LEARNING JAPANESE LANGUAGE IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA: IS FACEBOOK AS AN ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE HELPFUL?

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Abstract

Facebook (henceforth FB) is currently considered as the most popular platform for online social networking among university students and it is confirmed that Malaysia has the highest FB usage in South East Asia (Toh, 2011). With this in mind, a study was conducted to investigate the benefits of the usage of FB in learning Japanese language in institutions of higher education. This study investigated if FB as a useful and meaningful learning tool was able to support and enhance the students' learning of Japanese language. The project involved 32 undergraduates enrolled in an intermediate language course of Japanese Language Minor Program in a local institution of higher education in Malaysia. This project explored how the students used FB for academic purpose to enhance their learning. The role of teacher was coordinating activities, monitoring group progress and encouraging reflection on language and content. All major components of the Japanese language class-based lesson remained the same as in the previous semesters. The FB group functioned as an alternative space for student discussion outside of class, not a replacement for Japanese language lesson or any other course components. The teacher, as the monitor of the FB group, found all 32 students to be active participants in every activity initiated in the FB group. It was found that FB facilitated the learning of Japanese language. Data collected from interviews suggested that students will use FB as an alternate mode of communication and the enjoyment level of learning Japanese language enhanced further.

Keywords: JAPANESE LANGUAGE, ONLINE LEARNING, FACEBOOK, INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, MEDIA

Introduction

The new communication technologies have been greatly influencing global communication. Nowadays, new communication technologies, such as mobile technologies and computer mediated social networks, are being increasingly embedded in workplace and private lives. The usage of social network sites is increasing with global participation and the advent of technologies. The technologies of today's 21st century have changed the way people communicate, as well as to the manner in which they engage academically at the higher learning institutions. These social media increasingly place an important role towards work-related, interests sharing, friendship initiation and also academic practices. In order to highlight the situation of using the social network in higher education institutions, Council for Advancement and Support for Education (CASE) conducted a comprehensive survey in April 2011 (DISCO, 2012). According to the research which focuses on North America, it was found that almost all the universities are utilising Facebook (FB) as a tool in the academic setting. FB, which is a popular social network site, is found to be one of the most commonly used social networking tools among university students.

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For foreign language learning, it is essential to equally develop four skills that encompass speaking, listening, reading and writing. The challenges always faced by the foreign language teachers in the improvement of these language skills are sparing sufficient time for practice to enable students to master the target language. To achieve the objective mentioned above, teachers actively seek to encourage their students to engage in collaborative interactions. Similar opportunities for such interactions can be created within the context of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and, in particular, in the area of computer-mediated communication (CMC).

CMC has gained popularity over the last decade. CMC transcends international boundaries, allows the learners to communicate with the native speaker afar, has become a convenient way to communicate and learn at a distance. Recent developments in online technologies and CMC have had a significant impact on the sphere of foreign language education. Foreign language learners are regularly engaged in new types of learning activities such as blogs, wikis and FB. CMC can provide the learner opportunities to engage in collaborative interactions. An increased level of interaction have important implications for foreign language learning because CMC creates the opportunity for a group to construct knowledge together. CMC has made it possible for learners to interact with a wide range of native speakers of the language.

Research has also shown that CMC (Foreign Language Teaching Methods: Writing, 2012):

- “Can help increase students’ motivation to learn the foreign language,
- Lower their anxiety,
- Increase their fluency in the target language,
- Lead to improved intercultural competence and democratize classroom communication.”

The use of CMC in the instructional context could ultimately have a positive effect on the student-teacher relationship, which has the potential to impact on positive student outcomes. In fact, Waldeck, Kearney, and Plax (2001) found that students are more likely to communicate with teachers online. O’Sullivan et al. (2004) found that students who viewed an instructor’s website with high levels of mediated immediacy had reported high levels of motivation and effective learning, which indicated positive attitudes towards the course and the teacher.

