

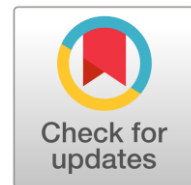


The Role of Digital Media Technology in Arabic and English Classes in the Kingdom of Jordan

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Abstract

Purpose - This study examines how Jordanian universities are using technology in the English-language curriculum, focusing on Petra and Al-Zaytoonah's Arabic and English preparation programs. The study's main goal is to determine how well smart boards, iPads, and Moodle teach ESL students. The study will also assess language classroom technology's pros and cons. The study's main objective is to assess technology integration and its impact on Jordanian EFL students.

Design/methodology/approach - The research methodology used in this study is a qualitative and observational technique in order to accomplish its stated aims. The research methodology includes conducting interviews with English academics affiliated with the University of Petra and the University of Al-Zaytoonah in the country of Jordan. The conducted interviews provide significant perspectives on the use of technology within English educational settings. Furthermore, the research undertakes a comprehensive examination of pertinent scholarly works in order to enhance and support the insights derived from the interviews.

Findings/results - Based on the data and the interviews, it has been observed that Jordanian educators use several technology tools, including smart boards, iPads, and Moodle, inside their English lessons. The use of technology might potentially enhance the language proficiency of Arabic and English language learners (ELLs) in Jordan, offering them many advantages. However, it is worth noting that there exists a significant deficiency in the level of knowledge of and comprehension of technology among some instructors.

Originality/value - Technology's role in Jordanian English language instruction is underlined in this research. Technology utilization in Petra University and Al-Zaytoonah University's preparatory schools is studied. Through educator interviews and literature reviews, this research analyzes technology integration today. This study also examines the pros and cons of utilizing technology to improve

language competency, helping educators and scholars comprehend technology's impact on language education.

Paper type – Research paper

Keywords: *Language, Digital Media Technology, Digital Storytelling, Arabic and English Language.*

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Introduction

The use of digital media technology has been increasingly recognized as an important tool in Arabic and English language classes in the Kingdom of Jordan. With the rapid advancement of technology and its widespread availability, digital media has become an integral part of language education in Jordan, providing numerous benefits to both teachers and students alike. Enhanced Language Learning: Digital media technology has transformed language learning by providing an immersive and interactive environment. Language learners in Jordan can now access a wide range of online resources, including websites, apps, videos, podcasts, and interactive learning platforms in both Arabic and English. These resources offer engaging and authentic language input, allowing students to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in a more dynamic and meaningful way (Alzubi, 2022 a). Additionally, digital media technology enables personalized and adaptive learning experiences tailored to individual students' needs and learning styles, promoting self-directed and autonomous learning.

Many changes take place at the level of traditionally built buildings as technological structures advance. There is no way to stop or reverse the progress of technology. It's undeniable that technology has altered the nature of human existence in many ways. (Saleh et al., 2013). While Arabic is the official language of Jordan and is spoken at all levels of education, many local and foreign students choose to learn English to better communicate with the rest of the world. Therefore, Jordan is a full participant in the field of intuitive higher education. Preparatory schools that focus on the English language do not offer English as a second language (ESL) instruction in Jordan. According to studies, Arabic is the native tongue of all its students. Modifying one's English to learn English or pass an English Language Test (Eshghinejad, 2016).

It takes a lot of work on the part of the teacher or lecturer, as well as a wide range of approaches and media, to teach a foreign language in a country where the native language is not Arabic. As part of this initiative, national Arabic language experts will guide teachers

towards novel approaches to education. (Saleh et al., 2021). The educational system in Jordan promotes excellence, places an emphasis on students' needs, ensures that all students have equal access to education, ensures that all students are treated fairly in terms of service delivery, encourages the use of cutting-edge ICT tools, and provides the most effective pedagogical practices (Rababah & Melhem, 2015).

