

Effective Use of Facebook in Improving English Communication Skills: Conceptual Paper

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ABSTRACT

Learning English is a great challenge for EFL students. The advancement and innovation of educational technology such as using Facebook would offer new opportunities for the teaching and learning of languages. Therefore, it is important to assist students to learn the English language effectively through using technological tools. Facebook is an educational tool to improve students' oral and written communication skills as it allows students to reflect on their own thoughts and attitudes. It is a review aims to show how Facebook as an innovative teaching method can develop students' oral and written communication skills. In addition, this paper aims to evaluate the challenges and problems of this instructional perspective. It was concluded that the learners were in favour of using Facebook' potential for improving English language proficiency. However, there are obstacles for Facebook use such as wasting of students' time and absence of the actual and direct communication and students' distraction by Facebook's other features.

Keywords: Facebook, Learning, Social Networks, Communication, Challenges.

Introduction

Recently, technology has a significant role in developing and facilitating the English language learning. In this regard, while Ahmed (2016) emphasizes that information constructed by the students cannot be professionally participated by the learners in the traditional learning environment, Dweikat (2016) indicates that social networks are significant settings for sharing knowledge and a good chance for the cooperative construction of knowledge. In this meaning, web-based, technology-improved learning is able to motivate the learning process and enhance its outcomes. The use of Facebook allows people to share text, photo, video, creating discussion (Çetinkaya and Sütçü, 2018). People use Facebook as a platform to communicate with others. Without a doubt, Facebook has effectively integrated into the youths' life, and becoming an important part of their life. The attractiveness of Facebook among learners has led some educators to pay attention towards such a program as an educational tool (Ghareb, et al, 2017). The role of the social networking platform in the process of learning of communication skills of the English language has always been a topic of discussion.

Today, education is affected by the development of technology, and this influence can be in many fields of knowledge such as science, space, and medicine. That is why, most instructional institutions are considering various types of technology as main instruments for learning as students are allowed to have access to various choices to obtain knowledge, and simultaneously, students are given open time and space to share their own ideas with others (Bdaiwi, 2017). Thus, this new learning environment leads to create a virtual interaction between students and their teachers that assist them to get more information and skills. Espinosa (2015) reports that the existing of a suitable learning the environment enables students to interact and share knowledge and resources with others. Therefore, educational institutions begin to involve the students in such technological forms to assist them to obtain the English language efficiently in a short time. Bdaiwi (2017) shows that using of technological forms that help students in facilitating their English learning process as teachers and students become no longer depend on only textbook and the

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method of a traditional teaching, instead they start to listen to music, involve a variety of computer programs and videos in the English language to create an attractive learning environment for learners. In this sense, the use of social networks can help students by providing them with a substitute environment to gain the target language instead of using classical teaching ways. Taking into account the various advantages of social media, Espinosa (2015) states that Facebook can assist students to make their English learning easy. As Tan and Saw (2010) emphasized that most learners in this world spend a lot of time out an academic institution on social media (Tan, Ng & Saw, 2010). Therefore, Facebook to supplement classroom teaching sounds to be aligned with the recent trend. Thus, it can be beneficial to use Facebook to support the process of learning the English language. Many previous studies focused on the importance of Facebook in developing learners' communication writing skills of the English language (El-Shami, 2011; Wichadee, 2013; Al-Haj, 2015; McCALL, 2017). However, there are few studies focused on the impact of Facebook on spoken and written communication skills of English (Dweikat, 2016 and Bdaiwi, 2017). Consequently, the present conceptual paper aims to show the effect of Facebook in enhancing both written and oral communication skills of EFL student. The aim of this conceptual paper is to investigate how Facebook can help students in developing their English communicative skills through language functions, both spoken and written, such as introducing yourself to others, asking and answering, discussing and so on. Additionally, It aims to discover the challenges that EFL students face while their use of Facebook as an instructional tool.

