

Malaysian Diploma Students' Use of Social Media and its Relationship with CEFR English Language Performance

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Abstract

Numerous studies established the relationships between social media usage and academic performances but few were conducted in Malaysia using CEFR grading as its academic performance indicator. This study determined the relationship between social media usage and CEFR English language performance. A survey method on semester one diploma students in a Malaysian public university was employed. Stratified sampling enabled the selection of 121 students where data collected using a self-administered questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS v. 20. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics that include Independent sample t-test, ANOVA test, and Spearman Rank Correlation were used. Findings indicated female students spent significantly more time and used English more extensively on social media. There was a positive linear relationship between time spent interacting using the language in social media and the rate of CEFR grades. Nonetheless there was insufficient evidence to conclude the mean time spent interacting in social media using English were different for students with differing CEFR grades. There is a weak positive but significant correlation between time spent interacting in social media using English language and CEFR grades for reading component. Nevertheless, there is almost no correlation for the writing component. In light of the findings, it is recommended that social media be used as a tool for teaching and interaction among teachers and students. Nevertheless it will only be effective if English is used in the interaction.

Keywords: Academic Performance, CEFR, English Language Education, Social Media

Introduction

English is the most widely used language on the internet with 60.4% of the top 10 million websites are in the language, as compared to only 0.7% in Indonesian language (Bhutada, 2021). A report by the Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission (MCMC, 2018) indicated an increase of domestic internet use between 2016 and 2018. The report also highlighted that 85.6% of the internet users consume social media platforms. Social media are applications, services, and systems that allow users to create, remix, and share content e.g. videos, movies, podcasts, news and messages on platforms such as Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), and WhatsApp. Facebook and WhatsApp are the two most preferred social media mediums among Malaysian users in 2018 with 93.1% using smartphones to access the internet. With such a volume of consumption with limited internet content in Bahasa Malaysia, Malaysian users (especially the students) are forced to indirectly learn English to effectively interact in social media. Malaysian students would collect interesting English quotes or images posted on social networking sites as well as giving attention to sentence patterns and accent while watching videos on those sites (Ismail & Shafie, 2019), which would explain for most young Malaysian learners taking up the accents. These students also perceived social media to be effective agents of improving listening skills and vocabulary.

Numerous studies have established an association between social media usage and students' academic performance. However, the results remain inconclusive (e.g. van den Eijnden et al., 2018), creating variations of responses. On one hand, social media usage is claimed to have improved English proficiency and academic performance (Desta et al., 2021; Anwas et al., 2020). On the other, there are arguments on its lack of relationship (Collis & Eggers, 2022; Alamri, 2019). In fact, there are research findings indicating the harm of using social media on academic performance (e.g. Alshwiah & Alaulamie, 2022; Hameed et al., 2022; Boahene, Fang & Sampong, 2019).

One way of explaining such discrepancies in these responses is partly due to the different methodology employed. It was noted that a variety of measurements as indicators for academic performance were used to make comparisons on the results of studies, leaving a complicated and inconclusive impression. Some of these academic performance indicators are the use of students' confidence on use of English (e.g. Desta, et al., 2021), students' self-rated perceptions on the four language skills as an academic performance indicator (Anwas et al., 2020), the institution's use of Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) (Hameed et al., 2022) and end-of-semester academic grade (Collis & Eggers, 2022). However, self-rated perceptions on survey questionnaires might be questionable indicators of students' performance since some students may be too pessimistic or optimistic in their rating. The association between the reliability of students' perceived improvement of their academic performance and better performance grades remains unresolved. Thus, more studies to determine the association between times spent interacting in social media and students' performance using credible performance indicators is highly encouraged.

In Malaysia, students' performance in English is gauged based on the grade achieved in the public examination conducted by the Ministry of Education (MoE) such as Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) for Form 5 students and Primary School Achievement Test for Year 6 students. In an effort to reform the teaching and learning of English language, the Malaysian government adopted Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) into the

syllabus. Consequently, CEFR grading was introduced as additional grading for English proficiency at SPM level in 2021. The three broad levels are A1/A2 ("Basic User"), B1/B2 ("Independent User"), and C1/C2 ("Proficient User"). CEFR grading encompasses grades for the four skills (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking) and an overall grade.

