1 presents the criteria for the selection and exclusion of data used in this study.

Table 1

Criteria for Selection and Exclusion of Articles

Criteria for Selection of Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related to research questions • Focus on primary schools in Malaysia • Published in the selected databases • Written in Bahasa Malaysia or English. • Published in 2017-2022 • Completed article in PDF Format
Criteria for Exclusion of Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not related to the research questions • Not written in Bahasa Malaysia or English • Not published in 2017-2022. • No complete text

Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) 2020 Statement

Furthermore, the researcher also referred to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) 2020 Statement by Matthew J. Page et al. (2021). The researcher utilized the PRISMA 2020 checklist, which comprises 27 key items for assessing the suitability and eligibility of articles selected for inclusion in this study. This checklist was used during the initial screening phase to determine which articles were appropriate and relevant for in-depth examination. By employing PRISMA, research findings relevant to the researcher's focus were systematically collected and synthesized to address the research questions that had been established (Fatin Najiha Zainuddin & Melor Md Yunus, 2022)

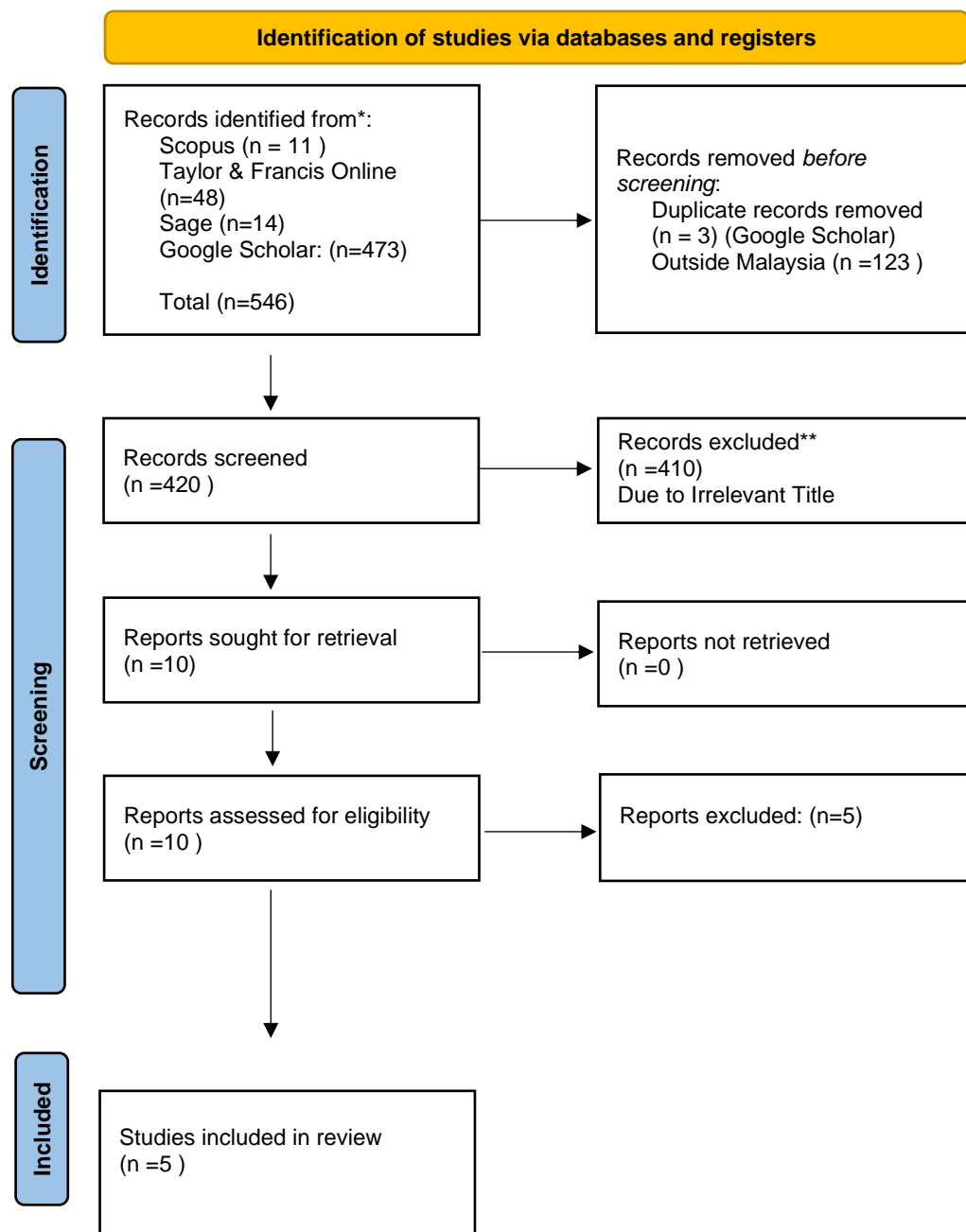
Article Searching Process

To find the suitable articles, the researcher followed the guidelines of PRISMA 2020. In the Identification phase, the researcher attempted to use four different databases: Google Scholar, Scopus, Sage Online, and Taylor and Francis Online. The researcher used the same search string for all four databases, which was "Benefit*" AND "Social Media" AND "Primary school*" AND "English" AND "Malaysia." The search results showed the number of articles retrieved from each database: Scopus (n=11), Taylor & Francis Online (n=48), Sage Online (n=14), and Google Scholar (n=473). The total number of articles obtained in the Identification phase was 546 articles.

From the 546 search results, the researcher excluded articles that were not relevant to the study's focus and articles that clearly indicated respondents were not among primary school teachers and students in Malaysia. Studies conducted outside the country were also excluded. A total of 126 search results were automatically excluded using the filters available in the databases, leaving 420 articles for the screening phase.

During the screening phase, the researcher applied specific criteria for the selection and exclusion of articles, as mentioned earlier in section 3.2.1. All 420 articles were screened through a first reading to ensure that only relevant articles could be used in the study. A total of 410 articles were excluded due to unrelated topics and not being within the context of primary schools. Only 10 articles that met the specific criteria were advanced to the next stage, Eligibility.

