

# English on Social Media. Theoretical and Applied Perspectives

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## Introduction

Social media have transformed the way we interact with other people and, consequently, the language used in those exchanges (Crystal 2008). Social media can be defined as internet sites and platforms that enable users to create and maintain social networks or communities through the exchange of messages and content in general.

## General objective

To extend our knowledge of the English language employed in social media from theoretical and applied perspectives.

## Specific objectives

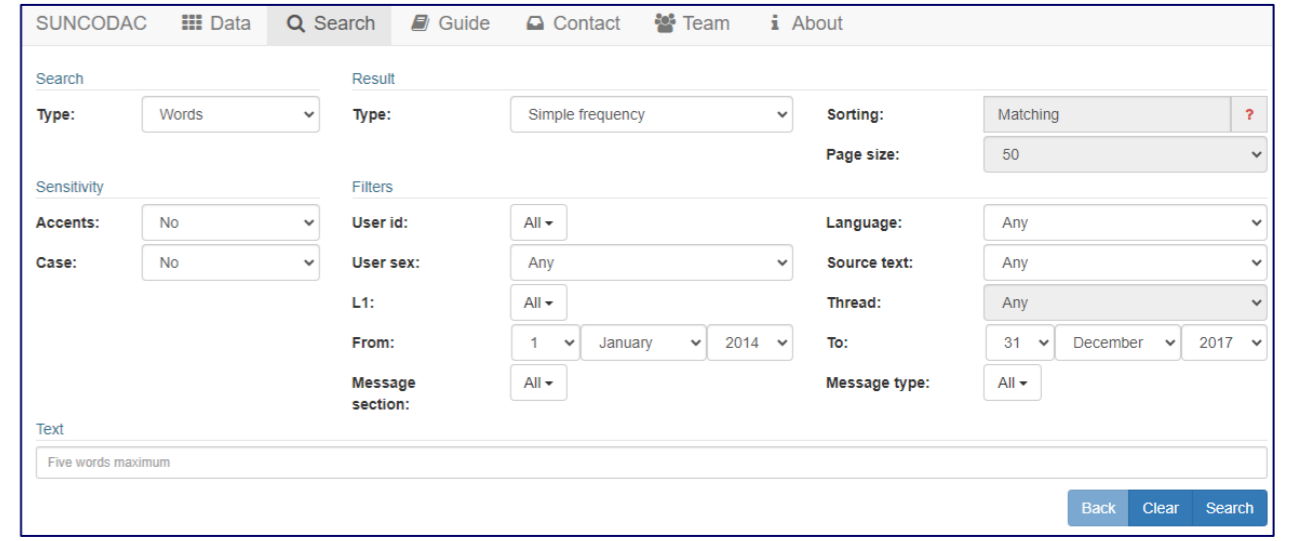
(1) To study characteristic features of interaction in Twitter, such as lexical innovation and creativity, the expression of (im)politeness, nominal vocatives, emojis and abbreviations.

(2) To delve into academic discussion forums investigating how participants construct arguments and convey persuasion, make suggestions, give advice and mitigate their language.

(3) To investigate the pedagogical potential of the use of social media as an informal learning tool in the EFL classroom and for the design of language materials.

## Methodology

Mixed methodology through the use of questionnaires, interviews, field work, diaries and social media, and academic corpora, i.e. SUNCODAC (Santiago University Corpus of Discussions in Academic Contexts).