As more countries begin adopting CEFR into their education system, there is also growing interest to use CEFR grades as an academic performance indicator. Recent studies (e.g. Setyowati, Setiawati, & Kurniawati, 2022; Ika & Santosa, 2023; Astuti, 2023; Hana & Mega, 2023) used CEFR grades as an academic performance indicator. Yet, none looked at the use of CEFR grading in Malaysia, which was introduced in 2021. Thus, there are knowledge voids, which necessitate further inquiry, especially in the Malaysia context. In line with the growing trend, this study examined overall CEFR grades as an academic performance indicator. As such, this paper asks 3 research questions, along with its hypotheses: (1) Is there any significant difference in mean time spent interacting in social media by gender?, (2) Is there any significant difference in mean time spent interacting in social media for students with differing English CEFR grades?, and (3) Is there any significant correlation between time spent interacting in social media using English and CERF grades across different language skills?

The corresponding research null hypotheses are:-

- H 1: There is no significant difference in mean time spent interacting in social media by gender
- H 2: There is no significant difference in mean time spent interacting in social media for students with differing English CEFR grades.
- H 3: There is no significant correlation between times spent interacting in social media using English and CERF grades across different language skills.

Literature Review

Social Media Usage

Social media is a group of internet applications that allows the creation of various content in the world such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube. It is as applications, services, and systems that allow users to create, remix, and share content. Social media usage intensity is increasing continuously. Recent studies indicated that social media usage had further increased during the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. Ahmad & Murad, 2020). An average person spends about three hours a day on social networks (e.g. Hameed & Irfan, 2021; Celestine & Nonyelum, 2018; Kemp, 2018). Social media usage has become a norm and students cannot resist using it (Du, van Koningsbruggen, & Kerkhof, 2018). The rapid increase in social media usage has a critical impact on the students' academic journey. For one, they often find it difficult to control the use of social media. This is because social network websites are able to distract their attention to other non-educational and inappropriate behaviours, including useless chatting.

Academic Performance Indicator

Researchers use a variety of measurements as indicators for academic performance making comparison on the results of studies complicated and inconclusive. Most past studies relied on students' self-rated perception or test scores deemed appropriate by respective researchers in determining the relationship between social media usage and academic

performance. For instance, Desta et al. (2021), used students' confidence on their use of English while Anwas et al. (2020) used students' self-rated perceptions on their four English skills as their academic performance indicators. In contrast Alshawish and Laramie (2022) used GPA (Grade Point Average) while Hameed et al. (2022) used CGPA (Cumulative Grade Point Averages) as performance indicator in their study on correlation between the level of a student's social media usage and academic performance. Collis and Eggers (2022) used end of semester academic grade (failed, below standard, standard, above standard) as academic performance indicator. As CEFR continues to gain recognition worldwide, more countries are beginning to adopt it into their education system. Consequently, there is a growing interest by researchers to use CEFR grades as students' academic performance indicators. Recent studies (e.g. Setyowati, Setiawati, & Khurniawati, 2022; Ika & Santosa, 2023; Astuti 2023; Hana & Mega, 2023) use CEFR grades as students' performance indicator. In line with the growing trend, this study used CEFR grades as credible students' academic performance indicators.

Social Media Usage and Academic Performance

Studies to establish the link between social media usage and academic performance are aplenty. Literature has shown substantial evidence of a strong connection between social media use and students' academic performance (Giunchiglia et al., 2018). Ahmed et al. (2020) who conducted a study on Pakistani university students, found a positive relationship between social media usage and academic performance. Similarly, Alamri (2019) who conducted research on Saudi university students found that their perceptions about social media use for academic activities were positive. Likewise, Boahene et al. (2019) conducted a study in ten public tertiary institutions in Ghana also found out that the use of social media for academic purposes is positively related to their academic performance. On a micro level, Raw and Ismail (2021) indicated that using technology is effective in enhancing teaching and learning of vocabulary, creating a positive learning environment that motivates vocabulary learning. To be specific, TikTok is said to be an enabler to learn literature (Rajan & Ismail, 2022). Another electronic media, Whatsapp, is found to be an advantageous media in teaching reading since it can be used anytime and anywhere (Indiran, Ismail & Rashid, 2022).