FB as a Teaching Tool

One of the more popular Web-based programs, FB was created in 2004. In 2006, FB was used at the rate of over 2,000 United States colleges and was the seventh most popular site on the World Wide Web with respect to total page views (Cassidy, 2006). To date, research on online social networking has received the most sustained interest (Boyd 2007; Boyd and Ellison 2007; Thelwall, 2008) in the field of education and such interest had the potential to revolve around students’ educational use of online social networking (Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2007; Selwyn, 2007).

FB has become increasingly popular among the academic communities on college campuses (Lampe, Ellison and Steinfield, 2007). It is the social networking site of choice for most college students (Thompson, 2007). Students spend a significant amount of time interacting on social networking sites and FB offers a dynamic and unthreatening environment for students to communicate not only with the teacher or a small study group but also with all other students in the course. As a contemporary technological tool that offers teachers and students a unique method to nurture the student-teacher relationship, FB can ultimately create a positive learning experience for both parties. Research has suggested that FB is a potentially useful tool for promoting effective academic practices. FB offers an application named *Courses* that teachers can use to create a course link and invite students to join a particular course at any institution. The teacher can post a variety of activities such as assignments, announcements and discussion topics. Students can sign up for study groups and post comments to

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each other. This application has provided many opportunities to collaborate and exchange knowledge with its members. Since FB has become increasingly popular, language teachers should consider using this technology to facilitate acquisition of language skills, given the environment to achieve specific pedagogical goals.

FB as a Learning Tool

In the digital world, the number of Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Portuguese internet users is growing much faster than English speakers. Chinese is soon set to be the dominant language of the internet (Socialmediatoday, 2012). FB gives the learners opportunities to practise foreign languages online. One of the greatest features a foreign language learner can benefit from FB is newsfeed. Newsfeed allows the learner to stay updated on the news from the learner's FB friends and all pages the learner subscribed to (Sooper Articles, 2012).

Three tips about the way to learn a foreign language on FB (SooperArticles, 2012):

1. "Like" Language Learning Resources

Subscribing to various resources on FB will help the learner to stay motivated and learn the target language. FB can help the learners to find people who speak or learn the target language. Participating in discussions on a FB page allows the learners to meet others who are learning the same language. By establishing rapport with others who are learning the same languages, it will provide the learners to share and exchange resources that provide more practicing opportunities in groups.

2. Invite Native Speakers to be your Friends

Establishing a rapport with native speakers on FB can motivate the learners because it provides opportunities for learners to experience real life practises. It also encourages the learners to invite the native speaker to correct the mistake and comment on their usage through the discussions and commenting on each other's FB page. It will help the learners to build their confidence and make their studies more engaging and enjoyable.

3. Default Language

FB settings can be switched to the target language. FB can be set to a wide variety of languages. If the learners set the language on FB to target language, the learners will see the language frequently. This can help the learners to learn more useful vocabulary and grammar from it.

Literature Review

Educational Uses of FB for Foreign Language Learning

FB, which is a popular social network site, is one of the most commonly used social sharing sites today. FB has more than 750 million active users and 50% of them log on to FB in any given day (FB, 2011). FB tools for creating and sharing information with others provide a means of communication that is highly accessible to users across the globe, it allows users to connect with others through the exchange of profiles, photos, video and conversations. Furthermore, FB provides multiple language platforms. It can also be utilised as a communicative tool to promote collaboration through target language discussions, comments, and questions. These can provide the students richer and more engaging learning experiences. With all the social nature of FB mentioned above, there are many ways to integrate it into foreign language learning and teaching. Terantino and Graf (2011) reiterate that FB provides a target-language-friendly interface created for and used by native speakers in a format familiar to students learning a foreign language. As users connect, they are able to share internet links

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and multimedia such as photos or videos with ease. This could allow the teacher to facilitate discussions among students of target language and culturally relevant material.

