

USING FACEBOOK IN LEARNING LITERATURE AMONG LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL ESL STUDENTS

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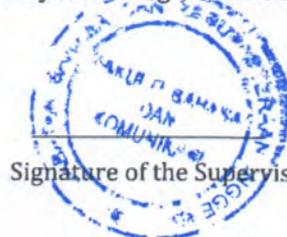
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ABSTRACT

Facebook as one of the social networking sites has captured the attention of educators and policy-makers as an alternative tool for language teaching and learning. The use of Facebook made the teaching and learning process interesting for the students and had given the students an opportunity to better understand novels. The objectives of the study were to explore the use of Facebook in learning literature among lower secondary school ESL students and to investigate their perception during the learning process. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. This study had two phases of investigation. The first phase involved survey-questionnaires. Meanwhile, the second phase involved conducting a quasi-experiment and semi-structured interviews. The subjects employed for the study were 60 lower secondary ESL school students using purposive sampling method. The subjects, were then divided equally for the treatment and control groups. The findings indicated that Facebook could be an effective tool in learning a novel. The results concluded that the students could use Facebook to help them understand a novel better. The results of the study implied that the use of Facebook is a beneficial literature-learning tool for lower secondary ESL students.

PENGGUNAAN FACEBOOK DALAM PEMBELAJARAN SASTERA DI KALANGAN PELAJAR BAHASA INGGERIS SEBAGAI BAHASA KEDUA BAGI MENENGAH RENDAH

ABSTRAK

Facebook sebagai salah satu laman rangkaian sosial telah menarik perhatian pendidik dan pembuat dasar sebagai alat alternatif untuk pengajaran dan pembelajaran bahasa. Penggunaan Facebook dalam pembelajaran sastera adalah menarik, bermanfaat dan penggunaannya telah memberi peluang kepada pelajar untuk mendapatkan pemahaman tentang novel. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk meneroka penggunaan Facebook dalam pembelajaran kesusasteraan di kalangan pelajar ESL sekolah menengah rendah dan untuk menyiasat persepsi mereka semasa proses pembelajaran. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dan kualitatif untuk penyelidikan. Kajian ini mempunyai dua fasa penyiasatan. Fasa pertama melibatkan soal selidik tinjauan. Sementara itu, fasa kedua melibatkan melakukan percubaan quasi dan wawancara separa berstruktur. Subjek yang digunakan untuk kajian ini ialah 60 pelajar ESL menengah rendah yang menggunakan kaedah pensampelan purposive. Subjek, kemudian dibahagikan sama rata untuk kumpulan rawatan dan kawalan. Penemuan menunjukkan bahawa Facebook boleh menjadi alat yang berkesan dalam mempelajari novel. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahawa pelajar boleh menggunakan Facebook untuk membantu mereka memahami novel yang lebih baik. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa penggunaan Facebook adalah alat pembelajaran sastera yang bermanfaat bagi pelajar ESL sekolah menengah rendah.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CMC	Computer Mediated Communication
CRP	Class Reader Programme
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELRP	English Language Reading Programme
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
FB	Facebook
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KBSM	Integrated Curriculum Secondary School
L2	Second Language
MOE	Ministry of Education
ODF	Online Discussion Forum
PAGE	The Parents Action Group of Education in Malaysia
SNS	Social Networking Sites

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

It is evident that our country needs a transformation of its entire education system. Thus, the preliminary National Education Blueprint (2013–2025) which was introduced by the 6th Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak on 11th September 2012 serves as the first stepping stone in achieving this agenda. The main objective of this blueprint is to reform our education system in line with the country's vision and mission to become a developed nation in 2020. The Blueprint focuses on 11 shifts that are needed to occur in order to deliver the change in outcome as envisioned by all Malaysians. Among all the shifts mentioned, Shift 2 clearly focuses on children's proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia

and English. Upon all the strategies outlined under this shift, the most attractive parts are the ‘upskilling’ of English language teachers and expansion of opportunities to more exposure to the English language via a compulsory English literature module at the secondary school level.

The Blueprint highlights that literature is a tool to promote English language and this clearly shows that the importance of literature as a complement to English language teaching and learning has begun to be realised. This means that literature has begun to take root and make its presence strongly felt again. Today, literature is assigned as a more prominent role to play in the teaching and learning of English. This is evident with the recent introduction of literature in the English language curriculum.