In contrast, there are past studies highlighting the insignificant relationship between the use of social media (Collis & Eggers, 2022) nor time spent (Alamri, 2019) and academic performance. Similarly, Wakefield and Frawley (2020) found that using social networking sites has little impact on high-achievers while it jeopardises low achievers. More contrasting findings are found by Hofmann et al., (2012) who revealed a negative relationship between social media usage and academic performance. Alshwiah and Alaulamie (2022) also found a negative correlation between the level of a student's social media usage and Grade Point Average (GPA). Many studies such as by Alamri (2019), Boahene et al. (2019), and Hameed et al. (2022) reported that social media usage for non-academic purposes harmed students' academic performance.

CEFR and Social Media

There is a growing interest in establishing the link between CEFR English grades and social media usage as more countries begin adopting CEFR into their education system. Setyowati, Setiawati, and Khurniawati (2022), for instance, found that English learners can improve their CEFR Level B1 English vocabularies. Ika and Santosa (2023) concluded that TikTok learning

videos are well-suited as teaching materials for classes at the A2 proficiency level. Astuti (2023) investigated the correlation between senior high school student's vocabulary mastery and their alignment with the proficiency levels defined by the CEFR. The findings have highlighted a noteworthy positive correlation indicating that as students' vocabulary mastery increases, their alignment with CEFR levels also shows an increasing trend. Hana and Mega (2023) found that there was a weak positive correlation between the intensity of YouTube usage and vocabulary acquisition, and the correlation was significant. They recommended that both teacher and English language learners could consider utilising the application to enhance vocabulary acquisition.

Social Media and Acquisition of English Language Skills

There are many interesting audio visual contents in English uploaded and shared in the social media daily, which gives ample opportunity for students to develop the four language skills namely; listening, speaking, reading and writing. For instance, they can develop reading and comprehension skills when they rely on English subtitles to understand Korean drama, writing skills when texting messages and updating/posting social media profile/contents, listening skills while watching/listening to videos/podcast/songs, and speaking when posting/creating audio messages/contents. Sirivedin et al. (2018) found Facebook can be used to improve writing skills, namely accuracy, meaningfulness, clarity and relevance when creating posts. Additionally, it can also enhance fluency, self-confidence, satisfaction and value. Musa and Ismail (2023) revealed that gamification using social media (e.g. Tik Tok SiWo Challenge) has significantly impacted pupils' language learning by enhancing students' reading fluency and keeping their motivation level high. Rahman, Atmowardoyo, and Salija (2018) reported podcasts improving students' listening skill. Nie and Ismail (2022) found that pupils are motivated to improve their spelling when learning through the use of online games. While there are some reservations about the use of social media applications in education, Al-Qaysi, Mohamad-Nordin, and Al-Emran (2020) believed that social media applications can help improve students' cognitive and writing skills as well as their training capacities. Dunstan and Ismail (2024) concludes that ICT-based interventions indeed significantly and favourably affect young learners' motivation and interest in reading English materials.

Nonetheless, Olojede, Ebim, and Abioye (2018) cautioned against the type of language used in social media platforms, which are described as violating the norms of Standard English. This may result in poor command of language, reducing learning abilities and causing a lack of creative writing skills in Standard English. Internet critics point to poor grammar use on social media as evidence that these sites breed poor language skills. Students are used to short forms of writing words in their chat rooms and they forget and use the same in the classrooms.

Studies to establish the link between social media usage and academic performance are aplenty with contradicting results. Most past studies relied on students' self-rated perception or test scores deemed appropriate by respective researchers in determining the relationship between social media usage and academic performance. This study examines the relationship between social media usage and English performance by using students' CEFR English Language grades.