Facebook as an Educational Tool

This review aims to explore the impact of using Facebook in developing the English communication skills, the results are hoped to discover the effect of Facebook on enhancing students' English communication skills. As a result, the process of education can be extended to a virtual setting where language acquisition can also occur. It was concluded that the use of Facebook provides students an opportunity to practice the English language outside the classroom not only within a class. Also, this conceptual paper indicates that the use of Facebook will include rich interaction and collaborative learning.

In addition, it shows how Facebook can assist students in diminishing the fears and stress making them more confident in their English performance. Facebook will strengthen the students' positions by making them the centre of activities within a class as well as reducing the burden of the teacher by making the teaching task easier besides providing them a student-centered environment.

Facebook has the capacity to strengthen the educational system to use new educational tools (technology and digital tools) to promote a more successful means of the learning of English language skills. It will also support the Ministry of Education initiatives to upgrade and improve the general mastery of the English language among her citizens and prepare the younger generation to play greater roles in modern society and contribute to developing the country in the future.

The basic concepts

Facebook: Al-Hij (2015) defines it as an online networking device. It has impacted the individuals' social life and activities. This type of program is common among people. According to (Boyd & Ellison, 2007), this program enables people to act together and cooperate with each other within its space. It is used for communication among individuals enable them to form an open or closed group to join and share their ideas with others.

Communication Skills: According to Dehghan and Ma'toufi (2016), communication skills are being able to communicate in effective and efficient ways with other people. Communication skills are organized and nonstop practice of speaking, listening as well as comprehension. Most of us are born with the physical capability to speak, but we must learn how to speak well and make our talking effective (Ahmad, 2016).

Blended learning: is a natural progression of e-learning in the direction of a complete program of various application of audio-visual aids as the best way to solve students' problems in the process of learning, taking into

account the students differences and fulfilling the ideal teaching (Al Fiky, 2011). Blended learning involves the benefits of face-to-face and e-learning to suit students differences. In Blended language learning, various kinds of authentic resources will be accessible to EFL students (Keshta,2013).

Theoretical Framework

There are two learning theories that are adopted in this conceptual paper:

Constructivist Theory: It is basically depended on the idea that constructing of Knowledge and its meaning comes from the interaction of human experience and their ideas. According to Vygotsky (1978) as cited by Chang et al. (2008) the process of learning happens via interaction in the learning environment rather than message conveying from the teachers. According to him, knowledge is appeared in websites and then appropriated by students. A lot of researchers have applied Vygotsky's social constructivist theory to foreign and second language learning and teaching (Ahmed,2016). These researchers have stressed on the significant role of social network sites in developing English learning and the significance of doing active communication tasks with educated people in the society. Therefore, it is significant to pay attention into account the individual's background and culture during their learning.

A lot of researchers have applied Vygotsky's social constructivist theory to foreign and second language learning and teaching (Ahmed, 2016.). These researchers have stressed the significant role that social contexts play in the language learning process and the significance of doing active communication tasks with educated people in the community. Therefore, it is significant to pay attention into account the individual's background and culture during their learning.

Collaborative Learning: Vygotsky (1978) as cited by Chang et al. (2008) also emphasizes that the collaborative learning is as a social activity by which EFL students learn from each other in a group during adopting roles, sharing multiple views, providing peer tutoring, and practicing tasks that would be not easy for a single student. Therefore, cooperation can assist EFL students gain knowledge more comprehensively, intensely and more professionally than learning in an individual way. Therefore, EFL students require teamwork. Based on one another, students learn instead of based only on the teachers (Ahmed,2016). For searching on a certain information, it is necessary to cooperate with each other. This is taken place on Facebook, the learners need to interact and collaborate to learn something together.