Throughout the transitional period of 1956 to 1964, English medium schools were phased out in support of the move to enhance the standing of the national language (Mauzi, 1985). In place, a systematic implementation of Malay as the medium of instruction in secondary schools was introduced while provisions were made for English to be taught as a school subject that was compulsory to take but not to pass for all students in the school system starting from the 1970s onwards (Gill, 2002). Furthermore, in the beginning, literature was given much attention during language teaching under the influence of the Formalists and Structuralists.

According to Thakur (2003), before the world war 2, the teaching of English language was synonymous with the teaching of literature. Moreover, at that time,

literature was taught as a body of knowledge or subject matter that dominated the language syllabus (Carroli, 2002). Then, the situation changed after the end of the British colonisation period as literature was separated from language teaching due to arguments by advocates of the Functional Approach to eliminate literature from language teaching (Delanoy, 1997). Nevertheless, literature had slowly reestablished its grounds in language teaching since the 1980s through a new evolution of Applied Linguistics and Literary Theory (Thakur, 2003).

The use of literature from then on in secondary schools was through the English language Reading Programme (ELRP) which was to encourage learners to read extensively and independently by providing them with as much reading material as possible. However, this unstructured reading programme was not successful and was instead substituted with the Class Reader Programme (CRP) in 1990 (Vethamani, 1991). The Class Reader Programme had primarily aimed to expose students to English materials in order to motivate them to read and inculcate the reading habit (Mukundan, Ting & Ghani, 1998). However, this programme too failed to produce a significant impact on the study of literature as it was not a compulsory and tested part of the English language curriculum, hence was conveniently sidelined by both teachers and students (Subramaniam, 2003).

Challenges in the 21st century such as the economy boom, globalisation, the age of Internet, Vision 2020, the plan to create a multimedia super-corridor and the development of a knowledge-based economy have brought greater impetus to the

teaching and learning of English. As stated by Usha (2002), the emergence of the internet added a new dimension to information creation and delivery which also globally triggered digitization programmes.

Since independence, the English language curriculum had undergone tremendous changes and constant revision, none of which had encouraged the inclusion of literature as a meaningful way of language learning since literature was perceived as a difficult and highly academic subject. The notion of literature as an amount of highly regarded texts and assessments that are based on the right interpretation of texts served as a deterrent to students and teachers alike.

Literature was never given a prominent place in the English language curriculum until the late nineties when curriculum developers re-examined the value of literature and began to uphold its worth again as a primary mechanism for critical thinking, creativity, discovery, cultural enhancement, language improvement and most importantly as outlined by the Ministry of Education (MOE).

From then on, literature has once again made its way into language instruction. This time however, it does not dominate the language instruction, but instead functions as a resource for language teaching and learning (Lazar, 2008). The renewed interest in the use of literature in language teaching has attracted many language syllabus planners and practitioners to turn to literature as an alternative resource for language teaching.

According to Subramaniam (2003), in the year 2000, the MOE of Malaysia decided to integrate literature as a tested component in the English secondary school syllabus. The incorporation of literature as a tested component of the English subject in the local context shows that Malaysia is not only serious, but also appreciates the value of literature for the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) for language learners.

The next sections provide a background of the study, followed by the statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, and finally the significance of conducting the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

English is taught as the country's second language in all primary and secondary schools in Malaysia (Darmi & Albion, 2013). A Malaysian child begins to learn English formally in Standard 1. By the end of primary schooling, students in Malay, Chinese or Tamil medium schools would have had six years of English language taught as a subject five times a week.

It is assumed that by the end of the six years, students would have mastered the basic grammar of the English language and have an adequate grasp of the vocabulary. They would then go on to secondary school and study literature as part of the English

subject to be examined. The Integrated Curriculum Secondary School (KBSM) English language syllabus reflects a literature-enriched curriculum.

The rationales for teaching English literature are to encourage and develop students' ability to enjoy reading literary works, explore the contribution of literature to human concerns and human relationships, appreciate values that enhance an understanding of themselves and their relationships with others, understand and respond to literary texts in different forms and from different periods and cultures, experience literature's contribution to the aesthetic, imaginative and intellectual growth, and be aware of how language is used for different purposes (Thaler, 2016).