Methodology

Research Design, Sampling and Population

The population of this survey research is all Semester One diploma students in one of the public universities in Sarawak, Malaysia. These students are among the first few batches of Malaysian students whose English language performances are graded based on CEFR grading. In addition, they have many similarities e.g. age, having gone through the same system and years of formal education. English is neither their mother nor main language to be used in their daily life. The selection of a population with almost similar background and confined to Sarawak was aimed at minimising other factors affecting the two main variables in this study (CEFR grades and time spent on social media). The sample of this study is 121 semester one diploma students from four programs namely Accountancy, Business Studies, Public Administrations, and Civil Engineering. These samples were selected using a stratified sampling method. First, all semester one student was first stratified according to the program of study. Next, the number of students to be selected from each program of study was calculated and was proportional to the enrolment for each program. Finally, students were selected at random from each program.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire was adopted from Desta et al. (2021), consisting three parts with a total of fifteen items. Part A (students' demographic profile), which consisted of seven items which included gender, program of study, their overall CEFR English language grade and the CEFR grades for each English language skills (Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading). Part B contains three items on students' degree of social media usage. They were asked to state the average time spent interacting in social media as a whole. To determine how extensive English is used, they were asked to state how often they use English while interacting in social media. In addition, they were also asked to state the average time (in hours and minutes per day) they spend interacting in social media using the language. Part C contains five items related to students' perceptions on social media and English language performance. They were asked to rate their agreement for each statement using the 6-Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). Only data from Part A and B were analysed and reported in this paper.

Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected using an online survey method. Students were briefed of the study and reminded to refer to their SPM certificate for their overall English Language CEFR grade as well as their grades for each English language skill prior data collection. This is to ensure data on CEFR grades collected were correct. During data collection, a Google Form link was given to the samples where they were required to answer a set of questionnaires immediately. For those who are unable to login due to network or device problems, they were given 3 days to complete the form.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected were analysed using SPSS Version 20 using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics mean, standard deviation and percentage were used to determine how extensive English language was used by the students while interacting in social media. Inferential statistics were used to test the three hypotheses based on three research questions. For the first research questions, Independent t-test was conducted to

determine whether there difference in mean time spent interacting in social media by gender. For the second research question, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was conducted to determine whether there is any significant difference in mean time spent interacting in social media for students with differing English CEFR grades. For the third research question, Spearman's Rank correlation analyses between time spent and CEFR grade for each English component (Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading). To achieve this, students' CEFR grades were ranked as rank 1 for grade A2 to rank 4 for grade C1. The time spent interacting in social media using English for each student was also categorised into the 4 ranks.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument adopted from Desta et al. (2021) was vetted by a content expert to ensure the validity of the items, especially items related to students' perception on media usage and English language performance. The questionnaire was pilot tested on 30 students who were not included as samples in the actual study. They were asked to answer the questionnaire and provide feedback for improvement. For the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency test reliability was conducted. The overall internal consistency or the Cronbach's Alpha yielded a score of 0.91 for items in the questionnaire.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents the results for the three research questions and their corresponding research hypotheses.

RQ 1: Is there any significant difference in the mean time spent interacting in social media by gender?

Ho 1: There is no significant difference in mean time spent interacting in social media by gender.

Table 1 shows the frequency of using English language in social media by gender. Overall, the distribution was quite normally distributed with the majority of the students (54.5% or 66 students) stated they often use English language in social media. On the two extreme sides, there was a fair equal percentage of students who rate themselves "very often" (22.3% or 27 students and "seldom" (23.1% or 28 students) when asked to state how often they use English language in social media. Further analysis revealed that female students use English more often as compared to male students. For example, 25.6% of the female students rated themselves "very often" in their use of English in social media as compared to only 12.9% for male students.

