

Literature Review of The influence of Integrating Social Media as E-Learning Tools into Teaching and Learning the English Language

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ABSTRACT

This study as a literature review aimed to explore the impact of the integration of social media (SM) tools into universities' English language classrooms. Currently, the English language plays an essential and fundamental role in education. Therefore, it is crucial for learners to obtain a good understanding of the English language in the academic environment. Teaching students by traditional methods might not help to improve their English language skills. One technique that can be applied to improve learning skills quickly is utilising E-learning tools and SM in teaching strategies. Hence, this paper examines the influence of the integration of E-learning tools and strategies such as SM in teaching and learning English language in Saudi university classes. This new strategy has been chosen as it allows learners to access information anywhere without restrictions of time, and it can support them to obtain an in-depth understanding of English language content. Finally, this study will provide some recommendations and suggestions for future work.

Keywords: Technology, Institutions, English, Social Media, Literature and Saudi Arabia.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, teachers who teach English language in universities and schools are looking for new effective teaching methods that can help them to improve the learning of their students. The strategies and techniques employed by teachers could have an enormous effect on the level of understanding of learners. Instructors acknowledge that learning the English language is not easy for some students; as a result, they seek new teaching methods, styles, strategies, techniques and training courses that can support them to meet the instruction needs of English language learners. In 2007, the use of technology was introduced into Saudi educational institutions by the Ministry of Education. However, according to Algahtani (2019), educators do not usually depend on technology when they teach students English language, despite the benefits of the adoption of technology in teaching and learning English language. These benefits include saving time, the ease of obtaining information and communicating between teachers and their learners, and thus improving the quality of the education process. Also, it enables students to see the practical use of English in the real world (Murphy, 2016). Instructors should concentrate on improving their teaching style for English Language since this may encourage and motivate learners to engage in the lesson activities. One of these improvements is integrating E-learning tools such as SM into education methods, as this may assist students with understanding the English language quickly and easily and improve their achievement. Therefore, this literature review will focus on previous research that investigated the influence of the integration of SM technology, such as Twitter, Facebook Google, Classroom Tools etc. into the teaching and learning of the English language, particularly in Saudi educational institutions.

Outline of paper.

This paper shall begin with introduction of the use of social media in teaching and learning English language. The purpose of the paper shall then be outlined. And then some advantages and negatives of the use of social media in learning education will be shown. After that some studies, especially the recent research that carried out in Saudi Arabia context will be presented. Conclusion and recommendation shall follow after the discussion of the methodology. Ultimately, the limitations and future research will be discussed.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research is a literature review to explore and examine the impact of implementing E-learning (SM) tools into teaching and learning English language in Saudi educational institutions. In more detail, this study provides a comprehensive review of recent papers conducted and published in the Saudi setting. In addition to this, the paper aims to determine the benefits and drawbacks of the adoption of E-Learning tools (SM) in the teaching and learning of the English language in higher education institutions in KSA. By providing in-depth information about the limitations and benefits of the employment of E-learning tools in teaching and learning styles and techniques, it is hoped that new technology will be increasingly employed and used effectively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section the advantages and disadvantages of the use of SM in the teaching and learning environment will be mentioned. Also, some studies conducted recently in the Saudi context, will be presented

The advantages of the use of SM for learners of the English language.

Literature review revealed a number of advantages of the use of SM in the education environment. For example, SM can provide an attractive environment for learners where interactive communication with their peers or educators can occur. Moreover, SM allows educators to post activities and ask questions of their students at any time. In addition to this, students can submit their assignments any time of the day without having to be in a certain place. Alharbi et al. (2019) conducted a literature review about the benefits of the use of new technology in Saudi education and the results indicated that the use of new technology such as Google Classroom tools can help to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Also, Alsolamy (2017) found that the use of SM can assist students with using a more critical and reflective way of thinking. Also, the author mentioned that SM can help in terms of exchanging knowledge and experience between learners.

The negatives of the use of SM in learning English

The most negative aspects of the employment of SM can be distraction and misleading information. In other words, when educators teach students by using Twitter as a tool for learning, they may find it difficult to make all the learners pay attention to the lesson. Also, students might learn wrong information from websites which affects their prior knowledge and information. Moreover, there is no face-to-face communication between the teachers and their students with E-learning, which may cause students to lose motivation and feel discouraged. Finally, privacy issues have been mentioned as a problem facing users of SM in the learning environment (Cruzd, Staves and Wilk, 2012).

Studies conducted in the Saudi environment on the use of SM for the teaching and learning of the English language

Salih and Elsaid (2018) carried out research in Albaha University, specifically the College of Sciences & Arts - Biljurashi Department. They aimed to examine learners' perceptions and attitudes towards the use of SM in the learning environment. They used a survey as a data collection tool and the sample was thirty students. The study findings revealed that students had positive attitudes towards the integration of SM in their learning practices. This is because most of the participants (80%) indicated that they found that the use of SM for learning English enhanced and improved their learning. In addition to this, around 50% of them mentioned that using SM for learning the English language made their learning more attractive and interesting. Also, 94% stated that they found the use of SM useful as they felt that it helped them to improve their English language skills. Moreover, the students indicated that using SM for learning the English language helped them in terms of communicating and interacting with their peers and their educators, especially outside the classroom. Along the same lines, Sharma (2019) conducted a study at Jazan University. The main purpose of the research was to investigate learners' perceptions about the adoption of SM in learning the English language. The data were collected through a questionnaire. The sample was 60 students in the preparatory year. The study findings indicated that the participants held a positive attitude towards the use of SM as a tool for learning the English language. Other results were that the learners were willing to learn English through SM and this made them feel confident and less anxious. However, the participants preferred to learn by using YouTube, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Facebook and Twitter more than other tools such as Skype.