From the language perspective, recent investigations have pointed out that FB can have a positive effect on the student-to-student and student-to-teacher relationship (Mazer et al, 2007). Mazer and his colleagues noted that by accessing a social networking website, students may see similarities with peers and instructor's personal interest, which can lead to more comfortable communication and learning outcomes. A recent study by Terantino and Graf (2011), found that the learners of a beginning Spanish course were able to successfully complete their writings in FB as they would have done in a more traditional writing assignment. However, there was a significant difference in the apparent level of excitement among the students when they began working using FB. The FB activity utilised in the Intermediate Spanish course conducted by Terantino and Graf (2011) showed that the initial intent of the instructor in using FB was to promote interpersonal communication among students in the target language through the discussion of questions, status updates, and description of photos, videos, and events. However, unexpected results of this activity was the cultural competence gained by the students as demonstrated in their ability to seek out culturally appropriate descriptions and engage in meaningful discussions about certain habits and practices of the target language culture. A study done by a French teacher (Naditz, 2011) from Bella Vista High School in Fair Oaks, California found that while the students expect her posts to be in French (which they are), the students who have chosen to join the pages also typically post in French. Although the students were never explicitly told to post in French, the students did so and this indicates that they have fully invested in her brick-and-mortar French-speaking environment and as a result, they ensure that it extends to her virtual presence as well.

In a globalised world characterized by international links and intercultural connections, linguistic skills are crucial for employment and career. The knowledge of foreign languages increases job opportunities in many careers where knowing another language is a real asset. As we all know, learning a foreign language can be very expensive. Social media such as FB can provide foreign language learners with innovative ways to learn and practise using the target language. There are several benefits when integrating FB in learning a foreign language course. Firstly, it allows students to engage with peers in a familiar mode and for an academic purpose. It provides opportunities for informal conversations in the target language. The FB platform allows for "Access" to authentic materials and the sharing of culturally relevant photos, videos, and music. Secondly, the nature of the student-to-student and student-to-instructor interactions is more multi-dimensional than in traditional assignments (Terantino and Graf, 2011).

Numerous studies of the engagement of FB in language learning have reported encouraging influences on student motivation, engagement and attitudes. Studies by Yunus and Salehi (2012), Suthiwartnarueput and Wasanasomsithi (2012), and Promnitz-Hayashi (2011) indicated the impact of FB on the increase in language learning motivation among students. Accordingly, Mazer, Murphy, & Simonds (2007) reported that student motivation and participation were greatly enhanced when engaging course material was presented via more personalized platforms, such as FB.

Apart from that, studies also indicated that the inclusion of FB enhanced student satisfaction and investment. A research study has been conducted by Kabilan, Norlida and Jafre (2010) on 'FB: An online environment for learning of English in institutions of higher education' that focuses on university students to study the general uses and practises of FB as well as aspects of FB that students consider as an online environment that facilitate their English language learning as second language. This research study involved 300 under graduate students from Universiti Sains Malaysia to answer a set of questionnaire that was divided into two sections, Section A on demographic data and Section B on students' general practices and uses of FB. The findings of this study shows that FB managed to help the students in learning language according to four different aspects and they are language skills, confidence, motivation and attitude. This study has impacted the teachers and students in planning the

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learning projects that use FB as the medium of learning process. Kabilan, Ahmad and Abidin (2010) reported that students believe their language skills increased through the use of FB. This indirectly enhanced their motivation, confidence, and attitude concerning language learning.

In a preliminary study conducted by Yeoh and Tengku Sepora (2012), among 32 undergraduate students enrolled in the Japanese Language Minor Program in public university, a discussion topic generated a total of 22 posts to the FB discussion board. The students posted a total of 254 wall posts comprising of videos, pictures, events announcements, enquiries and discussions, dialogues and exercises, links, and lastly, group members adding notifications to the FB discussion board during 11 weeks. This highlights the tremendous amount of time students spend on FB and also their willingness to take part in discussions. Accordingly, the results indicate that pictures and videos are the most commonly used tools of FB by the students. Students used the pictures to help them to increase their knowledge in complicated sentence structures and also to understand the target language's culture. They used video to learn the application of the sentence structures they had learned from class into the daily conversation. From the way students utilized these tools mentioned above, it can be seen that students are trying to increase their knowledge and communication skills by sharing the pictures and video. Results from the interview with the students indicate they benefit from more contact and practice time and a chance to use the foreign language out of the classroom. At the same time, it also showed that FB provides great support to students with more language learning resources especially authentic resources. The students also highlighted that FB increased their interest in Japanese language learning as the use of FB was interesting and enjoyable particularly when they shared the resources and got prompt responses from course mates and the teacher. Indirectly, it also released the language learning anxiety.

