

Efficacy of Online Social Networks on Language Teaching: A Bangladeshi Perspective

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Abstract

It is now an established fact that the use of technology facilitates teaching and learning in language classrooms. With the advancement of technology, social networking websites have emerged too. Social networking sites have been quite popular among various age group users particularly the young users since their invention. Also, they are conceived to be able to motivate (Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes, 2009) and expose learners to the authentic use of the target language (Baralt, 2011). However, very little research has been done, especially in Bangladesh, on how much these websites can contribute to language learning and teaching though they seem to offer ample opportunities. Therefore, this study aims at investigating the effect of using 'The Facebook', a social networking website, in language classrooms at tertiary level in Bangladesh. Participants of this study were first year first semester university students doing a foundation course in English focusing to improve their listening, speaking and writing skills. The participants were divided into two groups. Group 1 was the control group who was taught traditionally and non-digitally without using Facebook. Group 2, along with classroom teaching, received help from the instructor through Facebook and did tasks assigned on Facebook. At the end of the three months semester a test was taken and the result of both groups was compared. Thus, this study shall try to provide an answer regarding to what extent online social networks can facilitate second language acquisition.

Keywords: Online social networks; Bangladeshi language classrooms; Second language acquisition; Facebook.

Introduction

Today's young generation is referred as the "Z-generation" or "Net-generation" as technology and the World Wide Web are the two most familiar objects to them (Horovitz, 2012). This "Net-generation" has been found to be applying different methods of learning from the earlier generations (Sandars and Morrison, 2007) as they are more "experiential, engaged and constantly connected" (Ramaley and Zia, 2005). It has also been suggested that the Net Generation students prefer independent learning style and take the benefits of technology for better learning (Carlson, 2005).

The innovation and advancement of social networking sites e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Orkut, Twitter, Hi5, etc. has increased further use of technology in this generation's day to day life. These social networking websites have also proven to be useful in language learning as they are more engaging and inspiring for learners to use the target language, and minimizes learners' fear and nervousness and authority of the instructor (Gilbert, Fiske, & Lindzey, 1998; Beauvois, 1998 cited in Millis, 2011). Moreover, the online social networks also provide an opportunity for both instructors and learners to be exposed to the language through authentic activities and materials and thus can promote constructivist learning through meaningful communication (Woo, Herrington, Agostinho, & Reeves, 2007). According to Chartrand (2012), the online social networking sites not only motivate the Net-generation learners to use relevant learning materials, but also let the learner experience the authentic usage of a language in communication. Since students can relate more if online social networks are used for language teaching, this invariably promotes language acquisition to a great extent.

However, the prospects and opportunities of the social networking sites in language teaching and learning are yet to be discovered in the context of a south-Asian country like Bangladesh. Thus with

this trait in mind, it is quite intriguing to understand if using this kind of technology in education and classrooms can be proven to be beneficial. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the role and effectiveness of using the 'Facebook' (a social networking site) in tertiary level English language classrooms in Bangladesh. The paper also attempts to provide theoretical framework to the use of such online social networks and to gain an understanding of further possibilities of the usage of social networking websites in second language acquisition.

Literature review

English Language Teaching and Use of Social Networking Websites in Bangladesh

Bangladesh, being a post-colonial country has always seen the English language to be viewed with high regard socially and economically. Competency in English is seen as an opportunity provider for higher education and it is a requirement for better employment (Sarwar, 2005). Therefore, English plays a very important role in the education system of Bangladesh. It is mandatory from grade 1 and is the medium of instruction for tertiary level education in both public and private universities (Hossain and Tollefson, 2007). Unfortunately, the three types of schooling system prevailing in Bangladesh- English medium, Bangla medium and Islamic education produces students with different level of competency in English (Hossain and Tollefson, 2007). Also, the standard of teaching English varies greatly between urban and rural schools which reflects in the result of public examinations and is the cause of failure for many students in university admission tests (Khan, 2013). All these factors contribute to a class of mixed ability students in tertiary level language classrooms. This 'mixed bag' of students in the tertiary level education system has posed such a great problem in modern Bangladesh, that universities, specially the private ones, have introduced foundation level English courses, just to overcome this language barrier and make the students able to compete with the 'better-language-equipped' students in the technical subjects pertaining to their respective

degrees. Such two courses being taught at the moment in the Independent University, Bangladesh are English 101 and English 102.

English 101 is an elementary course designed to improved students' listening, speaking, writing skill and grammar. The grammar done in this course is of very basic level e.g. present tense, past tense, use of preposition, modal verbs, character/ personality words, describing physical features of people, etc. which are taught at the school level. However, as mentioned before, due to varied proficiency level of students coming from different types of schools, it is pertinent to revise and reinforce their English language skills to operate in the university courses. English 102 focuses extensively on improving students' reading skills.

Thus for the sake of getting a clearer picture of what improvements can be achieved by any new methods or techniques in teaching, this study has chosen one such course, the English 101 as the experiential grounds for the investigation. The selection process of the course students will be elaborated in later sections.

Boyd and Ellision (2008) defined Social networking websites as “web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system”- where people can communicate with others. Such a social networking website called the ‘Facebook’ is immensely popular among Bangladeshi youngsters and adults alike. With an approximate number of over 37 million users of Facebook in Bangladesh and more than 50% of them being within the age range of 18-24 years (www.socialbakes.com), this website enjoys a popularity in the country that by far supersedes any other site in its league.

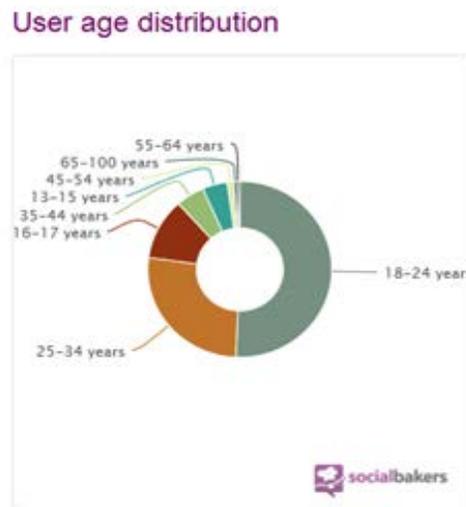


Figure 1. % Facebook user age distribution in Bangladesh (www.socialbakers.com)

A class consensus of two English 101 course batches was also taken and results indicated that every one of the students was familiar with the social networking website: Facebook. Naturally this caused the selection of the said site as grounds for the investigation.

