Research Paper

Learning it digitally: English language learning and the new media

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Abstract
Learning of a language, regardless of any complexity, requires special planning. Responsibility for execution of the various aspects of the program must be assigned. Cooperation of staff members is essential. Program goals and instructional techniques must be cooperatively determined by the involved personnel. In simple terms, instructional resources for effective English Language learning relate to both the human and the non-human materials that are involved in the transmission of information, knowledge, ideas, opinions etc. to the learner within and outside a classroom situation. Different new media tools such as Facebook, blogs, wikis, Google docs and YouTube are perceived to have effects on English language learner motivation. The present paper attempts to review the studies associated with the use of new media for learning English language skills.

***Keywords:** New media, learning, English language, effective learning, instructional resources, social media.*

I.   Introduction:

A considerable body of research from diverse disciplines over the past century has traced the complex and subtle ways in which the media have become an integral part of our everyday lives, implicated in the structuring of our domestic practices, our social relationships and our very identity. On a more macro level, a growing body of research is also charting how the media are increasingly central to broader socio-cultural, even global, flows of communication and information.

Learning of a language, regardless of any complexity, requires special planning. Responsibility for execution of the various aspects of the program must be assigned. Cooperation of staff members is essential. Program goals and instructional techniques must be cooperatively determined by the involved personnel. In simple terms, instructional resources for effective English Language learning relate to both the human and the non-human materials that are involved in the transmission of information, knowledge, ideas, opinions etc. to the learner within and outside a classroom situation. Different new media tools such as Facebook, blogs, wikis, Google docs and YouTube are perceived to have effects on English language learner motivation. The present paper attempts to review the studies associated with the use of new media for learning English language skills.

New Media and learning: New media refer to a communication system whereby media platforms are accessed through the Internet and used for the purpose of creating content, modifying content, and sharing information through the use of a digital device.

The beauty of the media is that different resources that would have been accessible through different devices could be accessed through a single digital device. Influence of the new media cannot be underrated although use and output of the media could be assessed based on users' behavior. Digital communication is no longer new in schools and colleges but the new media still stand as a new entrant to education sector generally. Although the traditional education system was certainly a very good way of learning before, now to many, globalization has changed the ways of doing things in every area, and education sector is equally affected. This has made application of the new media in the learning and teaching process necessary. The learner now has a major part to play in the learning process.

Figure 1.1
Source: (https://elearningindustry.com/new-age-interactive-learning-social-media)

It has been observed by educationalists that human behavior is learned by observing others and later this serves as guidance for our actions. Social networks are the prime tool of social media; Facebook alone caters to 800 million users. More and more social learning tools are emerging with their unique features to teach something new. Professionals are still trying to determine the full potential of these tools and the risks that come with it.

In the modern era, social media have their own set of tools to improve and enrich a user's learning experience. These tools assist a user through interaction where they work upon it, and hence learn. Social media can be an eminent part of learning process. In this fast paced world where one has no time to read a whole book to gain knowledge, it is through social media where we can immerse ourselves in the pool of information on the go. But a balance is to be maintained; the tools of social media for interactive learning should be used with face to face interaction. Their limitations are a concern, but their potential is vast like the sea.

The review: Learning the English language is an inspiration when the learning process is motivated by new media tools like English learning software or online materials (Alexandra, Hanna, Sommer, & Svensson, 2019). Learners' daily lives become increasingly involved in digital engagement with English, and these interactions likely influence motivation. Students become motivated when learning incorporates new media tools (Smith, 2019). Likewise, learners are motivated by evolving themselves in the virtual environment (Hasan & Ibrahim, 2017; Hasan, Hos- sain, Bhuiyan, & Mahmud, 2016).

Worley (2011) expressed that lecturers and directors face challenges in designing and teaching their learners. The rationale behind facing the challenges is that the "Digital natives" and their cognitive development is much different from their former generation (Evans, 1995). English learning software in Google playstore, Google, Google related link and search engine, Wiki, Blog, YouTube, Social media, English songs, movies and documentaries are the enormous sources of English language learning process that is followed in most of the countries of the world. Some studies (Hasan & Ibrahim, 2017; Balaji & Chakrabarti, 2010; Hasan & Rahman, 2017) have projected that the usage of new media tools incarnates the effects of improving English language capability in learners of higher education.