These studies indicate that when FB is utilised effectively, it can help build student confidence. An increase in student confidence contributes toward the enhancement of student engagement and satisfaction in second language learning. Traditional educational models emphasis a one-way passive transfer of knowledge from teachers to students in the form of classroom activities such as lectures and textbooks. However, SNS technology supports more flexible space for personalization of learning and increased communication between teachers and students. According to Gamble and Wilkins (2014), SNS technology supports student communication and collaboration in the context of extended interactions and activities that are unrestricted by time and place. The integration of social constructivist theories with the proliferating influence of technology in education have introduced computer-supported collaborative learning, which is based on learners sharing in the construction of knowledge using technology as the main source of communication.

Informal and Incidental Learning in the FB Environment

Informal learning can be deliberately encouraged by an organisation or it can take place despite an environment not highly conducive to learning. Incidental learning, on the other hand, almost always takes place although people are not always conscious of it (Marsick and Watkins, 1990). Incidental learning in education contributes to unintentional or unplanned learning that results from other activities, regardless of those activities which are academic or non-academic (Kerka, 2000).

Media technologies allow a wide variety of activities and experiences that can support language learning (Milton, 2002) but not all these activities are situated in a formal educational setting and many of them are embedded in people's day-to-day lives (Merriam, 2001). There is growing evidence that many people are engaged in a wide range of technology-based informal learning at home and the community (Cranmer 2006). The online community such as FB allows the users to carry out meaningful interaction synchronously or asynchronously with the native speaker, and this can facilitate the development of foreign language competence and cross-cultural knowledge. The modern day students are able to develop useful academic skills not only within formal educational settings but students can be encouraged to access a variety of online network resources. Students experience

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effective learning through online network resources in a more incidental and informal learning. Technology is changing the face of organisations and has an impact on the nature of informal and incidental learning. In fact, given the distributed asynchronous nature of technology-facilitated interactions, more may be learned incidentally by learners.

FB, which primarily functions as a popular social media, has recently been gaining interest of academicians to extend its usage in language teaching and learning. Previously, social media tools were considered as a classroom distraction as it leads to uncomfortable teacher-student interactions. However, it has currently been popular among youth in their academic activities. Therefore, it is vital to explore the popularity of FB in assisting language learning, particularly Japanese language. To support this further, a recent research by Dourgherty (2014), who spent two and a half years measuring the effectiveness of FB for his university course, indicated that students who participated in the online group (FB) enjoyed the course more, felt a stronger sense of belonging, and got better grades than those who did not participate. Indirectly, it not only assists in learning but also creates a well bonded class community. Furthermore, the application of FB in Japanese language learning will attract more students who are more inclined with learning through technology to take up Japanese language courses. With FB being the most popular platform for online social networking, it will be worthwhile to investigate if FB would be an efficient learning environment for university students to facilitate their learning of Japanese. It will increase the quantity of Japanese language learning students in line with a more contemporary teaching approach for Japanese language in an online environment.