Theoretical Underpinning to the Use of Social Networking Websites in Language Teaching

The aim of this research is to determine whether the online social network, Facebook can facilitate English language learning and teaching for Bangladeshi tertiary level students. The incorporation of social networking websites into language teaching evidently derives support from second language acquisition theories. The theory of Task- Based Language Teaching (TBLT) motivates and provides background to the use of online social networks for language teaching. TBLT is an approach to language teaching which emphasizes on using tasks “as the core unit of planning and instruction” (Richards and Rodgers, 2011). Feez (1998, p.17 cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2011, p.224) pointed out some important aspects of TBLT. He states that the tasks in TBLT focus more on “communication and meaning” where “learners learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully”. According to Ellis (2013, p.16) a task “requires learners to process language

pragmatically” and to be able to communicate the “appropriate content”. Nunan (1989, p.10) defines, tasks should be able to “involve learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language”. Freeman (2000, p.144) suggest that the tasks in TBLT enable learners to use the target language in a “natural context”. Considering the above mentioned definition of Task-Based Language Teaching approach and tasks, a clear connection can be drawn with the activities on online social networks.

Along with the support from TBLT theories, the use of online social networks in language teaching relevantly reflects the theory of language socialization. According to Duff (2010, p.427), language socialization is the process where “linguistic, pragmatic and other cultural knowledge” are acquired through social experiences ultimately leading to the development of “cultural and communicative competence”. In simple terms, language socialization is the process through which learners explore the underlying and implicit rules of communication and interaction using the language in a society. It is important to be aware of the language practices in a society in order to be able to function in accordance with the norms of a society (Duff, 2010, p.427). In one of her studies Duff (2009) has shown that English language learners from different cultural backgrounds often struggle in classroom interaction and discussion due to the non-existence of the concept of classroom discussion in their own cultures. The inhibitions due to cultural differences pose great difficulty for both teachers and learners in a language classroom even in Bangladesh; where in most cases the class constitutes of non native English language teachers and learners as the traditional classroom setting is mostly teacher dominated with little scope for participation. To reverse this process weakness it requires the ELT teacher to go to great extents, to be able to break the students’ inhibitions in a free and frank class participation. The teacher/instructor has to be more open towards a communicative language teaching along with instilling a belief in the students about a more welcoming class environment.

Such a reversal is often time consuming if not futile as class lectures tend to be ‘too little and too late’ in a language learner’s life when such a university course is chosen with students already in a firm belief about non-communication in the class room based teaching. However, because of the rapid growth of technology and internet, online social networks can be used to address this niche in language teaching in Bangladesh. Due to the immense popularity of online social networks which is very common among students from any background in Bangladesh, this research decided to use the online social network “The Facebook” and endeavored to attain usefulness of online social networks in language teaching.

Online social networks can provide a platform for L2 learners “for community participation and identity construction” (Rheinhardt and Zander, 2011). In a study where online social network “Facebook” was used for language teaching, they have found that the use of online social networks in language teaching support in language socialization and hence promotes language acquisition too. Harrison and Thomas (2009) also found in their study that the use of online social networks promotes active language learning as both teachers and learners can participate in a “collaborative learning environment” which provides opportunities for interaction and thereby helps in language socialization.

The online social network, Facebook provides the facility of individual and group interaction to its users. Users can also upload pictures, songs, create groups, sends messages, etc. on Facebook and be therefore exposed to the authentic language (Baralt, 2011). Furthermore, it also provides a platform to the learners to use the target language outside classroom for practical interaction purpose. In these ways, Facebook creates opportunities for learners to understand the social practices embedded in language and apply those in real life interaction. Use of online social networks may motivate (Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes, 2009) and engage learners more with language practice as the

activities on the social network Facebook, establishes immediate communication and result. Bosch (2009) in the study conducted among 200 undergraduate students of the University of Cape Town of South Africa found that Facebook usage for academic purposes offers potential advantages one of which is reducing the power distance between teachers and students; while the students welcomed the concept of using this social networking site for educational purpose. Eren (2012) echoes similar findings in his study conducted in the University of Gaziantep, Turkey where students expressed positive attitude towards the use of Facebook for language learning along with traditional modes of teaching. A similar view is expressed in a study by Wang, Woo, Quek and Mei Lieu (2012) where it is suggested that Facebook can be successfully used for learning management too. Incorporating Facebook in language teaching may also cater to the preference and need of independent learners of the Net Generation by boosting their autonomous learning style.

The belief of this study was that, since students feel much more comfortable and at ease when using this social networking site, it would be much easier for them to “open up” and effect a language socialization culture. Also due to having mixed ability students in class comprised of students from both rural and urban areas and different schooling backgrounds, it was thought that, students with better English language skills would feel an emotional onus towards their lesser able companions in the class and would correct and help them in the principles of the language during interaction on the website.

Methodology

This research was conducted among two groups of undergraduate university students. These students were all in their first year and first semester with a median age of 18. The university of choice is known as Independent University, Bangladesh and is considered as one of the top five (5) private universities of Bangladesh.

At this university, every student has to go through an admission process of testing and selection through their previous school-leaving results (up to 12th standard). After the selection process, the students are divided into two groups, the first group is considered as the group who can proceed directly to the main course curriculum of their chosen degrees while the second group of students go through a series of compulsory foundation courses. These foundation courses assist the second group of “weaker” students to increase their level of competency to be at par with their counterparts in the first group. Of these foundation courses, emphasis is given mainly on their mathematical and English Language aptitude.

One such course as mentioned earlier is the English 101. Since the number of students taking such foundation courses has traditionally been quite high, the students are then subdivided into smaller “sections” to maintain a class population of average 30 students per instructor at any one time.

This study has been conducted between two such sections of English 101, which were instructed by the same instructor, the author. This course basically focuses on improving students’ listening, speaking, writing and grammar skills to enable them to converse in English and to understand class lectures as the medium of instruction and study materials are in English. All the examinations are also conducted in English. This research emphasized more on improving students’ writing skill and grammar.

