

## THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AS ENGLISH LEARNING ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

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### ABSTRAK

Situs Jaringan Sosial (SNS) telah menjadi bagian integral dari kehidupan sehari-hari siswa dan semakin digunakan sebagai lingkungan untuk belajar Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL) di luar kelas formal. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki peran SNS sebagai lingkungan belajar yang mendukung Bahasa Inggris yang meningkatkan pembelajaran profesional siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan tinjauan literatur tematik naratif, mensintesis temuan dari studi internasional dan Indonesia yang terkait dengan penggunaan SNS dalam pembelajaran bahasa, dengan fokus khusus pada praktik pembelajaran, pola interaksi, dan hasil yang berorientasi pada pengembangan profesional. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa SNS memberikan paparan terhadap bahasa yang otentik, interaksi kolaboratif, peningkatan otonomi belajar, dan motivasi yang berkontribusi pada pengembangan keterampilan komunikasi profesional dan literasi digital. Platform seperti Instagram, TikTok, dan Facebook berfungsi sebagai ruang informal untuk terlibat dengan wacana dunia nyata dan membangun kesadaran profesional. Namun, penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi celah penelitian, terutama dalam konteks EFL di Indonesia, di mana sebagian besar penelitian masih berkonsentrasi pada persepsi dan keterlibatan siswa daripada pada integrasi pedagogis dan hasil pembelajaran profesional yang terstruktur. Oleh karena itu, penelitian lebih lanjut diperlukan untuk mengeksplorasi hubungan antara praktik pembelajaran berbasis media sosial dan pengembangan kompetensi profesional di pendidikan tinggi.

**Kata kunci:** Jejaring Sosial, pembelajaran EFL, pembelajaran profesional, literasi digital, pendidikan tinggi

### ABSTRACT

*Social Networking Sites (SNS) have become a fundamental aspect of students' everyday experiences and are increasingly utilized as environments for learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) beyond the traditional classroom setting. This article seeks to explore the function of SNS as platforms for English language learning that facilitate students' professional development. The study employs a narrative thematic literature review methodology, synthesizing insights from both international and Indonesian research concerning the application of SNS in language education, with a particular focus on learning practices, interaction dynamics, and outcomes oriented towards professional growth. The findings of the study reveal that SNS offer genuine language exposure, foster collaborative interactions, enhance learning autonomy, and boost motivation, all of which contribute to the enhancement of professional communication abilities and digital literacy. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook act as informal venues for engaging with authentic discourse and cultivating professional awareness. Nevertheless, this study also highlights a gap in research, especially within the Indonesian EFL context, where the majority of studies continue to concentrate on student perceptions and engagement, rather than on the integration of pedagogical strategies and structured professional learning outcomes. Consequently, additional research is essential to investigate the connection between social media-based learning practices and the advancement of professional competencies in higher education.*

**Keyword:** Social Networking Sites, EFL learning, professional learning, digital literacy, higher education

## INTRODUCTION

The swift advancement of digital technology has led to Social Networking Sites (SNS) becoming a crucial element in the daily lives of students in recent years, impacting not only their social interactions but also their academic involvement. This rapid technological progress has allowed learning to extend beyond traditional classroom boundaries, establishing new avenues for communication, collaboration, and access to genuine learning resources (AbuSa'aleek, 2015; Troussas et al., 2021). As a component of the larger Web 2.0 framework, SNS enable users to engage, share content, and form online communities, thereby increasing their significance in educational settings (Boyd & Ellison, 2010; Chartrand, 2011).

Social Networking Sites are typically characterized as web-based platforms that permit individuals to create public or semi-public profiles, connect with other users, and navigate through these social networks (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). These characteristics position SNS not just as communication instruments but as vibrant digital environments that foster participation, interaction, and collaborative knowledge creation. Consequently, SNS have increasingly been recognized as potential learning environments that enhance student engagement, academic discourse, and collaborative learning activities (Mega et al., 2023).

In the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, SNS present opportunities for learners to engage with authentic language usage in ways that are frequently restricted in conventional classroom environments. In contrast to teacher-led classroom interactions, SNS offer social platforms where learners can utilize English for real communicative purposes, engage with varied audiences, and take part in significant discussions (Blattner & Lomicka, 2012).

Prior studies have underscored the educational potential of SNS in facilitating ESL/EFL learning. Research indicates that SNS promote authentic language exposure, interactive feedback, and learner involvement through community development and resource sharing (Alnujaidi, 2017; Tan & Md Yunus, 2023).

