Technology in the Language Classroom: How Social Media is Changing the Way EFL is Taught

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Abstract:
This paper explores how technology, and specifically the application of social media, in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom is changing how language is taught. The paper begins with a depiction of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and how technology has generally been employed in EFL classrooms in the past few decades. This critical appraisal, which provides the context for the paper, assesses how successfully technology has been viewed in relation to language teaching and learning and how it has developed up to the present day. The focus then moves to social media apps and mobile technology as a contemporary form of CALL. The discussion considers the ways in which social media is used in language classrooms and more importantly the things it can offer the EFL teacher and learner. Importantly, the paper concludes by proposing ways in which these types of technologies can be better incorporated across cultures and contexts to promote EFL teaching and learning.

Keywords: CALL, EFL, language learning, social media, technology

1. Introduction

Currently, we are living in an information-technology-driven milieu and witnessing rapid developments in implements and methods in many areas of the economy, education, entertainment and health, to name a few. Within the field of education, and specifically language teaching and learning, these rapid technological advancements have forced changes in teaching approaches, largely because students' current learning styles are unlike those of previous generations (Wang & Liu, 2018). Undoubtedly, this has gradually created a generation gap between younger students and older teachers, which has thus caused some conflict in teaching approaches and methodologies. Specifically, EFL teaching nowadays is bearing enormous changes with regards to teaching models, conceptions methods and methodologies. This accordingly indicates a need to understand the various changes happening to EFL teaching and learning. Central to these developments is the concept of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and its formulae such as social media and mobile applications. The current paper examines the use and influence of social media in the light of the rise of technology use in EFL contexts. It seeks to remedy these issues by analysing the literature of the use of CALL and social media in language classrooms and through providing proposals for better integration of these technological advancements in the EFL context.

The paper has been divided into three parts. It begins by a detailed account of CALL (section 2.1) and an explanation of how technology has been employed in EFL classrooms generally in the past few decades (section 2.2). It will then go on to assess how successfully technology has been viewed in relation to language teaching and learning and how it has developed up to the present day, and then it sheds on what still needs addressing in this regard (section 2.3). Section 3 will then explore the specific uses of social media apps and mobile technology as a new form of CALL. The discussion will explore the ways in which social media is used in classes (3.1) and more importantly, the things it can offer to the EFL teacher and learner (sections 3.2 and 3.3 respectively). Finally, the conclusion (section 4) gives a summary and critique of the findings prior to the identification of areas for further research and the ways in which these types of technologies can be better incorporated across cultures and contexts.

2. Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL)

2.1 What is CALL

Due to narrow perception and controversy, there seems to be a degree of uncertainty around the terminology in CALL. Therefore, it is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by this term. CALL may be defined as "the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning" (Levy, 1997, p. 1). To Beatty (2003, p. 7), it is "any process in which a learner uses a computer and as a result, improves his or her language". CALL comprises multiple information-technology applications with the specific aim of enhancing language teaching, facilitating learning of language and providing learners with a comprehensive input. During the 1960s and 1970s, the traditional drill-and-practice programmes influenced most uses of CALL (*Chapelle* & Jamieson, *2008*). More recently, CALL has taken the form of virtual online learning environments and web-based distance learning. CALL makes use of interactive whiteboards and even extends to the use of corpus linguistics, mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) and computer-mediated communication (CMC). The philosophy of CALL in EFL classrooms globally places a strong emphasis on student-centred learning and the types of

materials which learners can work with independently. The idea is that learner autonomy is best fostered when learners take independent steps towards learning the target language.

CALL materials can either be "structured or unstructured", and they usually promote "two important features: interactive and individualised learning" *(Beatty, 2003*, p. 34). It helps teachers to aid and support rather than to instigate the language learning process. In addition, it can be used, in some measure, as a complimentary approach to reinforce what has been learned in the class or as a remedial tool to help the learners who benefit from additional support. Furthermore, CALL materials are usually designed taking into account "principles of language pedagogy and methodology" (Blake, 2008, p. 5). Crucially, they can be derived from a range of learning approaches and theories, such as behaviourist or cognitive for instance. A combination of teacher-led instruction and CALL is known as "blended learning [which] is specifically designed to increase a student's learning potential and is more common than CALL as a standalone method" (Pegrum, 2009, p. 27). Other benefits mean that students are not reliant on a single teaching method or approach and blended learning also caters for a variety of learner types. The following section will critically review the specific uses currently in practice in EFL classrooms and discuss their benefits. Following this, proposals for CALL integration in EFL contexts will be presented.