In this Eligibility phase, the researcher used various screening criteria to obtain articles that were truly relevant to the study and ready for further analysis (Mustafa Haidari et al., 2020). During this stage, the researcher filled in the required information using an Excel Spreadsheet to synthesize data from these articles. After reading and filling in information in the Excel Spreadsheet, the researcher used the Article Quality Assessment (AQA) criteria, which will be explained in section 3.4. As a result, five articles were excluded because they did not meet the specified eligibility criteria. Finally, only five articles were selected as the final articles to be reviewed in this study. The search, screening, selection, and exclusion process can be referenced in the PRISMA 2020 Flowchart provided below.



Article Quality Assessment (AQA)

Article quality assessment helps the researcher to interpret the study findings more accurately and provide recommendations for further research (Kitchenham, 2004). To ensure that the selected articles meet the criteria for high-quality articles, a checklist for article assessment can be employed (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007). Therefore, to ensure the quality of the selected articles, the researcher adapted five criteria used by Yunis Ali Ahmed et al. (2018) as follows:

AQA1: Does the topic stated in the article relate to the use of social media in primary school English language learning in Malaysia?

AQA2: Is the article clear in terms of the context of the study conducted?

AQA3: Is the research methodology explained in depth?

AQA4: Is the data collection process well-described in the article?

AQA5: Is the data analysis method appropriately evaluated?

All five quality assessment questions were applied to all articles that underwent the article selection and exclusion process to further strengthen the relevance of the selected articles. Yunis Ali Ahmed et al. (2018) used these five questions with assessments ranging from 0-2. If the selected article adequately addressed the quality assessment questions, it would be rated as 2. If it partially addressed the quality assessment questions, it would be rated as 1, and if it did not address the quality assessment questions at all, it would be rated as 0. After the assessments were made, each article would have a total assessment score, which would determine the level of article quality. If an article received a total score of more than 6, it was considered a high-quality article; between 4 and 5, it was considered lower quality, and 3 or below, it was considered not high quality. Articles identified as not high quality were excluded from the study.