FB has continued to grow in popularity over recent years and become a bigger part of students' lives. As students become increasingly connected through FB, it is also being adopted by more and more educators for teaching purposes and it is important for us to explore how it can be utilised specifically in foreign language learning. The use of FB in the teaching and learning of Japanese language will support, enhance and strengthen the students' language learning processes. The university students will be able to improve their Japanese language ability through online social networking platforms. Their discussion sessions will also not be restricted to communicating with their classmates but could also extend to Japanese learners in Japan. Furthermore, interaction with Japanese native speakers will also introduce them to Japanese practices and manners. Teachers would also benefit from the use of FB in this context. Teaching and learning would be more meaningful with variations in Japanese language teaching approaches in the virtual world. Researchers can use the findings of this study to identify and comprehend how an online social networking platform like FB could contribute to Japanese language learning. It will also provide a clearer picture on how Malaysian students learning Japanese as their second or third language improve their language ability through FB especially in terms of reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary. Researchers would then be able to create new pedagogical ideas or methods that make effective use of FB for Japanese language learning and expand the use of FB to not only university students but also students in the secondary and high schools in Malaysia.

FB is a powerful digital tool that is influential in student learning, especially in second language (L2) learning. Previous research by Wang and Vasquez (2012), Buzzetto-More (2012) and Jones and Shao (2011) indicate that the application of SNS into L2 education has shown to improve students' overall interest in language. Furthermore one of the SNSs, FB has been used by language teachers to improve their teaching methods (Lockyer & Patterson, 2008; Nakatsukasa, 2009).

Online social networking sites (SNSs) such as FB are a popular example of communication technology that have been widely-adopted by university students. Consequently, FB has the potential to become a valuable resource to support educational communications such as in a foreign language classroom. FB, established in 2004, is the most popular SNS in the world (Mazman & Usluel, 2010) and the most established social-networking tool for students' online learning of the past decade (Omar, Embi, & Yunus, 2012).

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Currently, in higher education scenario, students communicate a lot by means of the social media. The ICT vehicle is their support to perform communication. An example of online social networking site (SNS) used by the students is FB because it is one of the most popular SNSs for college students that provides personalized and interactive services based on interest and activities on the web (Kwong, 2007). Statistics also indicate that millions of people Access FB every day. FB is a significantly important tool to promote and support the teaching and learning of Japanese language as a foreign language.

The establishment of FB in 2004 is seen to give great impact to social network users. In higher education scenario, Lempe, Ellison, and Steinfield (2006) mentioned that an increasing number of university students have turned into frequent users of FB. Given the huge number of FB users among students, a platform for efficient learning environment can be built as it is the most established social networking tool for students' online learning for the past decade (Omar, Embi, & Yunus, 2011). The idea of FB being one of the social networking sites however is seen to be a major concern in creating a learning platform because of its features that weights more on a space for socializing. In facilitating language learning environment through FB, previous research study (Kabilan, Norlida & Jafre, 2010) has taken FB as a platform to learn English as a second language. This study on the other hand, will look into the suitability and effectiveness of FB as a tool to learn Japanese language as a foreign language among university students.

This study investigates Japanese as foreign language learners' perceptions towards the ease of accessing FB in an educational context. The study also aims to investigate whether the foreign language teachers could provide a more engaging and meaningful learning experience for their foreign language students by integrating FB into regular foreign language teaching and learning environment. This is achieved by analysing students' perceptions. Teachers are faced with contradicting information regarding the suitability and effectiveness of FB's educational potential. The findings of this study will provide the knowledge needed by foreign language teachers on the suitability and effectiveness of FB in their Japanese language teaching.

Research Questions

1. What are the Japanese as foreign language learners' perceptions towards their academic practices using FB?
2. What are the Japanese as foreign language learners' perceptions towards engaging in academic activities using FB?

Research Methodology

The study employed a quantitative survey exploring the respondents' general practices or uses of FB and their views on FB for Japanese language learning as an online educational environment. The questionnaire comprised of Section A, which entailed demographic information; Section B elicited information on the students' practices of FB through Likert Scale items. A purposive sampling method was used to select respondents who were students enrolled in the Japanese Language courses in the School of Languages, Literacies and Translation at Universiti Sains Malaysia

As a pilot study that was carried out prior to the main study, it was found that students faced no difficulty in completing the questionnaires. On average, students took between 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaires. Students were asked to sign student consent forms acknowledging that

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the results of the study would only be used for research purposes and that their identity would remain anonymous.