The two sections comprised of a total of 57 Students. The first group has 30 students in it and the second group comprised of a population of 27students. A gender analysis of the population of both groups was conducted and the results showed fairly even distribution of both genders in the group. Thus the first group was taken as the “**Control**” group (33% Female, 67% Male) and the second group was taken as the “**Experiment**” group (15% Female, 85% Male).

To ensure a fair distribution of the ability of students, both groups were subjected to a diagnostic test which measured the level of English Language aptitude of the students. For simplicity purposes, these tests were called as the “**Start**” test. The test contained a series of questions from the English 101 course content which would later be taught over the semester. The results revealed that the Control group were more apt in the Language achieving a class average of 68.31% marks while the Experiment group achieved a lower average mark of 65.42%.

A questionnaire survey was also conducted between both groups regarding their educational background, results in Board Exams- Secondary School Certificate and Higher Secondary School Certificate, location of their schools and colleges, (if in rural or urban area) etc.

An analysis of the groups’ School leaving English Language results further confirmed this difference in result between the Experiment group and the Control Group. It is noteworthy to mention here that, the English language test results of school leaving examinations are divided into four broad categories with “A” being the highest and “D” being the lowest before a student fails and achieves an “F” in their exam. Whilst within the control group 77% students had achieved an “A”, 74% had achieved the same grade in the Experiment group. On the other hand, 23% of the students in the Control group had achieved a “B” (with none achieving lower grades). In contrasting the Experiment group’s populace consisted of 22% students with a grade “B” and the rest 4% having achieved a grade “C” in their School leaving English results.

Thus, the Control group showed a considerably better result in their school leaving examinations when compared with the Experiment group, further supporting their results achieved in the Start test that was conducted.

An analysis of the urban: rural education of both the groups revealed identical results with both groups clocking 70% of their students with urban education and 30% from rural education

backgrounds respectively. Finally a survey of the number of Facebook users in the class revealed that every student was familiar to and a frequent user (more than 3 times weekly) of the social networking website Facebook.com.

When deciding the method of incorporating Facebook into the course instruction of the Experiment group, very close scrutiny was given to the amount of time the students would make contact with the course instructor. A clearer picture of the calculation is given as below:

Table 1. Lecture time calculation

| | |
|--|-------|
| No. of lectures in 12 week period | 24 |
| Contact hours per lecture | 1.5 |
| Total Contact hours (24x 1.5) | 36 |
| Hours lost due to mid-term exam | (1.5) |
| Hours lost due to diagnostic test | (1.5) |
| Hours lost due to Class quizzes (6 x 15 min) | (1.5) |
| Hours Lost due to survey & introductory class | (1.5) |
| Net contact hours in any group | 30.0 |
| EXPERIMENTAL GROUP | |
| Expected hours gained by each Facebook activity | 0.5 |
| Number of Facebook Activities | 20 |
| Total Hours Gained | 10 |
| Therefore average contact hours each class for experiment group (30-10=20/20=1) | 1 |

As shown above, traditionally there are a total of 24 lectures (or 2 lectures per week) designated for each group in a 12 week semester. Each lecture would last 90 minutes or 1.5 hours. However, with six class quizzes of 15 minutes each to be taken during the semester means that (6x15=90) 90 minutes or 1 lecture worth of actual teaching time is lost each semester. 1 full lecture is used up to conduct a “mid-term” examination, whilst for this study, 2 Lectures were used up for the diagnostic

test, survey and introductory class. This would mean that a total of 4 lectures were lost during the semester leaving a net total of 20 lectures or 30 hours of class contact time for the students. Whilst, this was the case for both the groups, the Experiment group was also subjected to Facebook activities which were considered to add around 30 minutes of contact time each. There were a total of 20 Facebook “activities”, which will be explained more elaborately later on, meaning that there would be an extra contact time of almost 10 hours for the Experiment group. This “extra” contact time was however minimized by shortening each of the twenty lectures of the Experiment group by 30 minutes to stand at 1 hour each.

Incorporating Facebook into Teaching

As discussed earlier, it was decided to use the Facebook along with formal classroom teaching with the experimental group whereas the control group would only be taught through traditional classroom teaching. A Facebook group was created for the experimental group at the start of the semester. As Facebook is immensely popular with the young generation, students showed great enthusiasm about this initiative.

The teaching through Facebook with the experimental group followed a method. Every week, a task was posted on Facebook based on the lesson in the class. Students were given tasks on grammar, description of pictures, writing on specific topics etc. These tasks were called ‘Contests’. In addition, ‘Help Files’ were also posted on the same topics to clarify students’ understanding and increase their engagement with the topics. Typically each help file would receive students’ discussions about the topic of the help file. Students were also encouraged to interact spontaneously in the group. In addition, student used to post status, comments or news freely which maintained the practical life interaction on Facebook. Every student’s comments were corrected by the author if there was any spelling or grammar mistake. It was observed that, even students were correcting each other’s

mistakes, which re-affirms the notion suggested by Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes (2009). As mentioned before, the tasks or activities on online social networks are thought to “motivate” and engage the learners to learn the language with less dependence on instructors. The Experiment group members were also able to use the language in “natural context” where the primary focus was on meaningful communication which connects the theory of Task- Based Language Teaching and using online social networks for language teaching. For example, a group member would usually post a status about their day or some unexpected life event whereby other members of the group would give feedback comments on the status. The only rule to be followed in the Facebook group was that each and every member would have to post whatever they liked in English.