2.2 Why introducing CALL

A large and growing body of literature has investigated the benefits of introducing CALL into the language classroom. As will be discussed, prior studies that have noted the importance of CALL were primarily based on technologies and applications which are older and more well-established. It is important to review some of these studies so they can be compared with the much more recent and developing research on CALL in general and social media specifically (Section 3). To begin with, in relation to the use of interactive whiteboards (IWBs) and EFL, there has been extensive research (Johnson, Ramanair & Brine, 2010; Hur & Suh, 2012; Öz, 2014). Gerard, Greene and Widener (1999) claim that IWBs promote language teaching processes in three ways: a) they boost interaction and communication; b) they provide new cultural and linguistic elements; and c) they improve organisational skills of teachers. Johnson *et al.* (2010) interviewed a number of IWB-trained language teachers and students, and complimented this with class observation to determine what improvements needed to be made in its application. The study concluded that both teachers and students appear to make personal transformations and suggestions on how to employ the IWB depending on the specific experience, knowledge and cultural context of the students and teacher. The researchers implied the need for collaborative work among teachers working in similar contexts. In a similar study, Hur and Suh (2012) looked at the impact of IWBs on vocabulary tests of Korean newcomers' children in the USA. They found that when learning new vocabulary, IWBs were effective for giving visual presentations, interactive games and reviewing tests. According to Pennington (1996), IWBs work well together with other aids such as personal computers. Since interaction in class is essential in language learning, it is important that the class works as a group and relying on personal computers alone can make learners antisocial. IWBs can present a topic to everyone at the same time, and promote communal and group discussion (Wang & Liu, 2018).

To date, there has been little research on the small-scale use of tablet computers, another form of CALL, specifically for the second/foreign language learning environment. Lan, Sung and

Chang (2007) carried out a study on elementary English language learners in Taiwan and concluded that in small-reading groups, students worked more collaboratively on peer-assisted reading tasks. The students who worked with tablets gave more support and feedback to their peers, and avoided conflict more often. In support of these findings, Liu (2009) conducted a case study on Chinese EFL learners with personal digital assistants, PDAs, (like a tablet PC) for creating a more fruitful listening and speaking environment. Results showed that the group using PDAs improved their speaking and listening skills significantly more than the group without them. This lack of research on tablet computers in EFL settings is presumably due to its still fairly recent inception.

A broader perspective on the use of tablet computers has however been documented in the literature. Previous studies have shown that there has been a drive to promote tablet use globally and many governments and policy makers are finding means to supply schools with the necessary technology. The Antiguan and Barbudan Government for instance, started a project in 2012 named GATE (Government Assisted Technology Endeavour), allocating more than 3000 tablets to students of school age (Tamim, Borokhovski, Pickup & Bernard, 2015). Brazil similarly purchased 460,000 tablets for schools under its tablet initiative (Tamim, *et al.*, 2015). South Korea not only proposed 7.5 million tablets for elementary and high school students but also to produce more e-books for access on tablets (Kim & Jung, 2010). Similar drives are occurring in Thailand (Lesardoises, 2012), the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America (Tamim, *et al.*, 2015).

Interestingly, furthermore, Turkey also launched their FATIH project with the specific aim of improving English language teaching in schools. The project aims to provide tablet computers for every student, interactive white boards and a decent internet connection in every class. Run by the Ministry of National Education of Turkey (MoNE), it has five constituents. These are: providing equipment and software; providing educational e-effective management; information and communication technology (ICT) applications in teaching programmes; training for teachers; and a reliable, manageable and measurable outcome of the project. The results of the project have shown thus far that IBWs have helped language teachers directly, and progress has been measures in students' listening, reading and writing skills. Interestingly, the tablet computers however, have been shown to be less cost effective for the outcomes they delivered.

Another popular use of CALL in EFL classrooms currently is the 'flipped classroom'. This classroom model gets students to watch pre-recorded lecture and PowerPoint videos before a lesson, and then "class becomes the place to work through problems, advance concepts, and engage in collaborative learning" (Tucker, 2012, p. 82). Strayer (2012) has described it as a 'pedagogical approach' which "moves the lecture outside the classroom and uses learning activities to move practice with the concepts inside the classroom" (p. 171). Researchers such as Brunsell and Horejsi (2011) and Zhong and Song (2013) have also described it as 'a unique teaching model'. The aim is that teachers and learners can work together to solve problems and complete difficult aspects of the homework in a collaborative manner. Crucially, it is characterised by its direct application of modern education technology and thus many researchers view it as the key to promoting student-centred and autonomous learning.