In the environment of Jordanian universities, ICT is supplied to aid students and professors in presenting learning parts to make such resources easier and more productive (Rababah et al., 2013). Acquiring new knowledge is crucial to the success of any academic activity. The vitality of a country depends on its citizens receiving a quality education. There is no doubt that education plays a crucial role in enhancing the caliber of available human resources. There are a variety of approaches that may be used to teach Arabic, but not all of them are appropriate for every topic. Lectures, PowerPoint presentations, class discussions, and student-teachers all seem to fall short of what's needed to get students engaged in their studies, especially in Arabic (Cahya & Ashoumi, 2022).

Purpose of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate the most effective classroom conditions for promoting the learning of the Arabic language. The study also investigates the use of English as a Second Language (ESL) technology and its integration by Arabic educators in their educational environments. The results of this research are expected to serve as a source of inspiration for English as a Second Language educators who have yet to integrate technology into their language training inside conventional classroom environments. Therefore, the current study included participants representing the whole continuum of the English educational system, spanning from early childhood schooling to advanced postgraduate degrees. This research examines the potential benefits that educators and learners may get from the incorporation of emerging technologies in educational environments, with a special emphasis on English as a Second Language (ESL) instructional settings. The study included empirical examples to demonstrate the tangible consequences of integrating these technologies into real-world scenarios.

Research Questions

1. What type of technology, tools, methods, or techniques do teachers utilize in ESL and Arabic classrooms in Jordan?

2. What challenges are there in technology-equipped ESL and Arabic language teaching in Jordan

Literature Review

Since non-Arabic speakers often struggle with learning Arabic, it is thought that technology-based platforms may be the best way to satisfy their needs. Teachers across all grade levels are using a variety of electronic tools, but the outcomes are subpar at best (Ritonga et al., 2022). It is difficult to acquire a new language orally in the modern digital age. In the past two decades, the availability of online resources has had a profound impact on the method by which people acquire new linguistic skills (Reinhardt, 2019). The Internet and other forms of IT have been indispensable in many fields. Through the power of the internet, information can be sent and processed instantly across time zones and international borders. One of the many benefits of having students and teachers converse online is the increased diversity of their interactions (Abdillah, 2020).

The digital media sector is constantly evolving and now provides several possibilities for those with certain preferences, such as those who like binge-watching TV shows or movies in their leisure time. Once the serial-movie platforms were established, particularly internationally, and the requisite localization procedures were kept up, they attracted a massive audience and user base (Türkmen, 2020). Since the advent of the industrial age, advancements in information and communication technologies have had far-reaching effects on how people acquire knowledge (Aprilia & Ahdi, 2021). Technological progress alters the classroom experience. As a tool for promoting education, the Internet is becoming more pervasive and sophisticated. Online education is essential as an adjunct to conventional teaching methods. A widely used technological medium nowadays is the mobile phone (Yasaroh et al., 2022).

Using weblog (blog) and wiki software improves communication, information accessibility, content production, and teamwork. The right use of technology in curriculum development should facilitate the development of novel pedagogical approaches and the improvement and expansion of students' learning opportunities. The word "digital learning" refers to the same concept as e-learning, which stands for online courses. (Hwang et al., 2021). In today's classrooms, most Arabic teachers make use of some kind of digital resource, although the types chosen, the learning activities developed, and the regularity with which they are used may vary greatly from teacher to teacher. The two primary factors that teachers

look for in digital resources are how user-friendly the technologies are and how well they meet the students' requirements (Murtadho, 2021).

The use of digital technology in education has been a sign of academic advancement since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution (Mufidah et al., 2021). Students have various issues throughout the learning experience, including fatigue; thus, teachers need to be able to combat this via innovative and creative use of pedagogical approaches and media (Susanti, 2019). The English language continues to play a pivotal role in the workings of the global communication infrastructure (Barzani et al., 2021). Rather than teaching all four English language skills, the curriculum in most Jordanian schools (and notably in public schools) emphasizes reading and grammar (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). Because the goals and results of English language courses at universities and colleges are geared towards preparing students for success in the modern economy, this creates a barrier to entry for prospective students. Therefore, English curricula at the university and college levels should be structured to foster growth in students' capacity for logical and effective thought and communication. In the Arab world, English is the most difficult language to learn, which is particularly true in English classes. Furthermore, this requires even more careful consideration when it comes to online learning, as the mode of content delivery is fundamentally different from traditional classroom settings (Awajan, 2022).

