# Use of Social Media in Classroom Teaching and Learning

DR. SHEFALI NARANJE
Dept. of Business Communication
Vivek College of Commerce
Goregaon (west) Mumbai-400104.
Mumbai (India)

**Abstract:**
*In this online globalized world that we are living in, learning a language has become a bit easy. It has become interactive, interesting, as well as social. If we consider right from Twitter to blogs to social networks, there are numerous ways in which one can start social language learning and keep it up while making new friends.*

*The landscape of social media offers a wealth of resources and information where people can discuss and expand on hobbies, interests and passions - while creating connections with others who feel the same way. Learning a language is no different. This paper tries to tell of ways that one can use social media to learn a language and connect with native speakers.*

**Keywords**: *Smartphones, Apps, Learning Language, Apps for English Language Learning*

## 1. Introduction

Life itself is a learning process. But fitting learning into life is in itself a huge task, especially with the current scenario of social media taking the most important or central place in almost everyone's life. Why social media has gained so much importance in today's age? If one looks back in ancient times stories happenings of important events with important people like Kings, common man, and the society at large is also depicted in various forms like in history, arts and crafts books, novels, story books, films et al. But imagining all these lifestyles of these people was difficult, thanks to social media for making it more easy and accessible.

Learning is a part of life and specially if one talks of higher education as a student, these years of senior or degree college marks an important beginning in a student's life. He/she has to now prepare for future life. Having said that what role does social media has on these students in shaping or breaking their careers. This paper tries to highlight how social media can be beneficial to undergraduate student to learn a language. It tries to study how students use their apps to maximise the effectiveness of their out-of-class learning and how students perceive these apps which will benefit their language learning.

## 2. Method

If one considers time in a student's life for learning there are various pockets of time that is available to him/her in a day. These pockets are the profitable moments of learning, even outside the learning place and thus, the purpose of learning can be met out to a larger extent. It goes beyond the stings of formal education or College or University teaching. Students with vast exposure to social media can make their own choices regarding their studies or career. It helps them to fit into their busy lifestyle. Students are not commodities. They have to juggle between friends, family, social network and other connections. Therefore the students need to find out ways to 'fit' learning into their lives. It therefore becomes important for students to use mobile phones as a tool which help them to maximise their time-on-task wherever and whenever there is time and opportunity to learn.
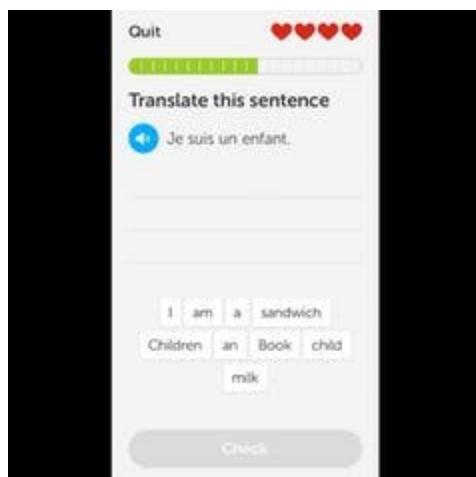
Pricing and mobile connection is rapidly becoming more accessible to students. Smartphones now have outnumbered laptops and are exceeding saturation (Traxler, 2011). But here the discipline aspect to certain extent has to be overlooked. A lot of information is available at different sites and hence searching the right and appropriate information takes a long time.

The nature of foreign language learning outside class learning in various other disciplines is not only dependent on how students learn that language but also on which type of apps they learn. There are more general theories on education such as Social Constructivism which have broad applicability for language learners, the ways in which students acquire languages has demanded language specific learning theories (Chapelle, 1997, 2005). More recent examples of these theories include Second Language Acquisition Theories (SLA), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning (ILT) (see Lo Bianco with Slaughter, 2009). Such theories highlight a range of pedagogical approaches that were created specifically for the discipline of language learning with a view to language acquisition. To extend language learning outside of classroom time, especially where in-class language practice time is limited, is essential to language acquisition (Kennedy and Levy, 2009). English and other foreign language learning and mastery require frequent informal practice (Kukulska-Hulme, 2012). To discuss computer assisted language learning, categorises some of these areas and skills such as speaking, grammar, vocabulary, reading, pronunciation, writing, listening, speaking, and also culture. This study considers these areas and skills in terms of students' reported use of mobile apps and the learning benefits they perceive. Fitting learning into life the ability to practice language anywhere and anytime was a strong motivator for the student. Students would rather appreciate such flexibility and convenience of using these apps to meet their personal learning needs at various times and in different places that suited according to their lifestyles.

