

## Facebooking in today's net generation: prospects and challenges

### ABSTRACT

The popularity of Facebook (FB) skyrocketed during the last decade as students and educators joined the bandwagon by getting themselves connected as active users for social networking purposes. Since then its wide array of technological affordances has evolved and its versatility as a language education tool has been researched extensively as researchers find ways to use social networking in academia. This study explored the use of FB in general as well as language learning among 150 secondary school students in the ESL context. It looks into Facebook usage in terms of its frequency of use, types of usage and whether teachers actually use Facebook in their lesson. The study employed a descriptive survey approach substantiated with some qualitative information obtained from semi-structured interviews. Results showed that the majority of the students use FB at least once a day and a variety of FB functions are used such as chatting, updating status, messaging friends, commenting on other people's posts or just mainly getting connected with their friends. Students also use FB for academic purposes which include asking friends about homework and getting updates on what went on in the language class. Findings from the interviews conducted revealed that their teachers were hesitant in using FB as a means to stay connected with their students. Despite the fact that students were open to the notion of using FB as part of the English lesson, teachers were skeptical in using it as an instructional tool. This paper highlights the issue of whether FB can be a viable tool in language learning by providing some recommendations on how it can be used in the classroom.

**Keyword:** Facebook; Social networking; Language learning