Learner Motivation social media: Facebook is used as a motivational tool for English language learners (Khusnita, 2017). The findings of Soomro and Farooq (2018) pointed out that social media instruments like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp incarnate a vital role in the learner's motivation while they are learning English language skills. Vurdien and Puranen (2018) also stated that learners motivated themselves through tele-collaboration of social media tools; those are above cited, and as the sequence, learners of the English language may feel free in possible learning. Al-Jarf and Bockarova (2018) mentioned that learners of other languages might improve their writing by doing Facebooking what's going on in his or her mind. Besides, learners up to higher secondary level, consciously or unconsciously, use Facebook for a particular time in communicating and learning English (Hasan & Labonya (2016). Furthermore, the finding of Lee, Yu and Liu

(2018) exhibited that the learners are mostly inspired and motivated to write in social media like Being, Twitter, Facebook, Messenger, Google+ and other new apps of Google play store. Their approximate result highlighted that Hong Kong students are inspired to use social media to accelerate their writing skills. In another sense, applied research done by McCall (2017) projected that micro-blogs on Facebook motivate students.

Motivation through Smartphones: The young generation of learners regularly uses a smartphone for academic and non-academic communication purposes. This new media tool can motivate learners as they spend more time using this device. The result of Sarhandi, Bajnaid and Elyas (2017) stated that smartphone enables learners with multi-level-task and activities, feedback receiving and providing process, sharing and exchanging views, interactivity and motivating learners to learn a lot more about English. Similarly, Freiermuth (2017) revealed that a smart-phone GPS treasure-hunting game in a flipped English class helped the learners communicate and learn with confidence and higher motivation. Conjointly Wang's (2017) study exposed mobile apps for vocabulary learning-driven learners to practice and learn new vocabularies to improve their English language proficiency. The investigator suggested that lecturers empower learners to use the smartphone for learning English language skills and motivate them not to waste time playing games most of the time. In line with the studies mentioned above, Tsai, Cheng, Yeh, and Lin (2017) portrayed that learners are more gratified and motivated while learning through mobile game-based English language learning system. Moreover, Weinberg (2017) pointed out that if the new media tools are not appropriately incorporated, it may leave negative washback instead of helping students learn English language skills.

Blogging for Interaction and Motivation: Blogs are thought to be one of the widely used web tools in learning English language skills. Alsubaie and Madini (2018) stated that learners would be able to ensure self-learning when they will write up in the blog or in the web page. The problem-solving activities energize them, and they open the problem box by solving the blog matters with peer interaction and motivation. This is possible through the use of new media tools like blogs and wiki in the absence of their teacher. Besides, the result of Hamuddin and Muzdali-fah (2018) summed up that learners will be free from many other barriers when they are engaged in the blog writing task in learning English. Performance on blogs may be used to complement the jigsaw task classroom learning to gear up learner's confidence, creativity and participation, maximize progress, and create a platform where learners can learn collaboratively (de Andrés Martínez, 2012). By blogging, learners can improve their ability to express interactions and reactions over there, and they can also evaluate and, more importantly, develop language skills (Trajtemberg & Yiako-umetti, 2011). That is why blogging may be used exponentially in motivating learners to learn skills. Nonetheless, it is advised that teachers remain very cautious and selective in operating blog content and activities.

English songs with subtitles are a massive source of motivation in learning skills. It sounds positive for learners because they enjoy the whole learning process through smooth enjoyment; it is also called suggestopedia in learing. It is very badly in need of the teacher to use appropriate songs for the specific learners and the teacher can choose songs from learners' favorite list. Investigating research among intermediate level learners, Farmand and Pourgharib (2013) divided the participants into two groups; one group listened to songs with subtitles and another group without subtitles. After the experiment, the reflection showed that the group that listened to songs with subtitles has improved pronunciation and oral production. Therefore, using songs with subtitles improves learners' articulation, listening skills, pronunciation and verbal communication skills. Even when learners sing English songs after listening to the projector and sound system, they can utter accurately specific English words of the selected songs (Farmand & Pourgharib, 2013).