## 3. Findings
Digital language learning has become popular for over a few years. Apart from traditional listening on CDs, radios and television smartphones are doing this job better. Touch screens, enhanced text entry, high-quality image, audio and video recording, sharing and editing, voice recognition, connectivity, storage GPS system all bring in the multi-sensory experience to the student and makes the learning of the English language effective.  The mix of different and varied ways to learn and present the information making use of these apps becomes more appealing rather than using a traditional books, or even sometimes activities that are carried out in a language lab of school and universities. These have become old fashioned as it follows the old system of video clips and audio recordings newspaper reading, dictionaries and other handbills and printouts.

What is more appealing is that while using these apps the student is not exposed to others even if he/she makes a mistake. So he feels comfortable trying these tasks as many times as one likes till the student does not get it right. The added advantage is this that many apps come with game- like features which infact becomes fun while use them. The student does not need to spend hours in that app or do a formal setting before beginning. The student can do five minutes of quick practice anywhere and anytime.

Certain app like Kindle uses dictionary functions while reading foreign language text. Some also include pronunciation guides. There are also certain apps like grammar drilling apps provided by Collins or The British Council. These apps are perfect for students who want to do grammar exercises or practise preposition, tenses et al.

For writing skills there are spelling apps as well as dictionaries that include pronunciation guides. For learning phonetics there is an app as MacMillan Sounds. There are even apps which students can use to create their own flashcards to help them memorise vocabulary, such as Quizlet. Sometime an app that is meant for native people could also benefit a person learning that language though it could be a more challenge to them. Newspaper or magazine subscriptions in English language and word processors set in the language can help with reading and writing. With the help of social media apps the student can be connected to the native speakers. Certain apps like Skype or Face time will help the student to speak with the native speaker but here the condition is that the student should know the native speaker. Some language learning apps like Duo Lingo gives feedback from native speakers which can be very useful to learners.

The last thing that is of almost importance is that these learning apps for language learning should have technology and design and also should be user friendly. It is unlikely that one app will provide all the solutions a student needs for learning a language, but with smartphones and tablets users can store many different apps for different purposes. This is one of the best things that an app can do. It will help the student by providing solutions to every learning style. It will help in learning language skills like grammar, vocabulary, reading listening, speaking or even writing for that matter.

It now rests with the students which one works for them. It is up to them to download these apps and see and work out which one is best suited for their needs. Some of these apps are:

**Babbel** – It is an online portal where the student can learn different languages like English, Spanish, German, Italian and French. Some of its best features include: its detailed vocabulary exercises, visible translate bar throughout the whole website by Google, group chats, and the ability to insert common symbols into instant messages and emails.  If you want to build a foundation and learn a new language, this is definitely the place to begin.

**Busuu** – This app provides learning units for four different languages (English, Spanish, French, German) that can be added to the users' learning portfolios with audio and written vocabulary exercises, which can be easily saved as a podcast or printed, respectively. If the student wants to learn "on the go," Busuu's resources are a must.

**Livemocha**- This app offers a number of popular languages, including English, French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Icelandic, Italian, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin and Russian.  Livemocha's community utilizes a point system to keep track of how many actions are completed by the user - as a student or as a teacher - and the site relies on a peer review system. For example, written or spoken submissions are reviewed by members, which is a wonderful way to interact and listen to different accents of the same languages. If you want a continuous flow of intermediate to advanced language practice, or want to improve your teaching skills, Livemocha is the app where you want to be.

**Shared Talk** by Rosetta stone – It is a place to practice what one has learned so far?  Shared Talk has audio, and group and private chat rooms available in 30 languages.
**I Talk-** is a language exchange app which offers users the ability to find language partners to chat with, find language teachers, and watch videos.
**X Lingo**- Create blogs and flash cards and quiz other language learners at X Lingo. This language exchange also offers forums and chat rooms.

## 4. Conclusion
Looking at these advantages one feels that in today's time it has become convenient for everyone to get what one wants with the help of smartphones. But there is another side of the story. In India there are many students who use whatsapp for communication. But here for typing instead of typing in

English they type the message using English alphabets but the communication is in Hindi. This is particularly for students in remote areas and vernacular medium students. When asked about it they had various reasons for it. A few is stated as: Usually in a group of friends no one talks in English, they do not know English as they have studied in vernacular medium. They are more comfortable using Hindi as they know many words in Hindi as compared to English. It is comfortable to both the sender and receiver. Typing English alphabets is easy as compared to Hindi or other languages. One can see here that though the students are not well versed in English language but they are capable of using these alphabets and framing spellings and words in Hindi to communicate.

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