Research on the flipped classroom technique in language learning has so far showed positive benefits. What it appears to provide, which other teaching approaches so far have not shown, is that it directly meets the imperative need for technology-enhanced learning (TEL) (Pillay *et al.*, 2015). Wang and Liu (2018) recently designed a task-based flipped classroom model to explore its application in a Chinese EFL environment. The findings suggested that the approach contributes to "the improvement of students' confidence and autonomous learning ability" (Wang & Liu, 2018, p. 1). Other researchers such as Westermann (2014) and Milman (2012) in seminal works have also reported the positive effects of the model "on students' learning as it can apparently enhance students' engagement and motivation in class discussion and interaction" (Milman, 2012, p. 87). The fact that this is still a new (less than five years old) model and considerable research is already being carried out shows the importance and the potential on this approach to language learning.

CALL can also be used in other, less ground-breaking areas of language education. For instance, a basic use is in the use of flashcards to acquire vocabulary. There are a variety of relatively simple programmes which aid teaches in vocabulary teaching in this manner. Programmes often utilise of spaced repetition. This is a concept where a learner is presented with lexical items which are committed to memory at progressively longer intervals. The aim is for long term vocabulary retention. This has led to an increase in spaced repetition systems (SRS) applications, such as phase-6, an app specifically designed for foreign language learning. In view of all that has been mentioned so far, one may suppose that the benefits of CALL do outweigh its drawbacks. Albeit the difficulty of confirming this, there still indeed issues that need addressing with CALL. The following section will highlight this in more detail.

2.3 What still needs addressing with CALL

Despite the positive reviews of technology in the EFL classroom, there are still some problems which need to be addressed. Access to the Internet is still not available in some developing world countries. Expense of materials is also an issue for some schools and colleges, despite the numerous governmental drives which have been documented. Perhaps less well documented is the time and training that must be given to teachers in order for them to incorporate technology into the language classroom. Unfortunately, "administrators often have the mistaken belief that buying hardware by itself will meet the needs of the students, allocating 90% of its budget to hardware and virtually ignoring software and staff training needs" (Davies, Hamilton, Weidmann, Gabel, Legenhausen, Meus & Myers, 2011: *Foreword*). Multimedia lends itself well to self-study and or self-directed learning, but the fact remains that technology needs to be incorporated into teaching, rather than seen as a separate aid for students to use alone. The simple existence of language learning apps, games and platforms does not automatically lead to students learning the language autonomously. Whilst it does foster independence, it also promotes collaborative and interactive exchange as has been shown above. Only when incorporated into the classroom environment does it fulfil its potential as a teaching tool.

While most of the above is established research, there are now newer forms of technology which are not yet addressed to their full potential in CALL research: namely, the use of social media and smart phones in the language classroom. The following section will discuss the research

to-date and argue for a stronger focus in teaching approaches and theories which put this new form of CALL at the forefront of the language classroom environment.

3. Social Media as a New Form of CALL
3.1 Current trends
        While diverse definitions of the term 'social media' have been suggested, this paper will refer to social media as any site which provides a network of people with a space or a platform to make connections and communicate virtually. Users can add to the network in a variety of ways for instance through posting videos, photos or comments; subscribing; responding or liking other people's comments, photos or videos; and making friends with others in their field, by sending out friend requests or getting subscribers and favourites (Johnson, *et al.*, 2010). Platforms may be general like Facebook, Tumblr or Twitter, or designed for a specific community with a single aim to their communication, such as Strava for cyclists and runners, LinkedIn for those wanting to manage their professional identity, or HelloTalk, FluentU, Lingualia and LinguaLift for those learning a new language. Within the past decade, networking technologies and social media "have created a revolution in the world of communication" (Allam and Elyas, 2016, p. 1). The emergence of social media during this time has indeed influenced the way people around the world communicate, as well as the how they retrieve the body of information surrounding them. A great amount of information can now be accessed at any time and from anywhere in the world (Johnson *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, according to Allam and Elyas (2016), social media has caused "a paradigm shift in education" all over the world (p. 1). It has resulted in an emphasis on new educational constraints, promoting such things as collaboration, personalisation, and autonomy. Allam and Elyas (2016, p. 1) also claim that "it is inevitable that these new generations of digital natives have certain expectations about the way they believe learning should be practiced and how it should evolve, to have social media as an integral part of this learning process". Thus, is becomes more crucial than ever that teachers are familiar with technological advancements which have the power to influence knowledge acquisition, culture, and pedagogy.