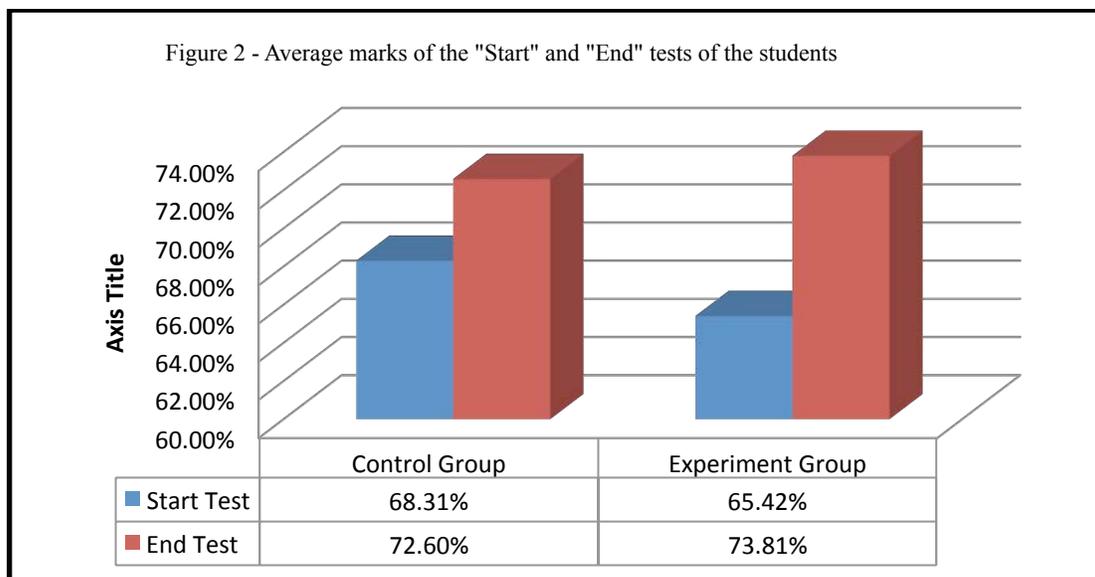
The Contest tasks were normally associated with Help posts and were comprised of questions regarding to the topics that were being taught in the classroom. So basically, instead of asking verbal questions in the classroom to re-affirm the understanding of a topic in a traditional setting where only a few students would be able to communicate with the lecturer, these Contests allowed every student equal chance to take part in the communication process. The Contest tasks assigned to the group members had a time limit. Students were given two days’ time to finish each task. After two days, the result was announced. Also, the response of each student containing grammatical or theoretical mistakes was corrected and explained to the students either on Facebook or in the classroom.

At the end of the three months semester, a total of ten tasks were given to the students. It was announced beforehand in the class that the three top winners will be rewarded with material gifts based on the number of wins. At the end, three winners, who had completed and won the tasks most of the time were rewarded. The first prize was given to the student who had maximum number of wins, followed by second and third position. A sample of the Contest posts, Help posts and winner announcing posts are given in the appendix.

At the end of the three month semester, a final examination was taken with an array of questions styled in the same way as the diagnostic test. This marked test was conducted again to measure the aptitude of the students in both groups and their development in the topics taught during the semester.

Findings and Discussion

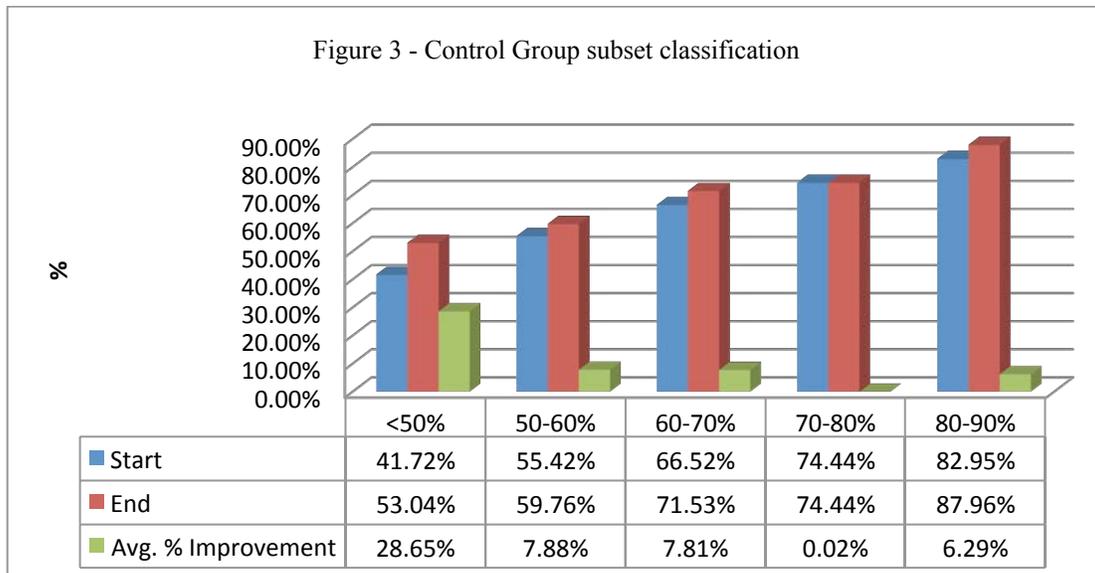
As mentioned before, a diagnostic test consisting of items from the English 101 course content was taken in the beginning of the semester with both control and experimental group. A similar test was taken in the end of the semester with both groups again to assess their progress. The average result of both the start and end test of the control and experimental group is shown below in the chart.



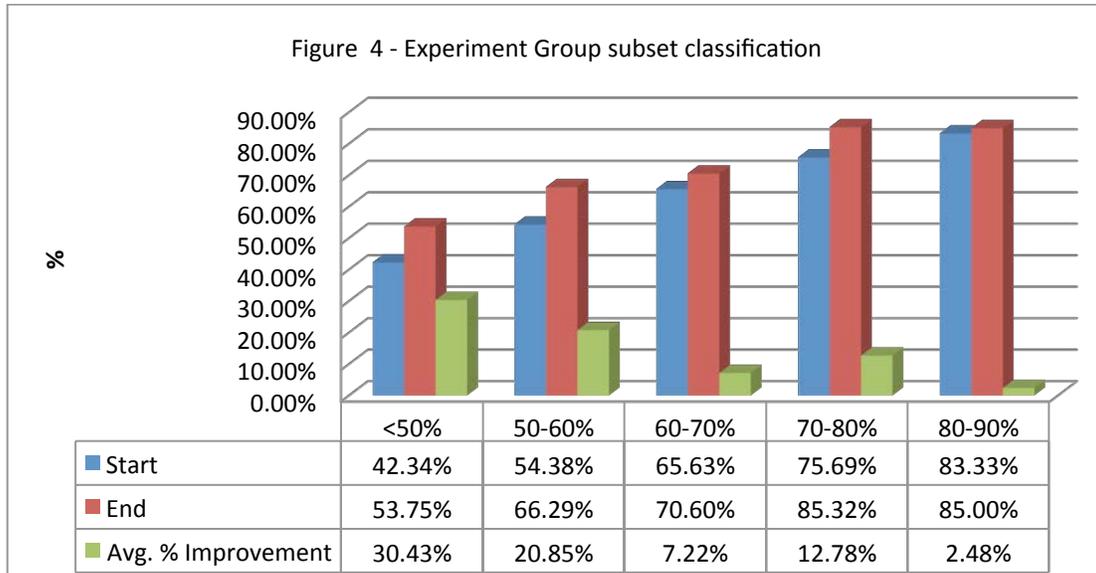
It can be observed that the control group outperformed the experimental group in the first test with an average score of 68.31% whereas the experimental group achieved an average score of 65.42%. However, after three months, in the end test, the control group achieved a score of 72.60% whilst the experimental group is seen to have improved slightly more and outperformed the control group with