Table 1

*Gender*Frequency of using English language in social media Crosstabulation*

Gender	Count & Percent	How often do you use English language in social media			Total
		Very often	Often	Seldom	
Male	N	4	18	9	31
	%	12.9%	58.1%	29.0%	100.0%
Female	N	23	48	19	90
	%	25.6%	53.3%	21.1%	100.0%
Overall	N	27	66	28	121
	%	22.3%	54.5%	23.1%	100.0%

It is a known fact that English is not the main language used by students in Malaysia. For meaningful comparison, there is a need for data on the students' total time (in hours in a day) spent interacting in social media and the actual time spent in social media using English. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the time spent per day on social media by gender. The percentage of time spent using English language to total time spent by students in social media was also illustrated in the last three rows of Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics on time spent interacting in social media by students

Statement	Gender	N	Time spent (in hours)			
			Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
In a day, how long (in hours) do you spend interacting on social media?	Male	31	1.50	12.50	6.4226	3.36994
	Female	90	2.00	17.00	7.8122	3.54421
	Overall	121	1.50	17.00	7.4562	3.53929
In a day, how long (in hours) do you spend interacting in social media using the English language?	Male	31	0.50	10.00	2.8361	2.32342
	Female	90	0.50	10.50	4.3244	2.51221
	Overall	121	0.50	10.50	3.9431	2.54087
Percentage of time spent using English language to total time spent by students in social media	Male	31	44.16%			
	Female	90	55.35%			
	Overall	121	52.88%			

The data in Table 2 showed that on average, students spent a total of 7.4562 hours a day on social media. However the average time spent interacting in social media using English is only 3.9431 hours per day. This is only 52.88% of the students' total time on social media. A more detailed analysis by gender revealed that female students spent longer time (mean of 4.3244 hours) and higher percentage of time (55.35%) interacting in social media. In contrast, the corresponding time and percentage of time were only 2.8361 hours and 44.16% respectively.

The results in Table 2 indicated that male students not only spent less time but also less extensive in using English while interacting in social media. Independent sample t- test was conducted to determine whether there is difference in the time spent between male and female students. The test was conducted at 5% level of significance and the results presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Time spend interacting in social media using the English language	Equal variances assumed	0.983	0.323	-2.898	119	0.004	-1.48832	0.51355	-2.50519	0.47144
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.011	55.967	0.004	-1.48832	0.49423	-2.47839	0.49824

Based on the SPSS output in Table 3, the p-value (0.323) is greater than α (0.05) in the Levene's Test for Equality of Variance. Thus the two populations (male and female students) are assumed to have equal variances. The p-value (0.004) is less than α (0.05) for the t-test for Equality of Means. Thus there is sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a difference in mean time (in hours) spent on social media using English language between male and female students at 5% level of significance.

RQ 2: Is there any significant difference in mean time spent interacting in social media for students with differing overall English CEFR grades?

Ho 2: There is no significant difference in mean time spent interacting in social media for students with differing overall English CEFR grades.

The research question seeks to determine the relationship between social media usage and the overall CEFR English performance. In addition, it also aimed to verify whether the perceived positive impacts of social media usage by students were actually reflected in improvement in their overall English grades. To determine the relationship between social media usage and CEFR grade, descriptive statistics were used to identify the type of relationship between them. The results were shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Descriptive statistics on time spent interacting in social media using English language by gender and overall CEFR grade

Gender	Overall CEFR Grade	N	Time spent (in hours)	
			Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	B1	8	2.4375	2.67845
	B2	21	3.0200	2.25303
	C1	2	2.5000	2.82843
	Overall	31	2.8361	2.32342
Female	B1	37	3.5824	2.40307
	B2	40	4.7375	2.43689
	C1	13	5.1654	2.67421
	Overall	90	4.3244	2.51221
Overall	B1	45	3.3789	2.46213
	B2	61	4.1462	2.49580
	C1	15	4.8100	2.75332
	Overall	121	3.9431	2.54087

The results in Table 4 showed that generally, there is a positive linear relationship between time spent (in hours) interacting in social media using English and CEFR grade. With the exception of male students with CEFR C1 grade, the mean time spent interacting in social media using English language increases as the CEFR grade progresses from B1 to C1. This indicates that students (both male and female) who spend more time interacting in social media using English language have a higher tendency to achieve higher CEFR grades.

The analysis revealed that the mean time spent interacting in social media using English language differs for students with different CEFR grades. ANOVA tests were conducted to determine whether there is significant difference in the mean time spent interacting in social media using English language for students with differing overall CEFR grades. ANOVA tests were repeated 3 times and the results presented in Table 5, Table 6 and Table 7.