Out of the 10 articles selected during the screening process and assessed for quality, a total of five articles met the criteria for high-quality and lower-quality articles. These five articles were finalized for inclusion in this systematic literature review. Meanwhile, the other five articles were deemed not high quality, and both of these articles were subsequently excluded from the next phase of extraction and synthesis.

Table 2

List of selected Articles

Writer(s)	Title
Patrick Duffy Bayuong Melor Md Yunus Ashairi Suliman	The use of social media (SM) among pupils in a rural primary school in Sarawak, Malaysia
Lenicer Tamillarassi Stalin Kim Hua Tan	Use of snapchat to enhance primary school english as second language learners in the writing of personal information
Melor Md Yunus Sakinah Zakaria Ashairi Suliman	The potential use of social media on Malaysian primary students to improve writing
Lee Yi Roua Melor Md. Yunus Ashairi Suliman	The Influence of Social Media on Spelling Skills among Primary School Students
Teoh Ci Xin Melor Md. Yunus	Primary pupils' use of social media to learn ESL

Data Extraction And Synthesis For Systematic Literature Review (Slr)

Data extraction aims to accurately and systematically record information obtained from the primary studies (Kitchenham, 2004). Yunis Ali Ahmed et al. (2018) emphasized that data extraction is a crucial process in this systematic literature review. Therefore, the researcher used digital media for this purpose, specifically an Excel Spreadsheet. The essential elements included in this Excel Spreadsheet are (1) Author(s), (2) Publication Date, (3) Study Title, (4) Publication Type, (5) Study Area, (6) Study Participants, (7) Research Methodology, and (8) Study Findings.

Publication Information

In this section, the publication information refers to the publication date range and publication types. All five articles were published between the years 2017-2022, with four of them being published in 2019 and one article published in 2022. All of these articles met the criteria for selection and exclusion as previously stated. All five articles are journal articles.

Table 3

Article Publication Information

Writer(s)	Publication Year	Type of Publication
Bayuong, Yunus M.M.; Suliman A.	2019	Journal Article
Stalin L.T.; Kim Hua T.	2020	Journal Article
Yunus M.M.; Zakaria S.; Suliman A.	2019	Journal Article
Roua L.Y.; Yunus M.M.; Suliman A.	2019	Journal Article
Xin T.C.; Yunus M.M.	2019	Journal Article

Study Area

This study focuses on primary school English education in Malaysia. Therefore, the study areas mentioned in the selected articles are crucial information to gain an overall understanding of the relevant research context. Among the five articles, several states have been identified as commonly used areas for conducting research: Sarawak (2 articles), Negeri Sembilan (1 article), Selangor (1 article), and one article did not specify the chosen state in detail.

Table 4

Study Area

Article	Study Area
Bayuiong P.D.; Yunus M.M.; Suliman A.	Sarawak, Malaysia
Stalin L.T.; Kim Hua T.	Johor, Malaysia
Yunus M.M.; Zakaria S.; Suliman A.	Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia
Roua L.Y.; Yunus M.M.; Suliman A.	Selangor, Malaysia
Xin T.C.; Yunus M.M.	Tiada maklumat

Study Participants

In this section, the researcher aimed to ensure that the participants involved in the selected studies were primary school students and teachers. After analysis, all five research articles involved only primary school students as respondents, without the involvement of teachers.

Table 5

Study Participants Information

Article	Study Participants
Bayuiong P.D.; Yunus M.M.; Suliman A.	50 pupils of Year 5
Stalin L.T.; Kim Hua T.	30 pupils of Year 2
Yunus M.M.; Zakaria S.; Suliman A.	47 primary school pupils
Roua L.Y.; Yunus M.M.; Suliman A.	50 pupils of Year 5
Xin T.C.; Yunus M.M.	61 pupils of age 10-12

Study Findings

The study findings in the selected articles should be relevant to the context of this study. In this research, the researcher aimed to identify the methods and advantages of integrating social media into primary school English language learning. Therefore, the study findings from the selected articles should be related to the main context of the study, which is the methods of integration and the advantages of social media.

From the five selected articles, all of them discuss the methods used by teachers for integrating social media into primary school English language learning. All selected articles

also discuss the advantages of integrating social media into primary school English language learning.