Descriptive analyses of the quantitative data were done using SPSS version 21.0 (SPSS, 2012). The responses in the questionnaire were based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 where 1 equals to strongly disagree, 2 equals to disagree, 3 equals to slightly agree, 4 equals to agree and 5 equals to strongly agree. The subjects' responses were analysed using descriptive statistics. Mean scores related to the research objectives were calculated to establish the trends of students' FB practices.

Results & Discussion

The results of the study are divided into two sections. The first section discusses the academic practices using FB and the second section discusses the students' academic activities using FB.

Students' academic practices using FB

A total of 234 respondents participated in this study. Male respondents comprise of 67 (28.6%) students whereas 166 (70.9%) respondents were female. In terms of Japanese language ability, 3.4% of the respondents are at the advanced proficiency level, followed by 17.9% of the respondents in the intermediate category and 76.9% at elementary level. Almost 99.6 percent, with a majority of 233 students, have their FB account. This finding concurs with Lampe, Ellison and Steinfield (2007) which foregrounds the fact that FB is popularly used among academic communities on various campus universities.

Table 1: Demographic details

Years	2001	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Frequency	1	2	5	11	32	72	56	18	8	2	1	234
%	.4	.9	2.1	4.7	13.7	30.8	23.9	7.7	3.4	.9	.4	100

Table 1 above shows the year that students joined FB where from the total of 234 respondents, 0.4 percent of the students had joined FB in year 2001 and 2014. This was recorded as the lowest percentage with just 1 student. Majority (30.8%) of students had already joined FB in 2009 which recorded the highest percentage with a majority of 72 students and consequently, 2010 had 23.9% students having an FB account. This contributes to the popularity of FB as a platform used to create and share information (FB, 2011).

Table 2: FB as an online social networking site (SNS) supporting Japanese language learning

<i>Language Used</i>	<i>Scale</i>				
	<i>Never (%)</i>	<i>Seldom (%)</i>	<i>Sometimes (%)</i>	<i>Frequent (%)</i>	<i>Always (%)</i>
Bahasa Malaysia only	12.8	37.2	27.4	9.4	12.0
English only	0	2.1	15.4	28.2	54.3
Japanese only	31.2	49.1	15.8	2.1	0
A Mix of Bahasa Malaysia and English language	9.8	17.5	32.5	26.1	12.0
A Mix of Bahasa Malaysia and Japanese	66.7	23.5	6.4	0	1.3
A Mix of English and Japanese	34.6	31.6	22.2	6.8	1.3
A Mix of languages: English, Japanese and Bahasa Malaysia	59.0	25.2	10.3	2.6	0.9

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Almost a third of students use English to frequently (28.3%) communicate using FB. While another similar proportion (26.1%) use a mix of Malay and English language. A Little over half (54.3%) of students always use English when communicating through FB. It was found that 31.2% never used Japanese while 49.1% seldom used Japanese as a language medium to communicate using FB. This finding confirms that students are not using FB to promote their proficiency in the Japanese language as there is lack in the need to use FB in the academic context. The high number of students who seldom and never use FB to engage in Japanese language learning shows that language teachers are not using technology to facilitate acquisition skills by posting assignments, making announcements and discussing topics using FB.

Table 3: Frequency of Logging in to FB account

	Frequency (%)				
Duration	1 – 3 times	4 – 6 times	7 – 9 times	10 – 12 times	More than 12 times
Daily	30.3	27.8	16.7	5.6	17.9
Weekly	1.3	5.1	9.0	14.1	57.3
Monthly	0.4	.09	2.6	4.3	77.4

An interesting 30.3% log into FB at least on an average of 1-3 times and 4-6 times on a daily basis and if language teachers use this social media in the academic context, there is a high possibility that students will engage with the variety of activities and this will promote the acquisition of the language in an effective manner. Table 3 highlights that a significant (57.3%) number of students use FB on a weekly and monthly (77.4%) basis. This premise highlights the possibility of using FB as a platform to facilitate language learning by taking into consideration the three tips to learning a foreign language (Sooper Articles, 2012), which is by motivating learners by using the “Like” language learning resources, invite native speakers to be learners’ friends and default language by setting to target language.