Because of the prolonged lockdown in many nations caused by the COVID-19 epidemic, educational institutions everywhere, including those in Jordan, have shifted to some kind of learning, whether it is synchronous or asynchronous. Choosing between fully online courses and blended courses to achieve learning outcomes and assure the sustainability of the learning and teaching process was a difficult decision for colleges of education, as stated by Krsmanovic (2022). This was in response to COVID-19 and the lockdown. According to Hu and Huang (2022), COVID-19 poses a challenge to all stakeholders, including educators, to provide outstanding online learning. In light of the global spread of the COVID-19 virus in the early 2020s, Zhang (2020) explains that online education has become more vital. The transition to online education did occur rapidly and without much forethought. Teachers, academics, and learners were caught off guard and unprepared for online learning as a result of this fast reaction to an emergency issue. Sadly, this was a problem in every Arab country, including Jordan. Because of the epidemic, "the prevailing paradigms in education have been rocked, causing the scientific information that has been created to be reviewed" (Ari & Schmitt, 2022, p. ii). The COVID-19 epidemic has had a significant impact on the world of

education (Maican & Cocorada, 2021). Even though neither the teachers nor the students were prepared for the shift, it was their shared obligation to adjust their methods of instruction and study accordingly. The primary issue was that both educators and learners lacked foundational knowledge of e-learning and ICT (Cifuentes-Faura, 2020; Maican & Cocorada, 2021).

Digital Media Technology

Most young people, including the vast majority of Arab EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students, use some kind of digital media technology every day. There aren't just one or two forms of digital media technology; there are many. These include different kinds of software and programs, hardware, applications, websites, social media tools, etc. Additionally, e.g., Saudi Arabia has a sizable young population that is becoming more tech-savvy and connected through digital media technology. This can include anything from social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to mobile devices like smartphones and tablets to websites like Google Translate (Khan, 2016).

Cultural Exchange and Authentic Language Use:

Digital media technology facilitates cultural exchange by exposing Arabic and English language learners in Jordan to authentic language use in real-life contexts. Through digital media, students can access authentic materials, such as news articles, videos, and social media posts, from both Arabic-speaking and English-speaking countries. This exposure to real-world language use enhances students' understanding of different dialects, registers, and cultural nuances, promoting their cultural awareness and intercultural competence. Multimodal Learning: Digital media technology enables multimodal learning, where students can engage with language input through various modalities, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. For example, students can watch videos with subtitles, listen to audio recordings, interact with multimedia apps, and create their own digital content using language skills. This multimodal approach caters to different learning styles and enhances students' engagement, motivation, and retention of language skills. Collaborative and Social Learning: Digital media technology promotes collaborative and social learning experiences among students in Arabic and English classes in Jordan. Through online platforms, students can collaborate on projects, engage in discussions, provide feedback, and practice language skills in a collaborative and interactive manner. This fosters a sense of community and encourages peer-to-peer learning, which can

enhance students' language proficiency and social skills. Teacher Professional Development, Digital media technology also plays a crucial role in the professional development of Arabic and English language teachers in Jordan. Teachers can access online resources, participate in online courses and webinars, and engage in professional learning communities to enhance their pedagogical skills, stay updated with the latest language teaching methods and technologies, and exchange best practices with other educators. This continuous professional development empowers teachers to effectively integrate digital media technology into their language classrooms, improving the quality of language instruction. Challenges and Considerations: Despite the numerous benefits of digital media technology in Arabic and English classes in Jordan, there are also challenges and considerations that need to be addressed. These include issues of access to technology and reliable internet connectivity, ensuring the quality and authenticity of online resources, addressing concerns about privacy and security, and providing adequate training and support for teachers and students to effectively use digital media technology for language learning (Martnez Lirola, 2020; Al-Amir, 2017; Muhsen Al Harbi, 2017; Goundar, 2019).