Table 5

ANOVA test for time spent interacting in social media using English language for male students

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.207	2	1.104	0.193	0.825
Within Groups	159.742	28	5.705		
Total	161.949	30			

Table 5 shows the ANOVA test to determine whether there is significant difference in the mean time spent interacting in social media using English language for male students with differing CEFR grades. The test was conducted at 5% level of significance. The p-value (0.825) is greater than α (0.05), thus there is insufficient evidence to conclude the mean time spent interacting in social media using English language were different for male students with differing CEFR grades.

Table 6

ANOVA test for mean time spent interacting in social media using English language for female students

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	36.389	2	18.195	3.013	0.054
Within Groups	525.307	87	6.038		
Total	561.696	89			

Table 6 shows the ANOVA test to determine whether there is significant difference in the mean time spent interacting in social media using English language for female students with differing CEFR grades. The test was conducted at 5% level of significance. The p-value (0.054) is greater than α (0.05), thus there is insufficient evidence to conclude the mean time spent interacting in social media using English language were different for female students with differing CEFR grades.

Table 7

ANOVA test for mean time spent interacting in social media using English language for all students (Overall)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	28.115	2	14.057	2.222	0.113
Within Groups	746.605	118	6.327		
Total	774.720	120			

Table 7 shows the ANOVA test to determine whether there is significant difference in the mean time spent interacting in social media using English for both male and female students with differing overall CEFR grades. The test was conducted at 5% level of significance. The p-value (0.113) is greater than α (0.05), thus there is insufficient evidence to conclude the mean time spent interacting in social media using English were different for students with differing overall CEFR grades.

RQ3: Is there any significant correlation between times spent interacting in social media using English and CERF grade for each English language component (Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading)?

Ho 3: There is no significant correlation between times spent interacting in social media using English language and CERF grade for each English Language component (Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading)

The third research question seeks to better understand the relationship between time spent interacting in social media using English language and CEFR English Language grades by

conducting Spearman’s Rank correlation analyses for four English Language components. The results of Spearman’s Rank correlation analyses were in Table 8.

Table 8
Spearman Rank Correlations Analyses

			Rank for time spent using English	CEFR Listening Grade	CEFR Speaking Grade	CEFR Writing Grade	CEFR Reading Grade
Spearman's rho	Rank for time spent using English	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.151	0.110	0.076	0.236**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.099	0.231	0.405	0.009
		N	121	121	121	121	121
	CEFR Listening Grade	Correlation Coefficient	0.151	1.000	0.441**	0.675**	0.557**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.099	.	0.000	0.000	0.000
		N	121	121	121	121	121
	CEFR Speaking Grade	Correlation Coefficient	0.110	0.441**	1.000	0.530**	0.559**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.231	0.000	.	0.000	0.000
		N	121	121	121	121	121
	CEFR Writing Grade	Correlation Coefficient	0.076	0.675**	0.530**	1.000	0.623**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.405	0.000	0.000	.	0.000
		N	121	121	121	121	121
	CEFR Reading Grade	Correlation Coefficient	0.236**	0.557**	0.559**	0.623**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.009	0.000	0.000	0.000	.
		N	121	121	121	121	121

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results showed that there is a weak positive but significant correlation between time spent interacting in social media using English and CEFR grades for reading component only. Only the p-value (0.009) for CEFR reading grade is less than α (0.01). The value for Spearman’s rho for CEFR reading grade is also the highest at 0.236. This is followed by CEFR listening grade (0.151), CEFR speaking grade (0.110) and the lowest for CEFR writing grade (0.076). These results indicated that interacting in social media using English can significantly help students improve reading. Although insignificant, there is still a weak positive correlation between the times spent interacting in social media using English and CEFR grades for listening and

speaking. However, there is almost no correlation for writing (Spearman's rho correlation of 0.076).