Literature is seen as an important aspect that can contribute towards the goals of the KBSM English Language Syllabus because a major concern affecting the acquisition of English in Malaysian schools is that students are not learning enough English to make them competent in the language (Ministry of Education, 2010).

As literature makes a comeback into the Malaysian classrooms, it becomes the foremost task of literature teachers to devise lessons creatively in order to engage learners' interest. By cultivating positive perceptions towards the diverse approaches to learning literature in English, literature students will understand that there are alternative ways to seek an understanding of literary texts on their own. These approaches can promote learners' self-realisation by synthesising and integrating their imaginative, intellectual, emotional and physical capacities (Lyton, 1971).

According to Rosli Talif (1995), learning literature in English is not easy since the English language functions as a second language in the Malaysian context. This difficulty arose because learning literature under the English as a Second Language (ESL) subject poses many language challenges such as the lack of positive attitudes among students towards the subject, shortage of suitable texts, being highly teacher-centric, having to deal with numerically large classes, and insufficient resources for teachers.

Students in the Internet generation expect more from a class and do not settle down for lectures and books only. Here, traditional classrooms are losing their ability to challenge and motivate the current generation of students. One thing to consider in the teaching of Literature is the use of technology. In dealing with technology, social networks seem to be the most widely accessed medium and they are fast becoming the new trend of today's communications.

In the Integrated Secondary School Curriculum, the mode of teaching is primarily formal, face-to-face and based on the chalk-and-talk mode. Teachers are looked upon as those who impart knowledge to students, and though teaching is theoretically learner-centred, it ends up being teacher-centred. This statement is supported by Kundu (2018) where he stated that still now teachers are imparting knowledge in an ancient way and in a teacher-centric mode which is most of the time boring and lack of interest. Group discussions are undertaken to promote the vigorous use of English language in and beyond the classroom, and teachers rely on approved English textbooks to carry out classroom activities.

There is a lack of research undertaken in Malaysia that examines the contribution of social networking tools in relation to the teaching and learning of literature. As stated by Mazman & Usluel (2010), the research on social networking in education is limited not clearly defined. Greater usage of social networking sites for literature activities in schools as well as outside the classroom is expected to increase the communication skills of learners. Therefore, in order to reap the full benefits of the digital era, the country needs to move away from traditional classroom learning and adapt an approach whereby there is integration between social networking tools and classroom teaching to provide greater exposure to the learning of English literature beyond the classroom. There is a dire need in the Malaysian context to create a tool that can be used by students to improve their literary skills.

Social networking sites (SNSs) like Facebook and Twitter are gaining popularity day by day. The reason may come from the fact that SNSs are different from traditional Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) in that the content does not only cover the creator's information, but is also shaped by changes or contributions that friends make (Tong *et al.*, 2008). SNSs offer different activities like sharing personal information, connecting with other users, uploading, tagging and sharing videos, photos, comments and joining groups with common interests (Lockyer & Patterson, 2008).

In conjunction with this, recently there has been much interest in the implementation of Web 2.0 tools for educational purposes. There are studies conducted on student and teachers with various results both in favour of and against the application of Facebook in educational settings (Muñoz & Towner, 2009; English & Duncan-Howell, 2008; Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Kung & Chuo, 2002; Stern & Taylor, 2007; McVey, 2009; Çoklar, 2012). Thus, it can be said that the study on Facebook integration has become an important aspect of language instruction.

Moreover, Facebook has become one of the most important social networking sites for the past decade (Facebook, 2013). Facebook was opened to the public in 2006 and reports have showed that it has achieved 1.06 billion monthly active users (Facebook, 2013). It was found that 93% of young people aged 12-17 go online, and 73% of them frequently visit social networking sites (Lenhart *et al.*, 2010). As many people have a Facebook account and use it frequently, we can benefit from Facebook by using it to teach language skills to students (Stern & Taylor, 2007). All these features make Facebook unique as an online environment (Zhao *et al.*, 2008).

The researcher decided to introduce Facebook as an English literature learning tool because Facebook is a frequently visited social networking sites and many benefits by using Facebook to teach language skills made. We cannot ignore the role that technology plays in English classes. Facebook is considered one of the most effective ways to achieve success in the English literature classroom. The use of Facebook in literature classrooms will provide students with good knowledge and understanding of

their lessons. Moreover, by using Facebook as a learning tool, students enjoy various learning skills and topics.

