

College of Education for Humanities

English Department



Ph.D. Studies/ Methodology

(First Course) 2024-2025

Methods of Teaching

“Effects of Social Media on EFL Teaching”

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1. Introduction

The process will be more effective if classroom action research is implemented by teachers along the way (Schmidt, 2002). For learners, independency and autonomy are necessary learning styles to be successful online language learners, especially in the distance learning context (White, 2004). While also claimed that online learners' characteristics must include the ability to identify, participate in and manage learning experiences, which match their individual learning needs in order to gain any benefit from the new learning mode.

2. Roles of Teachers and Learners

With the social media integrated as the new environment of learning, the role of the teachers is altered to be less controlled as Dalton (2009) implied from his research result that teachers should change their role into facilitator rather than the liver-of-knowledge and promote more group work and relaxing learning environments. For Online Distant Learning (ODL) teachers, Easton (2003) claimed that the teachers had two roles in particular :

- A. starting from an instructional designer at first and,
- B. to an interaction facilitator . when the online course begins. Duncan and Barnett (2012) found that, besides the roles of directing and leading the online learning class to reach the goal, the online teachers also had to be aware of a balance of flexibility of the teaching time and problem-solving tasks that might occur anytime while working on a lesson. As to students new roles, they have to engage in online task-based learning or discussions.

3. Affective and Attitudinal Effects

The affective response or attitudinal effect of using Social Media for education is also usually addressed in both positive and negative aspects. As an illustration, one research reveals that Facebook Social Network allows students to overcome their shyness in asking questions outside the classroom, and they feel unrestrained by boundaries between lecturers and themselves, creating a good rapport in some ways (Bosch, 2009). Some misuses of the Social Media are also reported. The online activities between teachers and students can cause negative impacts to teachers themselves such as the obsession of social networking or false teacher student relationships (Vasagar and Williams, 2012; Bloxham, 2010) The language and

culture are also being discussed. The different forms of language used to communicate in Social Networking sites among students, their peers and lecturers need to be carefully monitored; otherwise, some misunderstandings will occur and interfere with the learning-teaching process (Rembe, 2011).

4.The Types of Social Media

Social media are digital applications varied by their purposes of use: communicating, discussing, private chatting, selling products, etc. The social media are divided into two categories for further discussion as follows:

- Ashley (2003) defined the synchronous tool as a tool which enables real-time communication and collaboration in a "same time-different place" mode , while the asynchronous enable communication and collaboration over a period of time through a "different time-different place" mode .
- The synchronous tools, e.g. audio-video conferencing, chat and instant messaging, Twitter, Skype, etc., have some advantages in that they offer spontaneous reaction, updated data and immediate feedback, while the asynchronous tools, e.g. e-mail, web board, web blogs, streaming video-audio, etc., have less immediate interaction, and the delayed response will cause information to be out-of-date. However, it is not always plausible to respond quickly because in some cases, message receivers need some time to digest the information (Technology Solutions for Teaching and Research, 2012).
- ❖ The selection of synchronous and asynchronous depends on the purposes of correspondence between senders and receivers, hereby; the teachers and the students whether they want to communicate in real time or share information for later use.

5. Effect of using Social Media

1 . Positive Aspects of using social media

- “A recent technology that has made it possible to communicate over a distance easier, quicker and cheaper is the Internet or often by exchanging text, is Internet and Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC).” (Hrastinski, 2009, p. 80; Hrastinski 2007, p. 22). CMC is an Internet-
- based way of communication over distance, which fulfils different educational purposes and has various definitions that may refer to synchronous or asynchronous

interactions. CMC is virtual reference to email, chat, computer conferencing, or accessing information through online databases as CMC applications (Curtis & Lawson, 2001).

- In online learning, as there is less limitation and separation between learners and instructional system, interactions are easier and the learning process is more efficient (Moore, 1989). Social software, used in online learning, supports pedagogical communications. These tools help gaining new knowledge by accessing online resources, besides having the opportunity of interacting with instructors or students anytime, anywhere. As Hrastinski (2007) argues, the advantage of “anytime, anywhere” feature is that students with restrictions from family or work may still participate in online education, since social media enable them to access information and interact with others online.
- Online collaboration and communication give learners possibility of working with new people with different backgrounds to exchange and gain new knowledge (Curtis & Lawson, 2001). Further, interactions by using media that include video, audio, and document sharing or real time text interaction, refer to synchronous interactions and students show there is a need to use this (Curtis & Lawson, 2001). By using synchronous communicating devices, learners get quick and straight replies with no time delays. Hrastinski discusses online video-based resources, like YouTube, that support students to learn new knowledge out of classrooms.
- In addition, using discussion boards makes the advantage that learners can go back into the records of discussion to make more use of it (Curtis & Lawson, 2001).
- Social media thus provides many advantages for collaborative learning like assisting each other; exchange of resources; clarification of complex knowledge; sharing existing knowledge; reflections and feedback.

2. Negative Aspects of using Social Media

- Any new mode of interaction will have some negative aspects and some of the negative aspects in social media usage include the difference between online interaction and face-to-face interaction that is the lack of the non-verbal cues, which does reduce the extent of the communication (Curtis, and Lawson 2001).
- Another issue is of likely misinterpretation due to limited ability of non-verbal communication to exchange feeling like deficiency in voice and tone transmission, gestures, eye contacts, etc. (Markus, 1994).

- Further, lack of established grounded theoretical framework for using technology in terms of pedagogy is another negative aspect of (Bates, 1995). Curtis and Lawson argue that the capacity of the communication links limits different forms of asynchronous interaction and only text interaction is accessible and reliable without difficulty. They also discuss that collaboration, as a learning activity, requires considerable time. Although online collaboration has advantages, it is time – consuming as one has to rely on other communicators who may have different priorities (Curtis & Lawson, 2001).
- Furthermore, online asynchronous conversations occur with substantial delays in receiving a reply. In asynchronous communication for collaborative learning, the time delay is a negative issue since there is not an agreed or expected work schedule (Curtis & Lawson, 2001).
- In concurrence, perception is that communications through social media is not useful, and learners rather have a tendency to interact with others face-to-face (Massey & Montoya- Weiss, 2006).

6. Suggestions for Appropriate Use of Social Media in Education:

- Social media tools should be regulated by the school according to the age of the students.
- Teachers should inform students about the negative aspects of social media.
- Teachers should be fully aware of how sites work and what different settings and functions are available to use.
- Teachers must know how to reduce online risks and how to safeguard students from it.

7. Conclusions

Social media and Internet-based tools have been developed enormously in today's digital world and they are now widely accepted by all generations. These tools are substantial and very beneficial for students in terms of learning, collaboration, and information sharing. Social networks have become of vital importance due to the increasing emphasis on cohesive working and collaborative learning concepts around the globe. Collaborative learning can lead through the interaction of research group members, interaction with lecturers or supervisor, and intention to use social

media. Social media can assist in enhancing academic performance of students and researchers when lecturers and supervisors integrate social media in their teaching methods. The findings showed that social media facilitates collaborative learning and engagement, and this improves the academic performance of students and researchers. More than 100 social media are being used for language learning and educational purposes (C4LPT, 2012). The number of uses of the media cannot predict the efficient or effective result of the latest teaching-learning tool. More research needs to be conducted and tracked down regarding the never-ending evolution of technology in terms of educational implications. However, it is the teachers own premise to select what is considered best for their students. It might well be the case that what works best for others may be the worst for oneself.