Students’ academic activities using FB

Students learning Japanese as a foreign language lack academic practices related to writing in Table 4 as the mean scores of 2.96 showcases their practices in terms of engaging in activities that enhance their writing skills. This finding contradicts the popular belief that FB can be utilised to enhance students’ foreign language acquisition through writing activities and this shows that there is a lack of attention by the teacher in this regard. Terrantino and Graf (2010) reiterated that FB promotes writing tasks compared to the traditional forms writing through assignment based projects. A good mean score of 3.37 shows that students engage with reading activities related to the learning of Japanese and this finding concurs with most research that social media has the potential to transform foreign language learning experiences from traditional to innovative approaches. A high mean score of 3.29 was achieved also to showcase the potential of FB in enhancing students’ communication skills in acquiring Japanese proficiency.

Table 4: Enhance Japanese language skills

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Scores
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	(1) %	(2) %	(3) %	(4) %	(5) %	
Practice Writing In Japanese	8.5	20.5	41.0	26.5	3.4	2.96
Practice Reading in Japanese	5.1	12.0	32.9	40.6	9.4	3.37
Enhance Students' Japanese Communication Skills	4.7	14.1	34.2	37.6	8.5	3.29

Table 5: Enhance confidence in learning Japanese

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Scores
	(1) %	(2) %	(3) %	(4) %	(5) %	
Enhance Students' Confidence to Write in Japanese	5.6	13.7	35.9	38.0	6.8	3.27
Enhance Students' Confidence to Read Japanese Materials	3.8	7.3	33.8	47.0	8.1	3.48
Enhance Students' Confidence to Communicate Using Japanese	3.0	10.3	38.9	43.2	4.7	3.36

In terms of enhancing confidence, FB is seen to help students to increase their confidence level in reading and communicating as compared to writing in Japanese. 55.1% of the respondents agree that FB helps to enhance their confidence in reading with a mean of 3.48. O' Hanion (2007) suggested that FB is a platform for the students to communicate with each other as it is a social network based site. Thus, a lot of reading is required in order for the students to communicate with each other. This is proven when the results for FB enhancing students' confidence to communicate using Japanese language comes second with 47.9% of the total respondents agreeing and a mean score of 3.36. 44.8% of the respondents agree that FB enhance their confidence level to write using Japanese language with a mean score of 3.27. Chun (1994) and Warschauer (1996) mentioned that sharing activities on FB encourage the students to read and communicate with each other through writing. Thus, teachers should consider using FB as a platform to enhance students' confidence level in learning Japanese as a foreign language and strategise a more effective learning plan through FB.

Table 6: Enhance motivation to learn Japanese

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Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Scores
	(1) %	(2) %	(3) %	(4) %	(5) %	
Enhance Students' Motivation to Communicate Using Japanese	2.6	8.1	34.6	47.0	7.7	3.49
Enhance Students' Motivation to Read Japanese Materials	3.0	7.7	34.2	47.4	7.7	3.49
Enhance Students' Motivation to Write In Japanese	3.4	11.5	34.6	42.7	7.3	3.38

As for motivation, majority of the respondents agree that Japanese language learning through FB helps to motivate them in communicating, reading and writing in Japanese language. This is proven when 55.5% of the respondents from this research study agree that FB helps to enhance their motivation to communicate using Japanese with mean scores of (3.49). Also, 55.8% agree that using FB helps to enhance their motivation in reading Japanese materials (3.49) and 50% of the respondents agree with enhancing motivation to write in Japanese (3.38). The feature of FB that is target-language-friendly allows students to connect with each other and share internet links and multimedia such as videos and images with ease (Terantino & Graf, 2011). Through such activities, students are open for communication with each other and new knowledge can be shared when they are exposed to Japanese language material articles online with the help of pictures and images. However, only half of the total respondents agreed that FB motivates them to write in Japanese. It is understandable that only 50% of the respondents find FB useful in motivating them to write in Japanese as writing needs practice and majority (76.9%) of the respondents' Japanese Language ability is at elementary level.