The focus of this current study on English literature is specific on the teaching and learning process of a novel. This study is an attempt to suggest a new method of learning English novels by using Facebook. Hence, the aim of this study is to explore the effect of using Facebook on L2 learners' performance in literature, the perception of students towards the usage of Facebook in learning literature, and the difficulties and challenges faced by students in learning Literature using Facebook.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The importance of language will only realized by students if the teaching and learning process takes part in a way the children adapt into their own styles of learning. The English Literature teaching syllabus outlines learning outcomes which are the expected targets to be attained by students as a result of the teacher's instruction. Thus, this shows that the learning outcomes will only be achieved from the effectiveness of teachers' instruction (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2013).

The introduction of literature, however, invited mixed responses and concerns from various parties. Among them, Datin Noor Azimah Abdul Rahim who is the president of The Parents Action Group for Education Malaysia (PAGE) stated that

teachers' ability to handle the subject is important so that a situation does not arise where it is beyond the capability of students to handle English literature, a subject that is already deemed as not a 'light' subject (Mabunda, 2010).

Khalid & Kabilan (2012) conducted a survey on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners and found that EFL learners face many problems in English literature classes. First, literature courses are complex in nature, and the students want a method to facilitate these courses for better understanding. Second, the students feel bored in the Literature classroom because there is no enjoyment in the learning process. Finally, students also face problems in the methods of the teaching used as they follow the same routine. Thus, the students had suggested that teachers use other methods of teaching during literature classes. Moreover, English literature teachers find it challenging to generate an appreciation of English literature among their students (Mabunda, 2010). Students in Saudi Arabia have been shown to perform below average in Literature-novel courses. It was found that the problem is not only with students who struggle to understand the literature courses, but also with teachers who also have difficulties in conveying Literature lessons to their students.

Moreover, recent studies have reported that students were seen to be passive and unable to respond critically, and literature lessons are often too teacher-centred thus leading to teachers being labelled as dull and less creative (Gurnam Kaur, 2003; Siti Norliana, 2003; Suriya Kumar, 2004). A common problem for many ESL teachers is dealing with a passive class where students are unresponsive and avoid interaction with

the teacher (Snell, 2012). This is especially true when a teacher seeks interaction in teacher-class dialogues such as by asking questions to the class as a whole while expecting at least one student to respond. This can be a frustrating experience for both parties. Obviously, there will be times when no student can answer a teacher's question, but often students do not answer even if they understand the question, know the answer, and are able to produce the answer. Furthermore, students can often be very reluctant to give feedback or ask the teacher a question in front of the class (Snell, 2012).

As said by our former Prime Minister Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, we must make sure that our education system continues to progress in tandem. By doing so, our country will continue to keep its pace in the increasingly competitive global economy. Rather than simply adding staff and facilities, there is a need to understand and improve the dynamics of the teaching and learning process. The goal and purpose of the education system is to equip students holistically in order to allow them to succeed in the 21st century. Quality teaching is the most effective lever available to transform primary and secondary education and deliver improved outcomes for students. The Education Ministry has identified 11 shifts that will need to occur in order to deliver the stop change in outcomes envisioned by all Malaysians. In Shift 1, it is stated that the foundation for the success of a school system lies in its definition of what its students must know, understand and be able to do (KPM, 2010).

Moreover, the researcher has been teaching ESL for many years and had noticed that most students lack competence in English with special regard to literature, despite

the fact that all efforts have been made by teachers, parents and the school to help them enhance their learning. Thus, the researcher had conducted an interview at the beginning of the study which consisted of several questions on the problems that students face in English literature classes. Through the conducted interview, the students had voiced out that they found literature courses to be complex. Therefore, the students had requested for an interesting method of learning to facilitate their understanding of the subject.

In addition to that, though changes had been made to the literature component of the English subject, students still have difficulties in understanding literary texts (Kaur, P., & Mahmor, N., 2014). Students will just read and learn from reference books as the easiest way of learning (Nawi Ismail, 2005). This clearly shows that students are lacking of trustworthiness towards the literary texts provided to them.