        The discussion thus far provide evidence that social media technology has unquestionably become an essential part of people's life and is unsurprisingly been widely used among language learners on a daily basis. Smartphones are carried everywhere and as a result, knowledge can be accessed at any time. It thus seems inevitable in this 21st century that they should be better introduced into the classroom environment and be utilised as a learning aid. In spite of much hesitation on the part of some language teachers concerning the use of mobile technology as a direct teaching/learning aid, it is necessary to explore the ways in which it has revolutionised EFL through social media.

3.2 Application of social media in the EFL classroom
        Previous research has indicated that there is a significant positive correlation between social media and student/teacher and student/student relationships. In turn, this results in positive student outcomes in the teaching environment and more interaction in the classroom discourse. Incorporating social media into the classroom has also been shown to help boost student motivation (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007). In a similar vein, Mazer, Murphy & Simonds (2007) found that a website with a variety of cues, could shape the perceptions of the communicator. What many of the current studies on social media and teaching fail to do however,

is to come up with empirical research, which focuses on identifying and documenting a specific scheme for utilising social media as a pedagogical tool (Shabrg, 2012). Identifying the type of learning which works best with collaborative feedback or exchange, and the explicit steps that teachers should take, or the materials they should be drawing on in social media platforms is much needed.

It is the case that "53% of Twitter users around the world are females and 77 % of them are between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five" (Internet World Stats, 2013). Thus, we have seen an increase in Twitter being used in university classrooms, specifically in the last five years. Alshahrani and Al-Shehri (2012) explored the extent to which students and teachers understood and responded to some of the integrated EFL learning tools that were drawn from social media, such as Twitter. The researchers found that amongst students in Saudi Arabia, their perceptions and practices of e-learning incorporation were not always united. This meant that whilst students had high expectations, their actual use of the tools did not have any perceivable positive effect on the learning experience. More recently, Asiri and Alqarni (2015) researched the advantages of incorporating Twitter into the EFL classroom. Their study focused on the potential advantages to using Twitter in an educational context, again within the context of Saudi Arabia. Their results in contrast did show a positive effect from Twitter being used in the English language learning practice. Researchers such as Ahmad (2015) have explored the effect of Twitter, specifically on students' writing skills, focusing on ideas and content, organisation, and voice and style. The study showed that the females using Twitter as opposed to traditional teaching techniques outperformed the control group on a post-testing of writing. Finally, Kutbi (2015) undertook a research project to examine the ways in which undergraduate female students perceive Twitter when used as an educational tool. The findings showed that 84% of students prefer the use of Twitter as a learning tool. Undeniably then, the research survey on Twitter shows that learners have a growing interest in incorporating smart phone technology into their learning.

Facebook is another social media and social networking platform which dominates virtual communication with over 2 billion users worldwide. Mahmoud (2014) carried out a study focusing on Facebook use amongst on preparatory-year students and their achievement in EFL writing. They reported that writing performance improves considerably when learners are taught writing by using Facebook. This reaffirms the notion that learning content must be relevant to students and authentic if they are to succeed at language learning (Benson, 2000, p. 114). Specifically, Mahmoud (2014) claimed that the teaching/learning environment became more promoting and encouraging to the learners, especially the shy ones. Secondly, the researcher argued that English language is used outside the classroom (virtually in emails and on Facebook), giving the students further authentic exposure and an unwinding atmosphere, without the direct consequences of feedback and correction. Again, the findings support the claim that students have a positive stance towards utilising social media platforms for educational purposes. Indeed, these findings should be encouraging teachers and educators into incorporate this kind of technology.