Discussions

The results of the first research question found that female students spent significantly more time and used English more extensively in social media. On average, students spent a total of 7.4562 hours a day on social media. However the average time spent interacting in social media using English is only 3.9431 hours per day or 52.88% of the total time spent on social media in a day. This finding contends with the findings gathered by Hameed and Irfan (2021), Celestine and Nonyelum (2018) and Kemp (2018) where an average person spends about three hours a day on social networks. In fact, this findings aligns Ahmad and Murad (2020) that social media usage had further increased during the COVID-19 pandemic where classes were conducted online and dissemination of information either formal or informal were mostly through social media. The continued trend of increasing usage of social media post COVID-19 pandemic could be the possible explanation for the increase in social media usage among students.

The results of the analyses of the second research question showed a positive linear relationship between time spent interacting using English in social media and CEFR grades. Those who spend more time interacting in social media using English have a higher tendency to achieve higher CEFR grades. Nonetheless ANOVA test found insufficient evidence to conclude the mean time spent interacting in social media using English language were different for students with differing CEFR grades. The finding of this study shows that student's exposure to social media networks has a significant influence on their academic performance. This echoes Boahene et al. (2019), concurring that social media usage for academic purposes is positively related to their academic performance. This also corresponds to Setyowati et al. (2022) where students can improve their CEFR English vocabularies through Instagram. Ika and Santosa (2023) also found that TikTok learning videos are well-suited as teaching materials. According to Ismail and Shafie (2019), Malaysian students learn English informally by saving interesting English quotes or images posted on social networking sites as well as by paying attention to the sentence patterns and accent while watching videos on those sites.

The results showed that there is a weak positive but significant correlation between time spent interacting in social media using English language and CEFR grades for reading component only. These findings are compliant with past studies by Musa and Ismail (2023), Kojo, Agyekum and Arthur (2018), Rahmawati, Sukarni and Widodo (2020), and Rafiq, Arif, and Khan (2020). They discovered that the use of social media by students has a positive and significant impact on their reading ability. Although insignificant, there is still a weak positive correlation between the times spent interacting in social media using English language for listening and speaking component which is consistent with Rahman et al. (2018).

However, there is almost no correlation for writing components which contradict with findings by Sirivedin et al. (2018) and Al-Qaysi et al. (2020). Based on the researchers' observations, this finding was not unexpected as many short forms and symbols were used in the written messages in social media by students. Some common in language use observed on social media platforms include; simulate accent (eg. Cuz for Because, Duno for don't

know), omitting vowels (eg; Nt for Not, Hlp for Help), unique compounding with contraction and using logograms (eg. @wrk for At work), and orthography made of alphanumeric homophones (eg. 10q for Thank you, G9 for Good night). Olojede, Ebim and Abioye (2018) cautioned that language used in social media platforms very often violate the norm of Standard English resulting in poor command of language, reduction in learning abilities and lack of creative writing skills in Standard English. Internet critics point to poor grammar use on social media as evidence that these sites breed poor language skills. Students are used to short forms of writing words in their chat and they forget and use the same in the classrooms.

Conclusion

This research offers several findings. Firstly, there is a positive linear relationship between time spent interacting using English in social media and CEFR grades. Those who spend more time interacting in social media using the English language have a higher tendency to achieve higher CEFR grades. Nonetheless there was insufficient evidence to conclude the mean time spent interacting in social media using English language were different for students with differing CEFR grades. Secondly, there is a weak positive but significant correlation between time spent interacting in social media using English language and CEFR grades for reading component. Though not significant, there is still a weak positive correlation between the times spent interacting in social media using English language for listening and speaking component. However, there is almost no correlation for writing component. In addition, this study also found that female students spent significantly more time and used English more extensively on social media. Most students explained that they often use English on social media. On average, they spent about 7.5 hours a day on social media. An average time spent using social media through English is only around 4 hours per day (roughly 50%) of the total time.

In light of the findings, it is recommended that social media be used as a tool for teaching and interaction among teachers and students. Nevertheless it will only be effective if English language is used in the interaction. This study established the relationship between social media usage and overall CEFR grades as well the grades for four English Language skills namely listening, reading, speaking and writing. Further research can be conducted to examine the influence of different social media on academic performance.

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