According to Tyson & Woodward (1989), 80% teachers use textbooks to teach literature texts in the classroom, causing students to feel bored in the classroom as there is no enjoyment in learning solely from the textbook. Thus, the introduction of a new learning tool in the teaching and learning of literature would be of great value and interest. Thus, this study was conducted to investigate the use of Facebook as an English literature learning tool for lower secondary school students. Along with testing its effectiveness, the study had examined students' perception towards this learning method, and the difficulties and challenges the students may face in using Facebook for this English subject component.

Salasaar (1992) characterised literature teachers as experts with the right answers who deposit information into the heads of passive lifeless students. In such literature classrooms, students become more of consumers of predigested knowledge (Oyler, 1996) and so their voices are rarely heard. As such, the aim of learning literature which is to empower students in order for them to give personal responses to texts cannot be translated into reality. Therefore, there is a need to redefine the role of teachers into an intermediary between author, literary work and receiver (McRae, 1991) in order to open up a multi-directional sphere of interaction in the literature classroom.

In a learner-centred methodology, students' responses and the process of learning are foregrounded. There is a need to understand the process of learning in which learners engage either individually or collectively in a community of readers that makes use of Facebook as a channel of mediation, and in turn, a necessity to understand how students respond to literary texts through Facebook. Therefore, this study aimed to capture responses through Facebook to help generate more interest towards literature and thus, make the learning process of literature more engaging.

In addition to that, students nowadays grow up in a world that is ruled by microchips, thus training them to deal with information differently is necessary (Prensky, 2001). Adolescents' preference for an experiential, interactive and image-rich environment (Tapscott, 1998; Manuel, 2002) indicates a gap between their consumption habits outside school and their textual experiences in school. School-based printed texts and didactic teaching appear slow and unexciting compared to the fast-paced multi-

literate electronic world they know (Lankshear & Knobel, 1997). Therefore, there is a need to explore building strategies that integrated technology in the teaching and learning of literature. Research is therefore needed to investigate how Facebook can be harnessed to facilitate readers' responses to literature.

Moreover, the English language paper at the Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3 (PT3) examination level has posed a great challenge to Form 3 students, especially with the inclusion of the literature component. With the introduction of the new format since 2001, most students with average to low English proficiency levels have found it difficult to master the basic skills needed to handle literary texts. They have difficulties in fully comprehending the novels learned during their Form 3 year, and therefore struggle with the open response examination questions. The questions are usually based on excerpts from the prescribed texts.

A closer look at the Malaysian syllabus for the literature component reveals that the purpose of incorporating literature into the ESL classroom is basically to develop English language competence, create awareness and understanding of content, issues and cultures, and develop critical and creative thinking (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2001). It is therefore important for teachers to bear in mind that there is more to this component than language development. A big challenge in this is for teachers to find ways to make literature's language content and moral and cultural issues accessible to learners with poor English proficiency.

In the Malaysian context, studies done by various researchers have shown that the usage of computers in classrooms is limited (Wong, F. F., Lee, K. S., Lee, S. K. and Azizah, Y. ,2010). However, whenever new technology is introduced into the society, there must be a counterbalancing human response; the higher the technology is, the higher touch is needed (Naisbett, 1984). For these reasons, this study has been thought over and is indeed the researcher's intention to take into account what is currently understood of Facebook integration at the secondary school level and apply the relevant components of several teaching and learning theories to develop a strong framework.

In Malaysia, online technology has been promoted in secondary schools since the 1990s through various ICT programmes such as the Electronic Resource Smart School Project and the Global School Net Project (Chan, 2002). Although the effectiveness of Facebook integration in teaching literature and its benefits have been overall welcomed, the lack of many attributes in the effective use of Facebook in teaching literature is still deemed catastrophic (Wiese, D., & Farrugia, R. ,2009).

There are a number of significant problems faced in the teaching of literature at the lower secondary school level in Malaysia. Firstly, there is the students' negative attitude towards literature as they consider it unimportant compared to content subjects like Mathematics and Science. This attitude may have been affected by school policies. Very often, literature is taught using the integrative approach in the school curriculum, in other words, it is taught as part of the language programme. The grades obtained from examinations will thus form only a percentage of the overall English grade, and it is

usually not more than 40%. This method may subtly tell students that literature may not be important enough to warrant a separate grade in tests and examinations.