A further platform is YouTube which has firmly established itself as a social media website through video sharing and audience growth. In their seminal work, Watkins and Wilkins (2011) explored ways through which YouTube can be used to enhance language teaching and provoke learner autonomy. Similarly, Kabouha and Elyas (2015) carried out an experimental study

investigating the impact of YouTube videos as an aid for vocabulary learning. The findings were positive and 84% of the students found YouTube to be beneficial and gained a positive experience from it. Perhaps more importantly, 70% they also regarded it to be an easy form of technology to use. Similarly, researchers such as Alwehaibi (2015), Mayora (2009) and Silviyanti (2014) have looked into the effects of YouTube on students' learning of language skills ranging from writing to listening and speaking. Positive results were reported. Having said that, one of the problems teachers still face is a lack of training in social media apps which are designed for their learners age rather than for them. Ease of use is an important factor if we want to see more social media used in the classroom.

Chang and Yeh (2018) claim that for Chinese EFL learners in particular, "speaking is the most difficult and anxiety-provoking aspect of language learning" (p. 728). One way that social media is improving the language classroom is through its benefits for practicing spoken communication. The majority of studies on social media only focus on the effects to writing or vocabulary, which makes this recent study a valuable contribution, extending the benefits of social media use into other aspects of the learning process. Specifically, Chang and Yeh (2018) developed a learning model which drew on mobile applications (VoiceTube and Facebook) as an aid for students to interact in English collaboratively. A number of ten EFL learners took part in a six-week collaboration-based speaking activity that was mobile assisted. During the activities, students worked in pairs using their mobile to create collaborative reflection videos which were based on videos they viewed and chose together. They then uploaded them to Facebook, and received comments and likes from others. It does not make clear whether this was peers or the wider public that could view and comment on the videos. In addition to this task, they kept a learning diary. The researchers analysed the reflection videos, the learning diaries, and open-response questionnaires and interviews. Interestingly, the findings showed that both the elements of mobile devices and social media platforms, as well as the specific design of the activity, offered the participating students with opportunities to practice speaking. To conclude, whilst there is little research in this relatively new field, what has been achieved so far points to social media improving classroom learning in a range of ways.

3.3 The future of social media and language learning – What needs to be addressed
Introducing social media to the EFL classroom has been shown to be beneficial in a range of areas such as writing, vocabulary, speaking, and boosting general confidence and self-esteem. The materials taken from social media are also authentic and relevant and make the learning process or specific activity a meaningful and purposeful one. Despite this, accepting new technology in the workplace can be accompanied by a certain amount of concern, and as a result, some teachers are still disinclined to shoulder the change (Fullan, 2006). With this reluctance to change, some teachers hold on to the traditional top-down teaching practices which do not adapt well to social media as a tool (Peterson, 1999). For instance, using social media and mobile technology means giving a larger sense of autonomy to students and taking a step back as a teacher. It also means allowing students to make mistakes without any direct correction. According to Rosen (2010), in order to compensate their fears, some teachers formulate a perception that students might be socially or psychologically effected by overusing technology. Thus, it is apparent that a teaching-learning barrier does exist.

This idea of overuse, whilst often used as an excuse for some teachers, is something worthy of consideration. It is also less well-documented in the literature. As social media as a language tool is beginning to gain global popularity, most of research has focused on the potential benefits. This does not mean that we should ignore potential pitfalls and areas to improve or overcome. Alwagait, Shahzad, and Alim (2014) explored the impact of excessive social media use and its influence on academic performance. They collected surveys from 108 students to derive an awareness of the popularity scores of certain platforms and to test their academic performance. They found "no linear relationship between social media usage in a week and GPA score" (2014, p. 1092). Instead, they found a link between lower academic scores and students with poor time management.

Allam and Elyas (2016) used quantitative methods to gather descriptive data on the perceptions of social media use of seventy-five EFL teachers. Analysis of the data gathered supports the above findings that participants have faith in the pedagogical values attached to the use and direct application of social media as an EFL tool. Nevertheless, the participants also expressed reservations in relation to the extent of which social media can be used beneficially. Some perceive a double-edged sword effect, largely because of the distractions that it seemed to cause in some of their classes. This resulted in the opposite of its intended usage. Allam and Elyas's (2016) study recommends that more research is undertaken to better understand how experienced teachers utilise it successfully. This is crucial to develop the most effective practices in the classroom.