Allam and Elyas (2017) carried out research in two Saudi universities with 75 educators (40 females, 35 males). The primary goal of the paper was to investigate the advantages of and the barriers to the use of SM in teaching the English language. The main results of the research were

that educators found that using SM to teach English was beneficial for them because they believed that using SM helped students to improve their writing skills and made the learning environment more attractive. On the other hand, the participants mentioned a lack of time and distractions as the main challenges for them in terms of adopting SM in their teaching techniques. Also, a recent study was conducted by Haque and Salem (2019) at Najran University in the School of English Language. The study aimed to explore the impact of the implementation of SM in the learning environment. The study sample consisted of 228 undergraduate students, 75 males and 153 females. The authors used two tools for collecting the data: an online survey and interviews. The main findings of the study were that the students stated that the use of SM in their learning improved their English skills (mean 4.1). Also, the participants indicated that the integration of SM into their learning provided many benefits to them, for example accurate pronunciation of English words. In addition to this, they mentioned that their grammar was improved by studying through SM. In general, the students showed positive attitudes towards the use of SM in their learning of the English language. Similarly, Alqahtani (2019) studied the advantages of the implementation of SM in learning the English language. The sample was 45 female students who studied at the English department in Salman bin Abdulaziz University. The data collection tool was a questionnaire. The main findings were that the use of SM for learning the English language assisted learners in terms of improving their academic language and skills. Also, 88.9% of the participants indicated that their English vocabularies rose after learning English through SM.

Table 1. Summary of the studies included in this paper

Title of research	Study sample	Study location	Author and year
Students' attitude towards the use of social media for learning purposes (Case study: Al-Baha University, College of Sciences & Arts-Biljurashi)	Students (30)	Albaha University	Salih and Elsaid, 2018
Saudi students' perspective on social media usage to promote EFL learning	Students (60)	Jazan University	Sharma, 2019
Perceptions of using social media as an ELT tool among EFL teachers in the Saudi context	Educators, male and female (75)	Two universities in KSA	Allam and Elyas, 2017
Social media in EFL context: Attitudes of Saudi learners	Undergraduate students, male and female (228)	Najran University	Haque and Salem, 2019
The effect of social networks on the improvement of Saudi EFL students	45 female EFL university students.	Salman Bin AbdulAziz University in Alkharj, Saudi Arabia.	AlQahtani, Najla, 2019

METHODOLOGY

The search strategy carried out for this paper to find the sources and relevant papers was done in a variety of ways. Firstly, the researchers used relevant websites and databases such as university libraries, Google Scholar, conference procedures etc., using key words such as technology, E-learning tools, social media and English language. Also, each paper's reference list was checked in order to discover any other potentially relevant reports or studies. Finally, a saturation point was reached where no new papers were identified by using this method. Each data source was charted,

providing a summary of the research. These charts provided the final studies that are displayed in this paper.

Ethics

As this paper only reviews and analyses previous studies obtained from many sources and databases and no participants took part in this study, there is no need for the researcher to apply for ethical approval.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main goal of this paper was to review the literature about the advantages of the use of E-learning tools, especially SM, in teaching and learning the English language in Saudi education.

As technology is developing so rapidly, it is important that teachers keep up to date with the latest ICT advances so that they can use technology to the best effect in their teaching. Furthermore, teachers need to be aware of the skills that their students possess, in terms of both IT and literacy skills, so that they can harness these and develop them further in order to engage students in their learning and enhance their English language skills. It is suggested that incorporating SM into classroom practices will mean reconfiguring teacher and student roles; the students can tailor their learning to their own interests and activities, meaning that the teacher is no longer the main source of content and information. All of this acts as motivation for students to interact with information in English and provides opportunities for reading and writing in English in formal and informal contexts. Employing SM as part of a teaching technique can therefore serve as a bridge between communication that takes place inside and outside the physical teaching space.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The number of studies included in this paper is low with regard to the use of SM as a tool for teaching and learning the English language. As a result, the generalisability of the results is constrained by the limitations of this paper. A further limitation is that this paper did not consider all the studies conducted in the Saudi context, whether in schools or universities. Furthermore, this study only concentrated on papers that have been published recently and which used SM as a tool for teaching and learning the English language. Therefore, new studies could be conducted in the future to include qualitative and quantitative approaches with either educators or students in order to provide more in-depth information about the adoption of SM in the teaching and learning of the English language. Moreover, as can be seen from the review, most studies did not adopt the TAM frame as a guideline for the research. Therefore, future research could be conducted with students based on the TAM model in order to provide insights into the factors that might affect learners' use of SM in their learning, especially for learners of the English language.

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