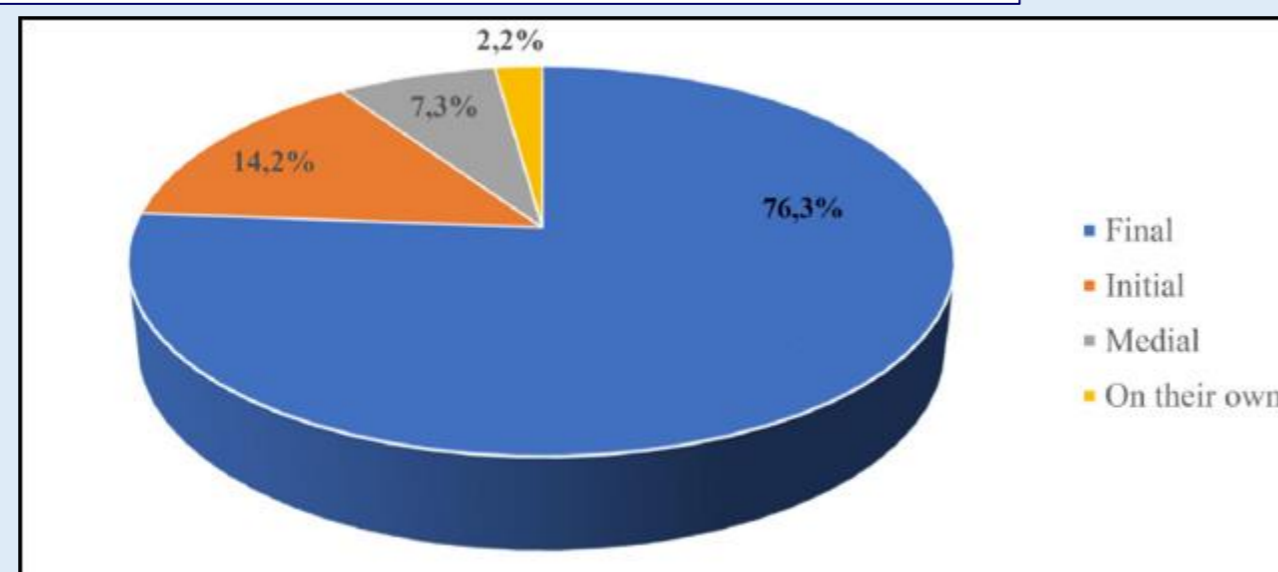
## Results (selection)

### Vocatives in Twitter:

Familiariser	Example	N	%
(my)bro and its variants	Keep being u bruv cuz you're amazing as u are. (Dappy, 2018)	87	26.6
man and its variants	Shut up man. (Dizze Rascal, 2018)	58	17.7
mate	Hi mate I downloaded your new album at the beginning of this week and just heard it once. (Dizze Rascal, 2020)	42	12.8
guy/guys/you guys	Sorry I couldn't be in Southampton tonight also guys (Dappy, 2018)	24	7.3
sis/sister	You have a very lonely life. Sort your circle out Sis! (Ray BLK, 2021)	23	7
lad(s)	Cheer up lad look like hes jus put a knife thru your footy. (Dizze Rascal, 2020)	10	3.1
fam/family	Fam, I think about the shrimp A LOT. (Ray BLK, 2021)	8	2.5
pal	You were amazing pal. (Dizze Rascal, 2021)	5	1.5
bud/ddy	Ta buddy. (Dizze Rascal, 2021)	3	0.9
boss	Cheers boss. (Dizze Rascal, 2019)	3	0.9
boy	Yes boy. (Dizze Rascal, 2018)	3	0.9
dude	People still listening to you dude? (Dappy, 2018)	3	0.9
people/pp/p	Loved every single drop of them drops! people if you ain't already I beg you get on her SoundCloud and take them in 🍷 (Little Simz, 2020)	3	0.9
Other (boss, boy, girl, friend, bud(dy), etc.)	Girl, some are just wolves in sheep's clothing. (Ray BLK, 2021)	55	17
Total		327	100

(a) Frequency

(b) Position



### Emojis in Twitter:

Emoji	Alternatives with similar meaning	Meaning	Total No	%
😂	😄 😊 😋 😍 😘 😙 😚 😛 😜 😝 😞 😟 😠 😡 😢 😣 😤 😥 😦 😧 😨 😩 😪 😫 😬 😭 😮 😯 😰 😱 😲 😳 😴 😵 😶 😷 😸 😹 😺 😻 😼 😽 😾 😿 😿 😿 😿	Highly amusing comment /video /picture	69	17.25%
👍	👏 🙌 🙏 🙇 🙆 🙅 🙄 🙃 🙂 🙁 😊 😋 😍 😘 😙 😚 😛 😜 😝 😞 😟 😠 😡 😢 😣 😤 😥 😦 😧 😨 😩 😪 😫 😬 😭 😮 😯 😰 😱 😲 😳 😴 😵 😶 😷 😸 😹 😺 😻 😼 😽 😾 😿 😿 😿 😿	Encouragement, support, power, strength	48	12%
😊	👍 🙌 🙏 🙇 🙆 🙅 🙄 🙃 🙂 🙁 😊 😋 😍 😘 😙 😚 😛 😜 😝 😞 😟 😠 😡 😢 😣 😤 😥 😦 😧 😨 😩 😪 😫 😬 😭 😮 😯 😰 😱 😲 😳 😴 😵 😶 😷 😸 😹 😺 😻 😼 😽 😾 😿 😿 😿 😿	Agreement	32	8%