Secondly, schools often allocate only two periods in the weekly timetable to the teaching of literature. With only about an hour and ten minutes of instruction per week, it may be a little difficult for students to really practice (Liu & Yeo, 1985). Thirdly, the state of literature teaching at the lower secondary school level has to be looked into. In a study conducted by Dhillon, & Mogan (2017) literature is often viewed as a boring subject due to its structural difficulty and its exclusive use of language. The students' lack of interest in literature is perhaps due to the inappropriate teaching methods.

It would be beneficial and create enthusiasm towards learning literature if the teachers change their teaching styles, materials and activities in line with the changing needs of students and advancements in technology as online learning offers a community of inquiry, social presence, cognitive presence, and instructor presence, and supports critical thinking with its rich resources (Anderson, 2011).

Although the positive and negative outcomes of the Facebook application in the teaching and learning of literature has been the focus of many research studies, there is still a breach in the studies on Facebook application due to missing information about the dynamics on the part of the learners such as their characteristics like age and language level. An important strength of this study therefore its experimental, qualitative and quantitative study which are appropriate for dynamic process such as the usage of

Facebook in teaching literature. Additionally, an important contribution of this study is that the lesson plans provided for the teaching through Facebook.

Approaches to enhance learners' language skills and domains on Facebook are still open to debate since there are no concrete findings that support the use of the Facebook application with clear and concrete examples. Another lacking in the previous research is the inclusion of students and teachers' opinions on the application of Facebook in the Literature classroom. Therefore, this study aims to fill the aforementioned gaps in the literature by analysing students' performance when using the Facebook application to study English literature, together with the learners' perception and challenges in implementing it.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

This study described the process by which secondary school students from chosen schools in the state of Selangor were empowered to incorporate technology in their learning activities through the use of Facebook, and their perceptions on this process. The students' perception on the process determines whether teachers will take the necessary actions to learn how to use Facebook, relate the technology to the intended content, design lessons effectively in order to integrate their teaching and learning activities with Facebook, and then implement this method in their teaching.

Moreover, it can be said that a technology- based teaching and learning offers various interesting ways which includes educational videos, stimulation, storage of data, the usage of databases, mind-mapping, guided discovery, brainstorming, music, World Wide Web (www) that will make the learning process more fulfilling and meaningful (Finger & Trinidad, 2002). In addition to that, students also will be benefit from ICT integration where they are not bounded to the limited curriculum and resources, instead hands-on activities in a technology-based course is designed to help them to stimulate their understanding about the subject. It also helps teachers to design their lesson plans in an effective, creative and interesting approach that would result in students' active learning. Previous researches proved that use of ICT in teaching will enhance the learning process and maximizes the students' abilities in active learning (Finger & Trinidad, 2002; Jorge et al., 2003; Young, 2003; Jamieson-Procter et al., 2013).

It can even be said that teachers and organisations have recognised that if they spend less time on record keeping and preparation, they can spend more time analysing students' need and having direct contact with students. Teachers can become more productive through training in technology-based methods. Quick access to accurate information may also help teachers increase their productivity. Also, teachers need to understand the role that technology plays in the society and in education, are prepared to take advantage of its power and at the same time recognise its limitations. In an increasingly technological society, teachers who are both "technology-savvy" and student-centred are needed (Roblyer, 1998).

Furthermore, Tella *et al.*, (2007) found that inadequate knowledge to evaluate the role of ICT in the teaching and learning process together with the lack of skills in using ICT equipment and software result in the lack of confidence in utilising ICT tools. The use of technology in the classroom may change the teaching strategies teachers use to achieve their instructional objectives. However, knowing exactly which technological strategies are perceived to be effective is vital for teachers, practitioners and reformers.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

Specifically, this study has fulfilled the following objectives:

- 1) To investigate how Facebook can help improve students' achievement in literature.
- 2) To investigate on how the usage of Facebook affects students' perception towards the learning of literature.
- 3) To investigate the challenges and difficulties encountered by learners in using Facebook as a tool in the learning of literature.
- 4) To examine the benefits of using Facebook in learning literature.
- 5) To offer guidelines to ESL teachers for the teaching of literature.