In the Indonesian context, there has been a notable increase in interest regarding the incorporation of Social Networking Sites (SNS)

into English language learning, especially within higher education. Research suggests that SNS are viewed as valuable resources for facilitating English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning beyond the classroom, offering flexible access to authentic materials and opportunities for informal language practice (Dewi, 2023; Suryanti Tambunan et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, despite the expanding research landscape, studies conducted in Indonesia often focus on learner perceptions, attitudes, and engagement, rather than investigating how learning mediated by SNS contributes to systematic language development or professional learning outcomes. In contrast, international studies more commonly integrate theoretical frameworks with analyses of interaction patterns and pedagogical implications (Alnujaidi, 2017). This disparity highlights a significant gap in the literature concerning the role of SNS as environments for English learning that enhance students' professional development, particularly in the context of higher education.

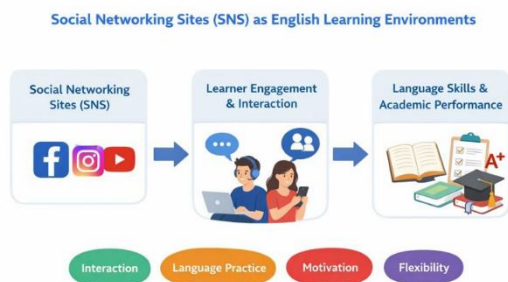
Consequently, this study aims to investigate how college students engage with Social Networking Sites as environments for English language learning to bolster their professional development. By examining learning practices, interactions, and perceived advantages, this research aspires to enhance the understanding of the pedagogical significance of SNS in modern EFL education.

### Key References on Social Networking Sites

No.	Nama	Ket.
1	(Boyd & Ellison, 2007)	Defined SNS as web-based platforms for creating profiles, connections, and online interaction.
2	(Blattner & Lomicka, 2012)	Showed that SNS facilitate authentic interaction and engagement in language learning.
3	(AbuSa'aleek, 2015)	Reported positive effects of SNS use on EFL students' language performance.
4	(Suryanti Tambunan et al., 2022)	Identified SNS as flexible informal learning

		environments for Indonesian EFL learners.
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## METHOD

This research utilized a descriptive qualitative approach to investigate the role of social networking sites (SNS) as environments for learning the English language, aimed at enhancing students' professional language skills. The primary emphasis was on gaining insights into students' experiences, perceptions, and learning methodologies, rather than on testing specific hypotheses. Data collection involved administering a questionnaire to 20 undergraduate students and conducting semi-structured interviews with 8 to 10 selected participants. The questionnaire served to gather foundational information regarding SNS usage and general learning experiences, while the interviews provided detailed insights into the ways in which SNS facilitate professional English learning. The participants consisted of full-time English Language Education students aged between 18 and 24, who were purposefully chosen due to their active engagement with SNS and their previous exposure to English language content. The data from the questionnaire were analyzed descriptively, employing frequencies, percentages, and averages to summarize patterns of usage, whereas the interview data were subjected to thematic analysis by identifying recurring themes, coding them, and categorizing them into broader themes. The findings from both data sources were synthesized to offer a holistic understanding of how SNS contribute to the professional English learning of students.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on a combination of previous research, Social Networking Sites (SNS) serve as effective informal environments for EFL learning. Previous research has shown that platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok provide authentic English language exposure, enabling students to encounter real-life communication language, professional vocabulary, and global discourse (AbuSa'aleek, 2015; Blattner & Lomicka, 2012). Furthermore, SNS encourage interactive and collaborative learning through commenting, sharing, and discussion activities that support language practice and digital literacy development (Troussas et al., 2021). Previous studies have also shown that SNS enhance learner autonomy and motivation, as students can independently access English learning content, follow educational accounts, and participate in professional online communities (Tan & Md Yunus, 2023). In the Indonesian context, research indicates that students perceive SNS as a flexible environment for informal English learning; however, most studies still emphasize perceptions rather than examining structured professional learning outcomes (Dewi, 2023; Suryanti Tambunan et al., 2022). Therefore, further empirical research is needed to investigate how SNS-based learning practices contribute to measurable professional English competencies in higher education.

## CONCLUSION

Following an examination of students' educational experiences and methodologies, this research concludes that social networking sites (SNS) are effective platforms for facilitating professional English language learning. SNS provide access to genuine language input, create opportunities for collaborative learning, and boost students' motivation and involvement in informal educational activities. The results indicate that while SNS do not substitute for formal education, they enhance traditional learning by allowing for flexible, self-directed, and interactive language practice. Furthermore, the study emphasizes that students' professional language development is positively influenced by the use of SNS when these platforms are purposefully integrated into learning activities, such as knowledge sharing, communication, and exposure to authentic

professional discourse. These results imply that educators and curriculum developers should contemplate the integration of SNS into English language learning programs to improve learner autonomy, collaboration, and digital literacy. Future studies could more regularly explore how learning supported by SNS translates into quantifiable language proficiency and professional competence, especially within higher education settings.

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