an average score of 73.81%. This meant that the average improvement in the Control group was 6.28% while that of the Experiment group stood at 12.82% which was almost double. This result almost evidently presents itself to prove that usage of social networking websites is an efficient medium of technique when teaching English to second language learners. However, a closer look at the scores of each group revealed some interesting facts which would prove this theory otherwise. As a first step of the investigation firstly, each of the groups (both control and experiment) was subdivided into five different subsets. These subsets of students were classified by the marks that they achieved in their diagnostic test which by their title were quite self-explanatory. The categories were “<50%” for the students who failed in their diagnostic tests, “50%-60%” for students who achieved equal to or more than 50% but less than 60%, “60%-70%” for students who achieved equal to or more than 60% but less than 70%, “70%-80%” for students who achieved equal to or more than 70% but less than 80% and “80%-90%” for students who achieved equal to or more than 80% but less than 90%. None of the students achieved more than 90% in their diagnostic test which was quite reasonable as these students were assigned to this course due to their poor performance in English Language in their previous tests respectively.

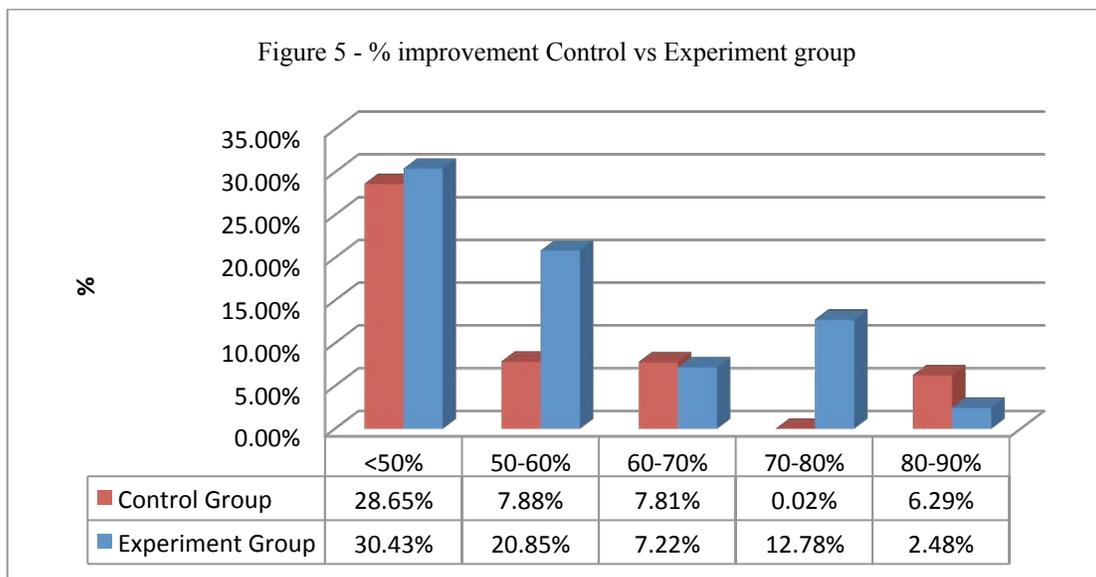
After this subdivision and assignment of students to different subsets, a comparison was drawn on how much each subset of students has improved and the respective subsets were compared within their own large group, i.e., the Control group and the Experiment group.



When looking at the Control group % improvements in results, the increase of the students’ aptitude (attributed by the marks they achieved in their respective tests) was seen to be quite spread out, with the highest increase in the failing group (28.65%) and lower but similar increases being noticed in the “50-60%”, “60-70%” and “80-90%” groups with increase of 7.88%, 7.81% and 6.29% respectively. This is quite acceptable as students with lower abilities tend to catch more in these specific courses than students with higher levels. This is because these courses are designed such that students with a background in learning English language but with poor skills in the Language are the priority target of the teaching. However it is quite interesting to note that, the students in the “70-80%” subset had almost no development in their test scores (0.02%).

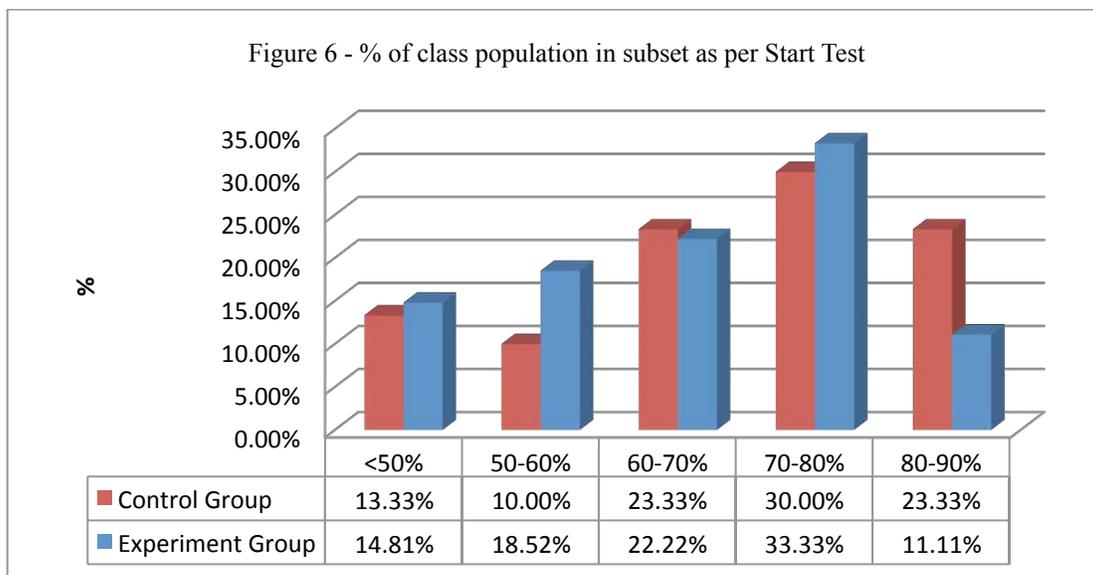


A look at the Experiment group however showed a slightly different trend, with almost a linear decrease in the improvement of students as their initial aptitude (attributed by the marks achieved in the diagnostic “Start” test) increased. The lowest increase in this group was noticed in the “80-90%” region. There was however a sudden spike in improvement in this trend for the “70-80%” subset with almost double the improvement from the immediately lower subset (12.78%)