(c) Most popular emojis for males

(d) Most popular emojis for females

Emoji	Alternatives with similar meaning	Meaning	Total No	%
❤️	💕 💖 💗 💘 💙 💜 💛 💚 💜 💛 💚 💜 💛 💚	Love	90	22.5%
😞	😟 😠 😡 😢 😣 😤 😥 😦 😧 😨 😩 😪 😫 😬 😭 😮 😯 😰 😱 😲 😳 😴 😵 😶 😷 😸 😹 😺 😻 😼 😽 😾 😿 😿 😿 😿	Sadness	42	10.5%
😂	😄 😊 😋 😍 😘 😙 😚 😛 😜 😝 😞 😟 😠 😡 😢 😣 😤 😥 😦 😧 😨 😩 😪 😫 😬 😭 😮 😯 😰 😱 😲 😳 😴 😵 😶 😷 😸 😹 😺 😻 😼 😽 😾 😿 😿 😿 😿	Highly amusing comment/video/ picture	31	7.75%

## Conclusions

This Project is still ongoing since it was conceived for a period of 4 years (2022-2026). Some conclusions follow:

(a) & (b) Nominal vocatives seem to be commonly used in Twitter discourse. The vocative *bro* and its variants (*brother*, *bruv*, *blood*, *blud*) are the most common vocatives in Twitter followed by *man*, *mate* and (*you*) *guys*. Most nominal vocatives in Twitter discourse are found in final position, followed by initial and medial.

(c) & (d) Differences are observed in the use of emojis by females and males in Twitter discourse. Our findings confirm the results of previous studies in that females make a higher use of emojis than males. Emojis used to express love, sadness and amusement are favoured by female users, while males opt for emojis to express amusement, support, power and agreement.

(e), (f) & (g) In the English sub-corpus, the sooner a contribution is made to the academic forum, the more chances it has of being read and used by others and of making an impact. There is a significant correlation of alignment types with author's gender, with women being more likely than men to make their agreement explicit and less likely to disagree openly with participants. In the Spanish sub-corpus, the study shows an interesting evolution in post complexity over the time span of the course, peaking in mid-term before slightly dropping off towards the end of the period, probably as group relationships consolidate.

(h), (i) & (j) Watching films and series, and using social media, such as TikTok and YouTube, are the most popular out-of-school audiovisual activities for English practice and learning. Most of the students questioned (an average of 61.1%) favour the inclusion of out-of-school activities in the classroom.