Digital Storytelling

Students who are taught to write their tales might also greatly benefit from the use of digital storytelling. Students may be given tasks that have them study a subject, choose a point of view, and pose a dramatic question in the style of the Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling after watching examples of digital tales developed by their professors or other story producers. Students of the "digital generation" in today's classrooms might benefit from this kind of activity in terms of being engaged, paying attention, and being motivated to learn. Students' abilities to learn how to utilize the library and the Internet to study rich, deep information while evaluating and synthesizing a broad variety of knowledge may be put to good use in this process (Alzubi, 2023 b). Students who take part in making digital tales may also improve their communication abilities by learning to structure their thoughts, formulate questions, articulate their perspectives, and build narratives. Furthermore, it may aid students as they learn to tell tales for an audience and express their information and thoughts in a unique and significant manner. (Robin, 2006).

Method

The research uses a qualitative approach to analyze the data. For example, the primary objectives of the study were to provide a comprehensive understanding of the strategies and methods used to assist learners of English and to investigate the technological resources available to assist teachers, particularly in lecturing. Furthermore, qualitative research relies on a methodology that actively searches for events to gain insight into the particular environment in which they occur (Hoepfl, 1997). In addition, the qualitative approach may benefit from the harsh perception of the event itself (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; 1998). In this study, we will look at the research that has been done on the topic of using technology in a classroom setting for learners of English and Arabic. The researchers used many technological means (tablets, computers, and smart boards) in their efforts to enhance educational practices. The study used a wide range of resources to compile its data, although academic publications and online databases such as ERIC, Summon, and CRCA were the primary publications. The study also considers data collected from the newspapers, providing additional context for the ongoing investigation.

We followed up our literature study with interviews with two Arabic and English language instructors. Two in-person meetings were held in December 2019 at the University of Petra English Preparatory School. The interviews also shed light on how these educators deal with their ESL students in the classroom. Researchers may learn from teachers who use technology to assist ELLs in quickly and accurately acquiring subject-matter knowledge. The interview was recorded, but the researchers nevertheless analyzed it thoroughly.

Instruments of data collection

To ensure that data is being gathered from the same information domain as the interviewee, this research employs general interviews (Turner, 2010) as its data-gathering method. It emphasizes discussions, such as by utilizing pre-fixed questions, but allows researchers some leeway when conducting interviews with individuals by asking unscripted follow-up questions. What's most important about the phenomenon's demise is preservation; for example, it allows interviewers some leeway.

The purpose of this study was to conduct in-depth interviews with seasoned educators who had previously employed technology effectively in the classroom, particularly in settings dedicated to language instruction. Concurrently, the children were taken from their normal sessions for individualized lessons. As a consequence, researchers were able to adapt the

study's questions or add new ones to get a deeper understanding of respondents' perspectives.

Participants

There were two Jordanians involved in the research, one from Petra and one from Zaytoonah. Mohammed, our first volunteer, is an English language instructor at the University of Petra. Maram is an English language instructor at Al-Zaytoonah University and is our second participant.

This research applies a literature review method that involves collecting, analyzing, and critically evaluating existing literature on creative Arabic language learning using the Pinterest application. The main subject in this research is the selected literature material, which includes articles, journals, books, and sources related to critical thinking skills, which are selected based on their relevance to the research variables and their relationship to the research topic.

Research data consists of primary and secondary data sources. Primary data includes articles that are directly related to research variables, while secondary data includes journals, articles, and books that are relevant to the research topic, as well as sources that discuss critical thinking skills. Data collection methods include the use of direct and indirect quotations. Direct quotations are used when referring directly to quotations or information found in the literature, while indirect quotations are used when summarizing and interpreting information from the literature without citing it literally.