1.6 Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following questions:

- 1) How does Facebook help improve students' achievement in literature
- 2) What are the attitude and perception of learners towards the usage of Facebook in learning literature?
- 3) What are the challenges and difficulties encountered by students in using Facebook as a tool in the learning of literature?
- 4) How does the use of Facebook affect students' perception towards the learning of literature?

1.7 Significance of Study

The information obtained through this study can be extended to various parties who are involved or are responsible for the inclusion of literature into the English language syllabus in Malaysia. Parties that may be benefited from the findings of this study would be teachers, students, textbook and reference book writers, the State Education Department, the Curriculum Department, the Committee at the Ministry of Education, and institutions across the nation that are responsible for the training of the nation's future English language specialists.

Furthermore, this study may provide a ground for teachers to reflect on their own teaching styles and teaching tools used so far when teaching literature. This study would provide teachers with information on the attitude and perceptions of students in learning literature through Facebook so that they can help solve the problem either directly or indirectly. Apart from teachers, this study may also influence students as they could see the reasons why literature is included into the English language syllabus, and how the components of literature help enhance their proficiency skills in the English language through the use of Facebook as a learning tool.

This field of study is important because sociability is an underlying theme in using the various forms of social networks. Since the social network phenomenon is continuing to grow at a fast pace, it is important to understand the effects it has on personal communication. For example, Facebook makes it simpler to communicate with multiple people at one time.

Besides that, the results of the study may support the curriculum development committee at the Ministry of Education in proposing the most suitable technique to be used in schools to teach literature and the type of assessment that would be most appropriate for different secondary levels. Furthermore, this study may be useful in proposing computer laboratory work for language use.

Since the area of literature in English language teaching is relatively new especially in the Malaysian context, the finding of this study should be able to help those

research enthusiasts within the area to continue or expand some of the efforts made through this study so that a more comprehensive understanding of the role and effect of literature can be studied.

Literature textbook or reference book writers may recognise an alternative approach in designing the contents of their books that can be used not only to meet the goals of the English language secondary school curriculum, but also to boost students' interest. Moreover, through this study, the State Education Departments will be able to use the results of this study in generating more customised training sessions. Furthermore, teachers can use Facebook as a teaching tool for teaching literature. Facebook could be helpful for teachers in order to improve students' performance in literature lesson. The easily accessible way can help the teachers to have their own teaching styles and at the same time make the students to understand the storyline of the novel better.

The literature lesson through Facebook can help to boost up interest towards their lesson and this make the students to give more responses when teaching using Facebook compared to task that should be done in front of the classroom. Moreover Facebook can improve students' motivation and enthusiasm towards learning.

Nevertheless, the interactive activity through Facebook may create collaborative learning environment among the students in carrying out their task. When the students work collaboratively, they bring their own framework and standpoints to the activity.

They can see a problem from different perspectives and are able to negotiate and generate meanings and solution through shared understanding.

Facebook may help teachers to fulfill the need of the students by providing sufficient and relevant learning materials. The teachers can also allow the students to be in charge of their own learning where it will be learner centered classroom. This type of teaching and learning process will provoke students' active learning, boost up self-directed learning and the students will be able to check on their own progress.

1.8 Scope of Study

1.8.1 Delimitations

According to Simon, M. (2011), delimitations are the definitions that have been set as the boundaries of a thesis or dissertation, so delimitations are under the control of the researcher. Delimitations are set so that a researcher's goals do not become impossibly large to complete. Examples of delimitations include objectives, research questions, variables, and theoretical objectives that have been adopted, and populations chosen as targets to study.

Simon, M. (2011) states that when declaring the delimitations, the researcher must clearly inform why this course of study has been chosen. It is simply because the

researcher is curious about the topic and wants to improve the standards of a professional field by revealing certain findings. The other available options must be clearly listed, together with the reasons why the researcher did not choose these other options. Generally, a researcher avoids these other options for reasons of practicality, interest, or relativity to the study at hand. Delimitations are often strongly related to the study's theory and research questions.