Study Designs

Based on the five selected articles, two types of study designs have been used by researchers: survey and experimental. Four articles employed a survey design, while only one article used an experimental design, where the researcher conducted assessments before and after the implementation of a new method on the respondents.

Study Findings

Research Question 1: What methods are used in integrating social media into primary school English language learning in Malaysia?

Based on the five finalized articles for review, the researcher analyzed the methods used by teachers to integrate social media into English language learning for primary school Level 2 in Malaysia. Since four of the selected articles used a survey design to collect data on the integration of social media into primary school English language learning, the researcher analyzed the ways or methods used by the respondents in these studies to incorporate social media into their English language learning. The researcher analyzed the questions used to gather information from respondents through the questionnaires developed.

Based on the analysis conducted, respondents indicated the use of social media for self-directed learning in English. Bayuong P.D., Yunus M.M. & Suliman A. (2019), Yunus M.M., Zakaria S. & Suliman A. (2019), Xin T.C. & Yunus M.M. (2019), and Roua L. Y, Yunus M.M & Suliman A (2019) stated that the integration of social media for English language learning was informal. This allows respondents in the studies to use social media as a self-learning medium and to connect with teachers for guidance. Respondents used their social media platforms to obtain input while working on assignments given by teachers. Therefore, self-directed learning without direct supervision from teachers in completing the given assignments is an informal learning method that can assist respondents.

Meanwhile, one article demonstrated an experimental design. Stalin L.T. & Kim Hua T. (2020) used a pre and post-test assessment method regarding the implementation of social media in English language learning. This method indicates formal learning that integrates social media as a medium for English language learning.

Research Question 2: What are the advantages of using social media in primary school English language learning in Malaysia?

The integration of social media into primary school English language learning through these five articles indicates several benefits for students. There are three main advantages that can be summarized through these articles: self-directed learning, increased comfort and confidence in communication, and the element of enjoyment in learning.

Firstly, self-directed learning by students. Based on the selected articles, four articles highlight that students apply the concept of self-directed learning by integrating social media into their learning. Bayuong, Yunus & Suliman (2019), Stalin & Kim (2019), Xin & Yunus (2019), and Roua Yunus & Suliman (2019) state that through the integration of social media, students can apply the concept of self-directed learning in their learning processes. They use social media to acquire information and complete assignments given to them. Besides completing their assignments, students can also learn new things they come across through social media.

Furthermore, all the articles state that respondents can connect more comfortably and confidently with teachers and peers. Based on the articles read, two of them touch on introverted students who lack confidence in face-to-face classroom interactions. However, through the informal integration of social media into learning, students can increase their self-confidence to interact with peers and teachers. In fact, introverted students are given the opportunity to express their opinions through social media.

Finally, the incorporation of fun elements in learning. Enjoyment in learning is crucial in helping students master or learn something new. All five selected articles state that students enjoy learning when social media is integrated into their learning. Recognizing that learning English is challenging for these students, the presence of social media integrated into learning helps them face these challenges in an enjoyable manner. This is because social media offers various entertainment features that can be used by users.

Discussion And Conclusion

The integration of social media into learning is not a new phenomenon in the 21st century. However, integrating social media into English language learning for primary school students, especially Level 2, is something rarely practiced. As evidence, only five relevant articles were obtained related to English language learning that integrates social media among primary school students. Based on the selected articles, four out of the five articles emphasize the concept of informal self-directed learning, while only one article uses social media for formal English language learning.

Informal learning can actually help students deepen their understanding of a subject. For the English language subject, informal learning is an added value to help students expand their vocabulary and grammar skills. Moreover, with the integration of social media, many resources related to English language learning are easily accessible.

Through the integration of social media, students can benefit greatly in their learning. Today, the world witnesses easy access to information through websites and social media platforms. This diversity of information is further enhanced by the convenience of the internet and the importance of gadgets in everyday life.

In conclusion, social media can be used informally in students' self-directed learning to enrich and enhance their mastery of the English language. The use of social media for English language learning can be further refined through research on the constraints or challenges that teachers and students need to overcome.

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