Conversely, social media use may separate language learners both from their peers as well as the society more generally. Indubitably, extreme usage of social media can take away students from getting involved in social activities and inhibit face-to-face communication, a necessary skill in acquiring fluency in a second language (Anderson, 2008). In addition, other side effects cannot be ignored such as the increase in sleeping problems, stress, and long-term depression, as well as a general decrease in self-esteem levels (Cotten, 2008). It can also impact less directly on students' perceptions of their abilities (Cotten, 2008). Scanlon and Neumann (2002) believe that it has the potential to affect students' grades. Anderson (2008) states that it can impact class completion. Some students may also be uncomfortable with the technology if they do not use it in a personal sphere and may fear the feedback of peers or wider influence of their communication. In addition to these concerns, there is evidence of misuse, such as cutting and pasting material without giving credit to authors (Jones *et al.*, 2008). On a pedagogical level, Norton (2000, p. 1) claims that "the differences between social media applications are such that it is impossible to treat the social web as a whole and to make claims about their pedagogical value – if any – in general". These are issues that must be addressed and maintaining a balance of incorporating social media and using other learning and teaching strategies must be acknowledged.

The advantages of social media for language learning are dependent on how these tools assist language teaching and learning communities, or in what Walsh (2012, p. 2) refers to as "the creation of a space for learning". Such tools needs to be effectively embedded into the teaching environment in a way that it compliments already present teaching practices and merges with current theories on language learning. Less work has been carried out in this area and there is a strong need for doing this. Norton (2000, p. 1) claims that this should really be a first step and that

"before moving on to the discussion of how (language) education can benefit from social media applications, one needs to critically scrutinise whether these artefacts can be situated with regard to, or are compatible with current learning paradigms". This research is fairly out-dated but if researchers still claim that social media as a learning tool is not compatible, then this raises the question of whether new theoretical paradigms and frameworks need to be created in order to address social media.

As has been documented, the popularity of social media as a means of communication more generally, is not going to wane any time soon and the reported benefits of its introduction to teaching appear to outweigh the negatives. Moreover, language learning must be taught authentically and in context rather than in a classroom vacuum. As a major form of communication, social media is a tool that should not be ignored in EFL. Rosen and Nilson (2008, p. 19) argue that on the level of course and content delivery, social media should be used in a way that enriches teaching and learning through offering students' academic support such as tutoring, and feedback (Rosen and Nilson, 2008). A key policy priority should therefore be to plan for the long-term care of social media and its successful integration in EFL teaching and learning. Nevertheless, as mentioned previously, in order to control the benefits of social media in the teaching environment, schools and universities need to focus on implementing them in light of well-developed and researched strategies. These practices and strategies are lacking in the field currently. What has come to light however, is the fact that social media as a CALL tool is increasing in global popularity and most empirical studies indicate the success and positive effects of these applications. Thus, the increase in its popularity is only going to continue and will need to be supported by theoretical frameworks and perspectives.

4. Concluding Remarks

Returning to the question posed in the title of this paper on how social media has changed the way EFL is taught, it is now possible to state that social media learning communities provide language learners with additional support, the potential to contribute to an authentic target language setting and a communicative purpose. Moreover, it has conclusively been shown throughout this paper that social media can provide learners with information and opportunities which can support their confidence in their language capabilities and more generally, their personal growth and development (Martínez, Alemán & Wartman, 2009). Thus, its effects have been shown to be positive in a range of areas, not least on academic performance, specifically in the areas of writing and speaking. A willingness to be open and an acceptance of the technology, by teachers, will lead to an increase in anticipated motivation and will boost affective learning of students. It will also promote positive attitudes (Mazer *et al.*, 2007) and will provide students with a greater potential for setting their own goals and designing course content. Learner autonomy is best fostered when students have control at the highest possible level of curriculum design. Thus, we can conclude that one of the areas in which additional research is needed is the effective implementation of social media at the level of course design. Rather than a simple aid to activities, social media should be driving the way courses are designed.

Moreover, with its increasing popularity, the influence of social media is only going to continue. By accepting it as a communicative tool and an important part of the learning process, teachers will bring their classes in line with a modernising society. Focusing on how social media

can be used in line with teaching philosophies and frameworks will give it a greater role in the language classroom. In this manner, the previously mentioned practical issues of teacher training and accessibility can be much improved if the technology is embedded into theoretical frameworks. Playing a role in course and syllabus design will also give CALL and social media more potential as tools to benefit the EFL environment and to develop as a philosophy, as society itself develops its own philosophies and trends in communication. A natural progression of this work, which could produce interesting findings, is to scrutinise the influence of social media, in the same sense as CALL, on EFL material design and delivery.

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