As can be seen above, a second comparison was drawn between the subset of students across the two groups. This helps to clearly understand how the improvement has varied over the two groups. The Experiment group (in blue) can be easily seen to be following a trend in its ability to improve as it moves along the subsets, while the ability improvement of the Control group seems to have drastically dropped when rising from the failing (<50%) students to the higher subset students. What is also interesting to notice is that, where one group failed in improvement, the other group seemed to almost always persevere with a common meeting place in the “60-70%” subset.

As seen in both groups, the only subset of students that gave results out of trend was the ones in the “70-80%” set. When revisited with the query of how they felt about the course, in the Experiment group, 100% of the students in this subset (70-80%) replied with a positive answer explaining that the course was very engaging.

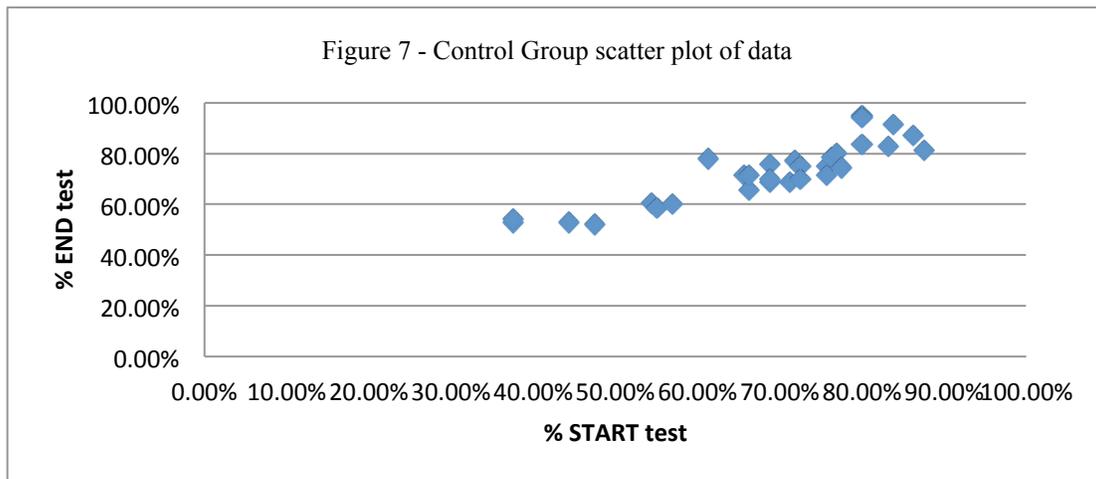


Finally, a comparative study showed that the maximum number of students resided in the 60-80% margin of marks (obtained in the “start” diagnostic test).

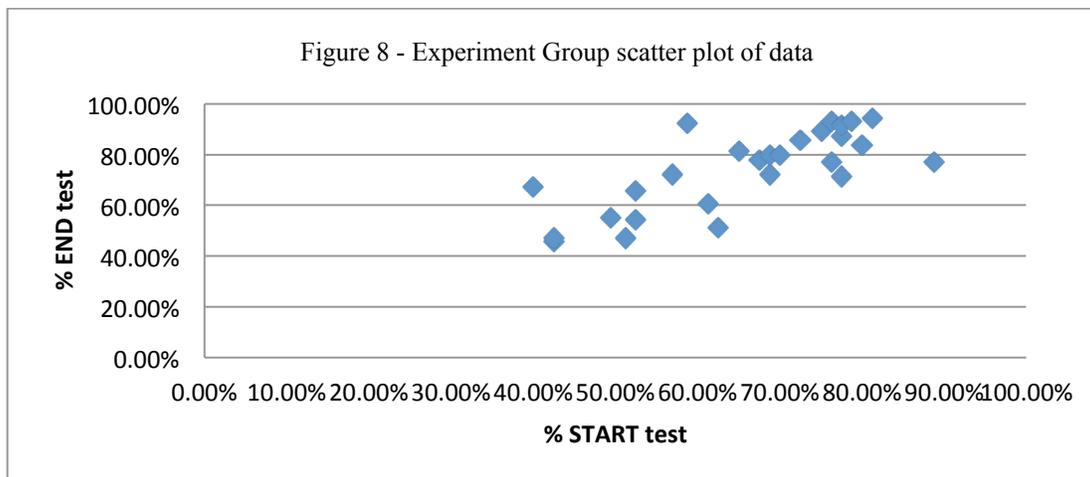
Correlativity & reliability of Data

A scatter plot of the two groups’ result was drawn up with the x-axis or the independent axis as the % of marks obtained by each student in the diagnostic Start test. The y-axis or the dependent axis was then populated with the respective students’ % marks obtained in the final End test. The results were then also calculated through the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient using the following equation to ascertain the correlativity and reliability of the data:

$$r = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n ((x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y}))}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2 \sum_{i=1}^n (y_i - \bar{y})^2}}$$



The Control group data when plotted in the scatter diagram showed a very good trend of uniformity with a strong to very strong correlation coefficient of 0.88868



The Experiment group data when plotted in the scatter diagram also showed a fairly uniform trend in data with a strong to medium correlation coefficient of 0.74317. This weaker result could be attributed to the abnormally higher improvement of this group's "70-80%" subset students.