Multimedia Enhancing Motivation: The pedagogic and innovative new multimedia tools help learn English with full entertainment (Kayaoglu, Akbas, & Ozturk, 2011). Presentations through multimedia ensure learners' autonomy and provoke motivation among the learners while learning English outside the classroom (Kilick-aya & Karjka, 2010). Using animated cartoons is the most effective learning method for young learners (ArÕkana & Tara, 2010). If teachers contextualize the cartoons and multimedia equipment, incorporate PowerPoint presenta-tions with learners' diverse learning styles, such as visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, and creativity by employing multimedia tools and methods, such as sounds, images, color, action, design, are preferred by the learners. Learners focused a positive attitude towards the usage of PowerPoint presentations (Oommen, 2012).

Lai, Tsai and Yu (2011) invented that PowerPoint presentation facilitates learning and draws the learners' attention along with specific needs on study materials. They used three points for effective learning for learners when they learn using PowerPoints. First, written and pictorial presentations of English words boost up learners, and this rein- forces learning. Second, learners can comprehend learning content very quickly. They also noted that students prefer that their teacher organize visual elements such as pictures or animated pictures, graphics, clip-charts, pie-charts, bar- charts, or tables in their PowerPoint presentations. Song (2013) explained

that PowerPoint presentation creates a positive approach and attitude among learners. By the projection of PowerPoint presentation, learners can become motivated to the second language learning classroom if it is logistically equipped with multimedia.

Motivation through Google Docs: In the context of online collaborative learners who worked with the support of Google documents and online medium for formal or informal, academic or non-academic communication were found positive towards learning the English language online. In this method of learning, learners did peer reviewing and peer correction activities using Web 2.0 applications. The collaborative group is motivated to learn skills using Google documents (Liu & Lan, 2016). Another recent study published by Pitura and Monika (2018) pointed that when a teacher encouraged learners to complete some tasks on language by using Google Hangouts or Skype, they were found motivated in the tasks and performed better.

YouTube Videos Arouse Motivation: In most cases, using YouTube videos in the learning process will be the most effective and long-lasting learning. The reasons are based on Krashen's (1982) affective filter hypothesis and input hypothesis. Krashen (1985) mentioned that teachers have an obligation to use comprehensible language input which will lower learners' affective filter while learning or following Stephen Krashen's habit formation theory, Dog's theory or Rat's theory in learning English. Comprehensible language input lowers affective filter and learners become motivated to learn. The previous studies (Brook, 2011; Metekohy, 2010) support the use of YouTube videos in learning also help improve motivation in the learning process. It is further said that the inattentive, the weaker and shy learners feel attracted and motivated to inter-act and learn when audio-visual language aids or contents are introduced in the classroom (June, Yaacob & Kheng, 2014). Thus, it is understood that the previous studies were conducted in a different context on different issues. The researchers have ignored the issue of learner motivation by using new media tools.

II. Discussion:

Feedback capability of new media tools like Facebook and blog is exciting and new to the learners. They find the feedback for their learning purposes similar to their regular communications with their friends. This feasibility of feedback in the language learning process motivates the learners. Previously the feedback system was face-to-face, and this was used to arouse shyness among the learners. On the contrary, due to the advent of educational technologies, learners these days get feedback online if they wish not to get face-to-face feed-back. As a result of the distance with their teacher, they can think freely and communicate without hesitation with their teacher and e-buddies. Moreover, in direct communication, learners had to fix an appointment with their teacher or whoever they thought useful for learning. But new media tools like blogs and Facebook allow them to choose their time freely and leave the comment and receive comments on their writing or any topic related to learning. Moreover, teachers find it flexible to give feedback in their convenient hours. This ease in giving and receiving feedback on the language learning process motivates learners to inspire to learn more.

The studies also made it clear that learners also find it motivating to learn when connected to an anonymous blogger or Facebook group admin and get feedback on their reading and writing skills. This creates room for a global collaborative learning environment for learners. In such communication where both the parties are not known to each other, lessen stress among learners. Often learners are shy to express their mistakes in front of their known contacts. Therefore, an anonymous e-buddy is a great help in motivating them to learn English. This is possible only with the support of new media tools. However, when the auto-correct option sometimes changes the word, what they intend to write leads them to perplexity, and they find new media tools, sometimes making mistakes. Therefore, learners need proper guidance to use new media tools, and they should be guided for the motivating and educative aspects of new media.

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