Review of Related Literature

According to Bdaiwi (2017), Facebook is able to connect individuals to each other from different parts of this world with different languages to share their ideas, express their attitudes, and make discussions. He indicates that the time spent on Facebook has increased. That is why, Facebook became the most dependable resource for information, news, and information for people in different countries (Monica-Ariana and Anamaria-Mirabela, 2014). Many studies are done focusing on the effect of integrating Facebook in learning a target language so as to achieve educational objectives (Aubry, 2013; Susilo 2014; Bdaiwi, 2017; and Won& Kim, 2018). The impact of using Facebook on EFL students' motivation was studied by Aubry (2013). the participants of that study were 104 learners joined in an online

French course at a university in the southeast U.S. Aubry divided the participants into the Facebook group, where they could access the profile of the teacher's Facebook throughout that semester and a control group. Results of Post-treatment showed that participants joined the Facebook group had an important change in their motivation facilitating their English learning. Susilo (2014) aimed to explore the benefit use of Facebook to help educational institutions in a social constructivist approach. To achieve her goal, 211 students involve in six sections of postgraduate English course, who were supported to participate in different activities during Facebook. The results indicated that a majority of students stated a positive view towards the process of English learning via Facebook, being provided with more chances to communicate using English only and work in a collaborative way and develop their writing skill. Dweikat

(2016) wants to explore the benefit use of Facebook in developing EFL students' communication skill. Hence, The participants were 50 who were studying a course under a special named. These students were divided randomly into two groups: the first group is taught during a traditional classes. However, the second one is taught via using a closed Facebook group. The finding of his study reflected statistically significant differences in the outcomes of the experimental group before the use of Facebook and after its use. However, Won and Kim(2018) show that fast advances of technology in the last years have a great influence on education such as the use of Facebook to develop EFL students' proficiency level. All these studies use a quantitative method to collect the data. However, this is no study aims to explore this phenomenon using a qualitative approach.

Social networks sites and Facebook

Social networks can be defined as a variety of applications by which individuals interact, discuss, share their thoughts and collaborate in a webs sites (Bartlett-Bragg, 2011). As Lantz-Andersson, et al (2013) show that Facebook is the common communication space including many users allowing them to join and interact, express their ideas, and form special closed or open groups. While social networking sites (SNSs) have many technological characteristics, these sites have an account as well as a lot of members who are included within these sites (yd,2011). These users have managed their account content. In addition, these sites provide its users a chance for making comments, sending messages, or sharing their own photos and videos. Presently, Facebook is the common type of these SNSs. It is a special account that users have managed its content. The researchers believe that FB is as

an educational tool has its potential features. According to (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010) Facebook can help students in achieving their educational goals and providing them with the best instructional experiences, as well as helping teachers in their task. These features make it beneficial for using daily for instructional and pubic objectives. Thus, Facebook can be used for social and educational purposes.

In this conceptual paper, the researchers want to determine the importance of Facebook in developing English communication (written and oral) skills of students. In addition, discovering some of the problems students might face in using FB for academic goals.

Communication skills and Facebook

Usually, communication is one of the barriers that prevent EFL students from developing their English skills. English grammatical structures are easy to fully comprehend, but they have poor performance in English communication(both of oral and written skills). in contrast, some students' performance of English is good. Although they do not have any theoretical background of the English grammar (Al-Sofi,2016). So, this emphasizes that the process of learning English should go away from Grammar and rules. Thus, communication is considered as the main element in the language learning process. When learners begin to communicate, step by step they can control their English rules and Grammar. That is why, Grammar should be taken out from the main levels of English Language learning, and the concentration should be altered to the English communication skills of students.

To defeat all barriers for EFL students, Facebook can be exploited to provide different forms of technology like audio, pictures, videos, and writing. These forms enable students in defeating difficulties that prevent them from developing their English communication skills(Al-Sofi,2016). In this way, students become a center of activities in the class because Facebook provides students with opportunities to communicate. As Bdaiwi (2017) stated that students feel shy in a traditional class and this prevents them to participate in front of his classmates. However, Facebook helps a student to learn a language, as he/she is usually alone and more confidence in his or her English performance.