Conclusion

In conclusion, after analyzing all the data from the study, it can be said that a social networking website does not work as a technical platform for students to learn new theories or hone their skills in English as a second language, rather, it works as a motivational platform (Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes, 2009) which encourages, liberates (from fear and introversion) and engages students into the practice of collaborative learning (Liaw, Chen & Huang, 2008) and therefore increase of skill in the language. This finding is also reflected in the survey by Kabilan, Ahmad, and Abidin (2010) where it has been stated by the students that Facebook – the online social network could facilitate second language learning. Zaidieh (2012) points out a few benefits of online social networks that they are 'flexible', 'repeatable' and 'convenient and accessible' which make them a beneficial tool to be used for educational purposes along with some drawbacks.

This means that, when teaching students with already advanced skills in the language, this method will not help the students to increase their skills much further. This can be clearly seen when

comparing the results of the students in the Experiment group “80-90%” subset. The “80-90%” subset of the Experiment group demonstrated only 2.48% improvement compared to a 6.29% improvement shown by their counterpart subset in the Control group. One reason that could be responsible for this phenomenon is as this course was of the foundation level, therefore the students with the highest level of ability in English had little to gain from the course. Secondly but more logically, the reason could have been because the higher ability students in both groups had advanced skills when it came to socializing in English but were rather weak in a few technical concepts of English. Such students would profit more from class contact time where each concept would be traditionally taught and consequently assimilated efficiently by the learner. The “80-90%” subset of the Control group received more of such contact time than the Experiment group whose regular class contact time was cut short by 30 minutes in each lecture (as mentioned earlier). Thus for such “high-skilled” learners, it could be safely said that a more technically focused class room based teaching method would help improve their skills further.

On the other hand students with very poor skills are also seen to have gained little more from the method, as seen in the “<50%” subset as in their case they are also learning new theories in English Language. This phenomenon can be clearly appreciated when comparing the said subset students’ 28.65% improvement of the Control group compared to the 30.43% improvement of the Experiment group. The second reason for the “80-90%” subset of both the groups stands to logic here also, but with a slight spin. What it seems is that, the “<50%” subset students in each group are so weak in the technical concepts of the Language specially Grammar, that they are far from even “entering” a language socializing zone. For them, the language English is still a “Foreign” language for which they are yet to learn the elementary principles. Such students again need rigorous traditional class contact time where they are introduced to the basic principles of English. Rather than improving,

such students “learn” the principles for the first time perhaps due to various reasons including but not limited to “seriously-flawed” teaching or learning practices during their primary and secondary education. Thus a decreased class contact almost offsets the “motivational factors” and positive impacts of such language socialization techniques. Such students therefore need to be firstly taught in class room based environments where they would progress to become “medium-skilled” and only then can further teaching methods be applied to “improve” their soft skills in the language.

Conversely the most surprising results were demonstrated by the students of the middle “50-80%” subset. Where the general norm seemed to be that the Experiment Group outperformed the Control group by a considerable margin. This is the group of interest where it seemed that the theory of Facebook thrived. The “50-80%” subset students of the Experiment group were also the ones who took part most actively in the Facebook activities. For these types of students, with fewer weaknesses in the principles of English language, bulk of the issue was the practical usage and learning through practice of the principles of the language. It is these “medium-skilled” students of Bangladesh, who are capable of understanding (and have somewhat learnt the theories) but have been suppressed by the one-sided communicative and “punishing” system of the prevailing schooling system in the country, who can benefit the most from this type of method (Chowdhury,2003) as online social networks provide equal participation opportunities to students (Warschauer, 1995). By “punishing” it is meant that the flawed communicative language teaching practice prevailing in Bangladesh, actually “injects” the student with theories of English language (in the forms of verbs, nouns, sentence making etc.) but never allows them to practice or even use the Language in an un-inhibited environment. The general English language student on the other hand is in an even unfavorable situation outside the classroom where the nation speaks only one common language “Bangla” and little use is needed for a second language other than when attempting an aristocratic upper hand.

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Appendix

Tables

Table 1. Lecture Time Calculation

Samples of Screen Shots of Help Posts, Contest Posts, Result Posts and Students' Posts

Help Posts

| time → | PAST | PRESENT | FUTURE |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ↓ aspect | | | |
| SIMPLE | <i>she worked</i> | <i>she works</i> | <i>she will work</i> |
| CONTINUOUS | <i>she was working</i> | <i>she is working</i> | <i>she will be working</i> |
| PERFECT | <i>she had worked</i> | <i>she has worked</i> | <i>she will have worked</i> |
| PERFECT CONTINUOUS | <i>she had been working</i> | <i>she has been working</i> | <i>she will have been working</i> |

Photos of RUB English 101

Tag photo Options Share Send Like

Shailla Shams · RUB English 101
11 February

A HELP file to help all students understand the different tenses in English.

Tag photo Add location Edit

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · Share · Edit

Mishu Rahman, Rayhan Protik, Shameen Yasar Oyon and 13 others like this.

Orko ViKings thanks ma'am ...
11 February at 23:30 · Like

Asifur Rahman thnx maam !!!
11 February at 23:30 · Like

Shanto Parvez thnx you ma'am.
11 February at 23:31 · Like

Refayyet Hridoy thnx for help maam
11 February at 23:53 via mobile · Like

Pascha Rahman Thanks ma'am...
12 February at 00:23 · Like

Write a comment...

Shailla Shams

HELP File 02: Simple Present Tense. Dear Students look at how the simple present tense changes according to single i.e. for one person and plural i.e. for more than one person. Also it is interesting to see the Active form of the tense. Active form is when we describe an action directly. Passive Form is when we describe an action indirectly.

```

    graph TD
      A[SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE] --> B[Singular Form  
(he/she/it)  
's' is added to the verbs  
Eg. He talks, she laughs]
      A --> C[Plural Form  
(they/we/you)  
no 's' is added to the verbs  
Eg. They talk, we laugh]
      B --> D[Active Form  
Eg. Mary washes the clothes every morning.]
      C --> E[Passive Form  
Eg. The clothes are washed by Mary every morning.]
    
```

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · 11 February at 23:37

Shanto Parvez, Shameen Yasar Oyon and 8 others like this.

Seen by everyone

Write a comment...

Contest Posts



Shaila Shams

Hello Students,

It is very nice to see all of you in this group and very actively participating too!. As your tutor I have given all of you some time to get used to this group. However it is now time that we start learning a bit more of the English Language which is the purpose of this group.