The scope of this study is confined to Form 1 students who are still in the school system. It is assumed that at the time the survey is conducted, the respondents should have some experience in learning the literature component in the English syllabus and should be able to provide accurate responses to the questionnaires and interviews. This study is limited to an investigation into the pedagogy of secondary English classrooms through the eyes of students when the unit of work is on any literary text. A further delimitation is that the researcher only included closed-ended Likert scale responses in the survey rather than including additional open-ended responses which may have induced more people to be willing to take and complete the survey. Delimitations are not good or bad. They are simply a detailed description of the scope of interest for a study as related to the research design.

1.8.2 Limitations

According to Marwa (2008), limitations are those conditions beyond the control of the researcher which may restrict the study in any way. In this study, although this research was carefully prepared, the researcher was still aware of the limitations and shortcomings. First of all, the research was conducted on Form 1 class students for eight weeks. Eight weeks were not enough for the researcher to carry on the lesson. It will be better if the study is conducted on a longer time basis.

Second, the population of the experimental group was small at only thirty students, and thus do not represent the majority of Form 1 students. Third, since the questionnaire was designed to measure students' perception and attitude towards the use of Facebook in learning literature, it might also have given useful information about the benefits of using Facebook.

In addition, since the pre-test and post-test assessments were conducted by the researcher, it is unavoidable that in this study, a certain degree of subjectivity can be found. In fact, it would have been a target if it is decided by two or three examiners. The students' overloaded work to some extent may affect the correlation between the students' performance in using Facebook and performance of learning literature using Facebook because the students will be required to take part in many task at the same time at the same time such as taking part in survey, interview and also in Pre-test and Post-test.

The participants in this study are lower secondary school students. This is because only lower secondary school students were available and the authority gave permission to conduct the experiment for the lower secondary school students as they were not having any major examination. Moreover, this research dealt only with Facebook and disregards other sites such as Twitter and MySpace. The results primarily depend on the features available on Facebook during the time in which this study is conducted. The data gathered will be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Finally, slow network connection may discourage participants' interest and motivation in joining the study's activities.

1.9 Definition of Terms

L2- L2 is a language that is not the native language of a speaker but is used in the locality of that person. In contrast, a foreign language is a language that is learned in an area where that language is not generally spoken. Some languages, often called auxiliary languages, are used primarily as second languages or *lingua franca*. More informally, a second language can be said to be any language learned in addition to one's native language, especially in the context of second language acquisition (that is, learning a new foreign language). A person's first language is not necessarily his/her dominant language, the one they use most, or is the most comfortable with. For example, a Canadian census has defined *first language* for its purposes as "the first language learned in childhood and still spoken", recognising that for some, the earliest language may be

lost in a process known as language attrition. This can happen when young children move with or without their family due to immigration or international adoption to a new language environment (Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

ELRP- It is an English Language Reading Programme designed to promote reading in English, improve students' reading and encourage language development (Parkash Kaur, 2000).

CRP- The Class Reader Programme is a programme that enhances target language learning in a context, helps build pupils' confidence in language usage, and also encourages extensive reading programmes (Parkash Kaur, 2000).

FB-Facebook is a social networking site where people can share certain kinds of links, take certain quizzes, play certain games and share thoughts. In addition to that, Facebook is emerging as a global village, and has been labelled as isolation in disguise, an opportunity to maintain relationships, and as a place to broadcast narcissism (Wittkower, 2010).

Social Networking Site- It is a web-based service that allows individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

1.10 Summary

This chapter provided a detailed explanation on the background of the study, statement of the problems as well as the objectives of the study. Moreover, this chapter discussed the significance of the study, research questions proposed for this study and finally the scope of the study which include the limitation and delimitations of the study. Following this chapter, Chapter 2 will explain the theoretical and historical perspectives on English literature, together with the current curriculum development, development of educational technology in Malaysia, the reasons for the incorporation of literature in language education, the teaching and learning of literature, social networking sites, the use of Facebook for teaching and learning purposes, the benefits of Facebook, the use of Facebook in literature classrooms, online learning and its challenges, social networking websites and students' engagement, students perception and attitudes towards the usage of social network in education, challenges and difficulties encountered by teachers in learning literature, the current research positioning this study, the study's theoretical framework, and finally a summary of the chapter. Chapter 3 will provide a detailed explanation on the research design, research procedures, sample and samplings, research instruments, summary of methods, tools and instruments, study validity and reliability, ethical issues, and pilot study. The chapter will end with a summary of the aforementioned content.