

A Study of EFL Saudi Students' Use of Mobile Social Media Applications for Learning

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Abstract

This research addresses the gaps in the literature on m-learning approaches in Saudi Arabia, with a focus on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students studying at university level. The research aimed to explore university students' use of social media applications and their role in language learning, with a focus on how mobile devices can best be utilised. It analysed the attitudes of 102 learners towards the use of social media to improve language learning both inside and outside the classroom setting. Students of both genders completed a questionnaire, and five students engaged in semi-structured interviews. The aim was to discover whether the students are currently using social media applications to enhance their language skills, and what the students' attitudes are towards the use of social media via mobile devices inside and outside the classroom. Prior to designing the research instruments, the literature was reviewed, including examining the attitudes of learners in different countries towards mobile technologies, and to decide on the best approach to take in examining attitudes towards new forms of learning. Based on the findings from the literature, appropriate questions were devised, and these reveal an overall positive response towards from the student participants towards using social media and mobile technologies to facilitate learning English. The results of this research are positive, and it is important that Saudi Arabia keeps up to date with advancements in technology to ensure the best learning experience for learners and maximise their potential.

Keywords: attitudes, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), mobile devices, Social Media Assisted Language Learning (SMALL)

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