### Analysis of student online forum discussions:

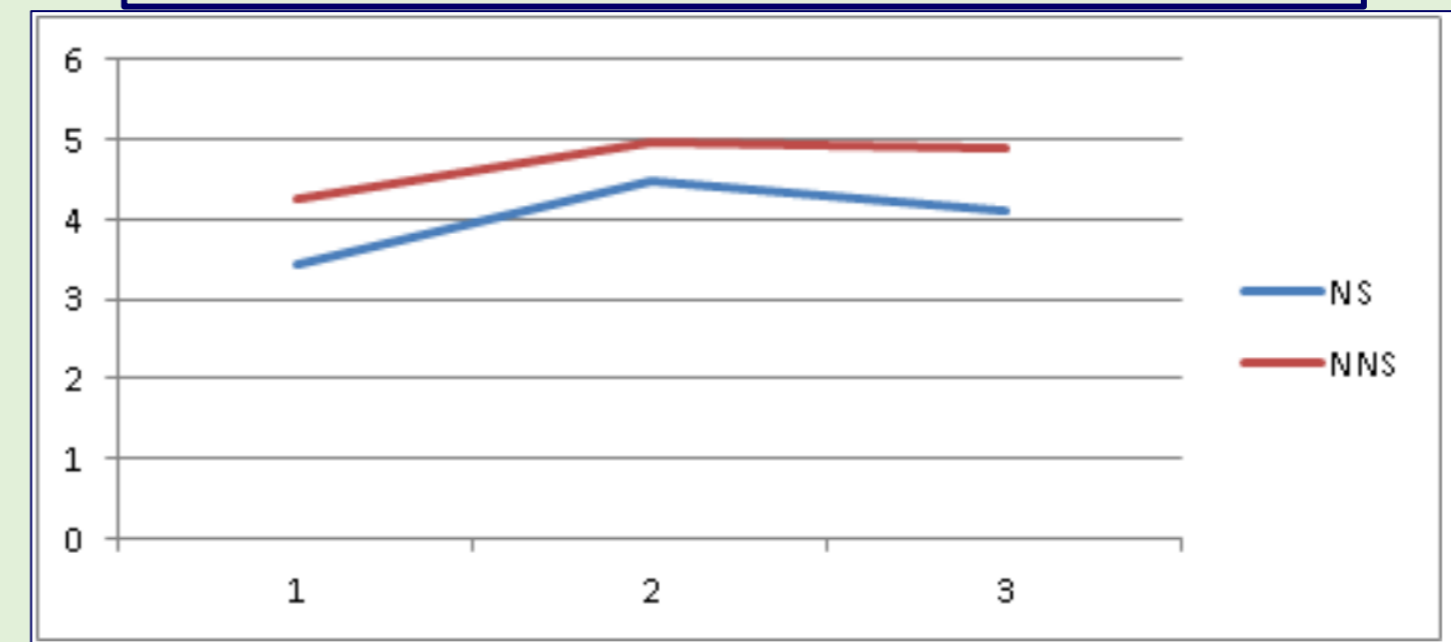
(e) Distribution of references by number of target message

Target message number	Number of references	% of total
First 15	349	82.5%
16-30	63	14.9%
31-45	9	2.1%
Later than 45	2	0.5%

(f) Overall distribution of alignment types

	Frequency	% of total	Cumulative %
Acknowledgement	462	57.0%	57.0%
Agreement	282	34.8%	91.9%
Disagreement	32	4.0%	95.8%
Mixed	34	4.2%	100.0%

(g) Average number of moves by nativeness and period



### Informal/out-of-school learning:

SE	BAC	SLS	UNI
Films (5)	YouTube (16) Netflix (15) Tiktok (12) Films (1) Series (1) HBO (1)	YouTube (17) Netflix (15) Films (9) HBO (6) Series (4) News (4) Amazon prime (2) Teds talks (2)	YouTube (14) Netflix (10) Films (6) Series (5) Tiktok (3) Cartoons (1) Twitch (1) Podcast (1) Facebook (1)

Note: SE= secondary education; BAC= baccalaurate; SLS= state language school; UNI=university

(h) Types of out-of-school audiovisual activities

(i) Types of out-of-school gaming activities

SE	BAC	SLS	UNI
Among us (4) Fortnite (4) League of Legends (3) Fifa (3) GTA (2) Rainbow (2) Siegue (2) Valorant (2) 2k (1) Games of war (1) Sky (1)	Among us (2) Fortnite (2) League of Legends (1) Pokemon (1) Omegle (1) Rocket League (1)	League of Legends (1) GTA (1) Star craft 2 (1)	League of Legends (2) Fortnite (1)

Note: SE= secondary education; BAC= baccalaurate; SLS= state language school; UNI=university

GROUP	YES	NO	NO ANSWER
SE	81.6	15.8	2.6
BAC	60	24	16
SLS	43.8	37.5	18.8
UNI	61.1	38.9	0
Total	61.1	29.2	9.7

Note: SE= secondary Education; BAC= baccalaurate; SLS= state language school; UNI=university.

(j) Results on including out-of-school activities in the classroom

## References

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