Over the next few weeks until the 1st week of April I shall post several topics, questions, videos and tutorials in this group. I would like to have all of you to participate in the activities.

Of all the posts made every week, there will be three posts that will be part of a contest for this group. These posts will be Marked as "CONTEST" before the post. Each student is required to reply to the contest posts and a lucky winner within the posts will be chosen and a mark will be given to him/her.

At the end of the contest period, 6th of April, 3 grand winners will be chosen within all the lucky winners. The Prizes offered will be as follows:

1st Prize= Canon Powershot A2200 HD Digital Camera & 10 Marks Grace
 2nd Prize= Transcend V-350 16GB Pen Drive & 8 marks Grace
 3rd Prize = 5 Marks Grace

Please note you can only have one comment per contesting post. If you make more than one comment, you can always delete the comment. In case if you have more than one comment, only your last comment will be read/marked.

Every Contest Post will have a maximum window of 48 hours after which I will comment and close the post.



Shaila Shams

Contest Post 2: Dear students, please use WH words to ask questions to the following sentences. Also, remember to write your answers serially, for example :

- 1.
- 2.

When you finish the task , send it to me as an email attachment to iubg101@gmail.com. Please provide your full name and in the place of subject, write contest 2.

Your time will be up on 20th February at 11:59 pm.

DO NOT ANSWER ON FACEBOOK

Thank you and Good Luck.

1. I go to school by bus.
2. The train leaves at 8 pm.
3. By walking regularly you can stay fit.
4. She can speak four languages.
5. My parents have two cars.
6. He studies BBA at the university.
7. She ate a sandwich.
8. I did not bring my books today.
9. I want to eat pasta and cheese.
10. I am going to open a bank account.

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · 18 February at 23:12

Enoy Hasan, Orko VIKings, Asifur Rahman and 9 others like this.

Asifur Rahman done maam
19 February at 18:09 · Like

Write a comment...

Shaila Shams

Contest Post 9:- For this contest candidates will have to choose only one picture from the picture list shown. You should give the number of the face you are describing. Please remember that one picture can be chosen by one person only once. which means that if a classmate of yours has described a face already, then you cannot describe it again and you have to choose a new one. Again for this contest the word limit is 200 words. Contest closes at 11:59 PM on the 1st of April. Good luck guys!!



Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · 31 March at 02:06

Asifur Rahman, Shameen Yasar Oyon, Refayet Hridoy and 2 others like this.

Faisal Jakaria Here I describe the number 21, here I saw a girl. Who is European or American . Her face is long and cunning. Her eyes are small and very black & dark. Her nose is so sharp. She is a

Result Posts

Shaila Shams

Dear students, result of contest 4 is now ready. It was really very difficult to choose one winner as all of you came up with wonderful stories and your writing was good too. However, a rule is a rule and therefore there can be only one winner for one contest. So, the winner of contest 4 is Shiam Rahman Turjo. Congratulations Shiam.

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · 13 March at 02:17

Orko Vikings, Refayet Hridoy, Asifur Rahman and 5 others like this. Seen by 30

View 7 more comments

Faisal Jakaria 13 March at 22:12 via mobile · Like

Shaila Shams Shawon Hossain... "congrats" 14 March at 00:02 · Like

Write a comment...

Students' Posts

 **Fima Kibria**
Hello friends, have any of you watched any animation films lately ?? Please suggest me some 😊

Thank you.

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · 14 March at 00:54 via Mobile

Refayet Hridoy and Enoy Hasan like this. Seen by 27

 **Rayhan Protik** hmnn.....if you bring your pendrive i will give u that....
i have some collection.....!!!!!!
14 March at 00:57 · Like · 🔄 1

 **Fima Kibria** I also have some, but i needed some names so that may come to know whether i have the movie or not 😊
14 March at 00:59 via mobile · Like

 **Faisal Jakaria** kungfu panda, ice age, madagaska, rio, finding nimo, toy story, mega mind, alice in the wonder land,
14 March at 02:04 via mobile · Like · 🔄 2

 **Refayet Hridoy** Tangled, Monsters Vs Aliens, Monster House
14 March at 08:08 · Like · 🔄 2

 **Fima Kibria** thank u .. but i have seen them all 😊 thank for suggestions !!
14 March at 23:04 · Like

 **Shaila Shams** Have you seen 'Avatar, The Last Airbender' Fima? Its a very long one, but I really liked it. You may try this one.
15 March at 23:42 · Like · 🔄 1

 **Refayet Hridoy** "Avatar, The Last Airbender" is an awesome Movie. Maam i saw this movie. 😊 @ Fima Kibria u must watch this movie.
16 March at 08:58 · Unlike · 🔄 3

 **Fima Kibria** i have seen avatar too 😊
16 March at 09:09 via mobile · Like

 **Shameen Yasar Oyon**
I may get B in English!!!!!! i got only 26 in mid!!!! i'm depressed 😞

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · 9 March at 21:11 near Dhaka

Refayet Hridoy, Mishu Rahman, Intehad Arno and 4 others like this. Seen by 27

 **Fima Kibria** Don't be depressed man !!! 26 is good , in the finals try to get more marks... In sha Allah you can do it. 😊
9 March at 21:16 via mobile · Like · 🔄 2

 **Shameen Yasar Oyon** i can do well... i hope so... thanks Fima 😊 ✕
9 March at 22:10 · Like

 **F** Saturday, 9 March 2013 at 22:10 kam (we are practising modals
9 March at 22:12 · Like

 **Shameen Yasar Oyon** yeah i saw that 😊 i must get at least CGPA 3.5 to continue my scholarship 😊
9 March at 22:20 · Like · 🔄 2

 **Fima Kibria** Yes you SHOULD read sincerely then 😊 😊 You can make it i am sure of it 😊
9 March at 22:21 · Like · 🔄 1

 **Shameen Yasar Oyon** thanks 😊
9 March at 22:23 · Like

 **Fima Kibria** 😊
9 March at 22:24 · Like · 🔄 1

 **Shaila Shams** good going guys
9 March at 23:34 · Like

 **Fima Kibria** 😊 Its fun to learn like this 😊
9 March at 23:37 via mobile · Unlike · 🔄 2