Facebook is a useful tool for learners in their social life as well as for academic goals because it allows for different activities such as getting help or sharing notes(Gafni and Deri, 2012). According to Junco (2015), Facebook could be a good means to promote the relationship between a teacher and their students, which to the good relationship could later create to a better learning environment in the classroom. The use of Facebook Group's wall enables students to ask the

question which allows the Group members to conduct "short question-and-answer session". At the same time, teachers give multiple choice of answers. Facebook has a significant tool in developing learners' performance in educational institution. According to Tuan and Tu (2014), learners' use of Facebook, at a Vietnamese university, has increased to a large extent with respect to their grades. Also, Tuan and Tu concluded that the improvements and value of Facebook were related to the social atmosphere adaptation in an educational institution not only to the students' academic performance. Similarly, Gafni and Deri (2012) emphasized the importance of Facebook in socializing learners and opening channels for exploring more resources. That is why, the integration of Facebook in students' learning and teaching process leads to enhanced their academic outcomes. Thus, Facebook is a beneficial device for students' interaction, communication and improving their academic achievements.

Few scholars suggested that the teacher should not to over-use Facebook, because students might not use Facebook as an educational tool, and overuse of Facebook might distract the process of teaching and learning (Storey and Song, 2017). In addition, Gafni and Deri (2012) indicated that the use of Facebook has the negative effects such as waste of time or overspending of your time, procrastination and altering priorities as well as waste of money as it leads to additional costs for surfing. A lack of face-to-face communication and direct feedback is other problem face students during their using of Facebook. Also, it is not easy for students to convey some abstract and complicated ideas during Facebook, as it leads to misconception and confusion. Besides, media had also emphasized the danger of Facebook depended on the negative matters that arose (Yunus and Salehi, 2012). It is important to pay the attention of learners to have a good training on Facebook to be obvious for the students of their learning aim and will be working towards it (Ningtyas, 2018).

Conclusion

Learning of Communication skills in the English language has always been not an easy task. This study has introduced the Facebook to improve EFL students' English communication skills. During the review of previous studies, Facebook has proved its significance in developing the English communication skills of EFL students. With using Facebook, students will be able to practice and learn more about their English written and oral skills. In addition, they will be more confident and active in their society. All previous studies approved the importance of integrating Facebook for instructional purposes. This educational tool allows students to interact with foreigners as well as the other classmates. Furthermore, integrating Facebook can assist students in saving time, practicing more, decreasing their fear and anxiety and utilizing the process of learning English. Thus, the use of Facebook has become more successful and efficient way in learning and developing students' English communication skills (spoken and written skills). Thus, we should pay attention to exploring better tools as a substitute for traditional teaching methods to help learners in improving their English communication skills. However, the main problem that students face during the use of Facebook such as many learners make their participation in discussion within their classroom not within their closed or open Facebook group. In fact, most students like to be learned in a competition form and their teacher prefers to be a leader and director the process of learning, particularly in this program (Facebook).

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الاستخدام الفعال للفيس بوك في تحسين مهارات التواصل باللغة الإنجليزية: ورقة مفاهيمية

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ملخص

تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية هو تحد كبير لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. من شأن التقدم والابتكار في التكنولوجيا التعليمية مثل استخدامك لفيس بوك أن يوفر فرصًا جديدة لتعليم اللغات وتعلمها. لذلك، من المهم مساعدة الطلاب على تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية بفعالية مثل خلال استخدام الأدوات التكنولوجية. هو أداة تعليمية لتحسين مهارات الاتصال الشفوي والكتابي للطلاب لأنها تتيح للطلاب التفكير في أفكارهم ومواقفهم. تهدف هذه المراجعة إلى إظهار كيف يمكن لـ كطريقة تدريس مبتكرة تطوير مهارات التواصل الشفهي والكتابي للطلاب، بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تهدف هذه الورقة إلى تقييم التحديات والمشاكل في هذا المنظور لتعليم. أغلب الباحثون كانوا يفضلون استخدام إمكانيات استخدام الفيس بوك كأداة لتحسين الكفاءة في اللغة الإنجليزية. ومع ذلك، بينما هناك عقبات أمام استخدام مثل تضيق وقت الطلاب وغياب التواصل الفعلي والمباشر وإلهاء الطلاب عن طريق ميزات الفيس بوك.

الكلمات الدالة: الفيس بوك، التعلم، الشبكات الاجتماعية، الاتصالات، التحديات.

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