Table 7: Positive attitude of using FB to learn Japanese

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Scores
	(1) %	(2) %	(3) %	(4) %	(5) %	
Make Learning Japanese more Interesting	1.7	5.6	20.5	49.6	21.4	3.79
Learning Japanese	2.1	8.1	24.8	47.9	17.1	3.70
Learn New Words in Japanese	1.7	8.1	26.9	44.4	18.4	3.68
Inculcate a more Positive Attitude towards Learning	2.6	6.4	26.1	50.4	14.5	3.68

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Japanese as A Foreign Language						
Inculcate a more Positive Attitude Towards Japanese as A Language	2.1	6.4	27.4	50.9	13.2	3.67
Make Learning Japanese Easier	2.1	12.8	34.6	38.0	12.4	3.46
Tolerate Language Mistakes	4.3	12.8	41.0	34.2	7.7	3.28
Make Learning Japanese more Interesting	1.7	5.6	20.5	49.6	21.4	3.79

FB is seen to help in inculcating a more positive attitude towards learning Japanese whether as a foreign language or as a language itself, with a mean score of 3.68 and 3.67, respectively. Mazer (2007) noted that by accessing social networking sites such as FB, students are able to improve their relationship among them and the teachers. This in return helps them to communicate comfortably and resulted in positive learning attitude. 50.4% of the respondents agree that FB helps to make learning Japanese easier, with a mean score of 3.46, and 71.0% of the total respondents agree that FB is a good platform to make learning Japanese more interesting, with a mean score of 3.79. Graf (2011) suggested that students are more proactive in social network because of the unlimited access to other cultures. Materials to target language learning are easily accessible and shared among each other and indirectly increase the students' interest and making learning Japanese language interesting as agreed by 71% of the respondents with mean score of 3.79. Besides that, 65% of the respondents agree that FB is one of the platforms that help students to learn Japanese, with a mean score of 3.70. Naditz (2011) agreed that while the teacher shares the targeted language materials on FB, some of the students are one step ahead in joining pages related to the targeted language learning. Through such exposure, FB provides good environment for the students to learn new words as agreed by 62.8% of the respondents (mean score: 3.68).

Conclusion

The results showed that foreign language learning can be integrated in students' daily life through FB. In the future project, this project will invite native speakers to the online community to enable the students to communicate with the native speakers. Higher education is experiencing the beginning of a paradigm shift away from an expectation of students' retrieval of information from traditional communication forms. Ability to find, organize and make use of information using computers (Shetzer and Warschauer, 2000) is a part of life for many in the developed world and consequently the use of computers in language learning has "become a fact of life". Therefore, language teachers should always plan and think how the computer and online social network can best be used in language teaching.

However, whether the use of network-based language teaching leads to better language learning depends on how the technology is being used because the technology itself is not ultimately responsible for the improvements in learning. The role of teacher in coordinating activities, monitoring group progress and encouraging reflection on language and content is the most important issue. The findings of this study will be used as reference to embark on encouraging Japanese language teachers in institutions of higher learning to integrate FB as a teaching tool in their Japanese language lessons. It

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will also be used to promote and increase the usage of FB for Japanese language learning among students who are acquiring Japanese as either their second or third language.

The findings of this study will also be used as a platform to apply for further grants to conduct longitudinal studies with a wider coverage of locations in Malaysia. Furthermore, international cooperation with Asean foreign universities such as from Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines to investigate the matter further and put into place the use of FB for learning of Japanese language.

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