For data analysis, researchers applied content analysis techniques. The aim is to explain and analyze the content of written information objectively and systematically. In this context, content analysis carried out by researchers functions as a tool for organizing and interpreting data collected from various literary sources. The collected data will be analyzed using the content analysis method to identify patterns, themes, and findings that are relevant to the research topic, namely the use of the Pinterest application as a model for learning Arabic. This approach ensures that the analysis is conducted in an objective and structured manner, which in turn increases the credibility and rigor of the research.

Result and Discussion

Result

The examination of the obtained data does not begin until much later. Every time we gather data, we have to go back and analyze it to see what influence the phenomenon has had

on it (Falk & Blumenreich, 2005). To top it all off, qualitative analysis is performed on the data. The researcher started by quickly transcribing the audio from each interview. The researcher took notes on everything that was said in both interviews after reading them again. Although the data gathered from the interviews was organized into three sections, The interview questions were recorded in the first set of columns, and the participants' responses were recorded in the second set. Still, all of the interview data is examined carefully. Findings that helped address research issues were also emphasized. The research found such things as pertinent textual comments, In the end, the searchers are tagged with a certain term. To protect the anonymity of the participants, their names and the names of their institutions will be modified before publication in the qualitative study section. Next, the research reviewed the interviews with both participants, focusing on how they used technology to learn Arabic and English in the classroom. The research produced five dimensions with which to examine the data.

Two people were chosen to participate in this study and provide data for the researchers. Therefore, both individuals are well-versed in the use of technology and have at least five years of professional experience in their respective fields (in this case, Arabic and English education). The participants in the study were chosen for the study. The researchers had some of his fellow assistant professors speak with educators who had been implementing technology-based language instruction for at least six years. Muhammad (a pen name) is a professor at Petra University in Jordan, where Arabic is the official language. He has been instructing for six years and specializes in English language arts. Maram claims she employs technology during her English classes because she is enthusiastic about incorporating it into the classroom.

The second person involved is known only by her pseudonym, Maram (one of our professors has known her for many years and highly recommended her to me). Maram is now a professor at Jordan's Al-Zaytoonah University. Maram has been an ESL teacher in Jordan for seven years, during which time she has worked with kids from middle school up to the graduate level. She also encourages the technological development of her fellow faculty members in her role as the school's current resident expert.

The following are the four overarching themes discovered by the researchers after compiling the responses of the study's participants.

1. The research looks at how different forms of technology-based instruction—from computers and Smart Boards to tablets and smartphones—can help students learn English as a first or second language.
2. Second, students' proficiency in English and Arabic improves, and their ability to study the languages on their thanks to the use of technology in the classroom.
3. Third, there are certain obstacles to employing technology in language lessons, such as students and instructors not being savvy with the tools available in their educational systems.

Discussion

Both participants were of the opinion that a teacher must engage in activities of this kind in order to fulfill the needs of their pupils, despite the fact that students are usually uninformed of the activities that are carried out in the classroom with the assistance of technological advancements. For example, the effectiveness of a lesson plan that incorporates technology is highly dependent on the way in which the students utilize the technology. For instance, Gilakjani (2017) says that a definition of technology integration may be how the instructor uses it to carry out the duties effectively, but how that usage may be reformed to fit the needs of the students. This definition would then be an example of successful technology integration. According to Yilmaz (2021), the term "technology integration" refers to the use of technology inside a school environment with the goal of making the setting more beneficial for the pupils. In addition, the use of technology in the classroom is beneficial since it enables teachers and students to do activities that were traditionally carried out with the use of paper by using digital devices such as laptops, personal computers, and tablets. Students may often benefit from the use of technology, and there are many ways in which it might be put to good use in English lessons. The kids need to be made more aware of the role that technology plays in the classroom, and it must be thoroughly ingrained in their educational experience. On the other hand, schools stand to gain a lot by seeing how teachers themselves integrate technology into their lesson plans. According to Costley (2014), students who make more use of technology assistance in their schooling report improved linguistic and interpersonal communication results. Murphy et al. (2003) contend that technology may be used to encourage engagement from students in a classroom setting. As a consequence of this, the interaction that takes place between the teacher and the pupils is an extremely useful tool for increasing the pupils' level of fluency in the English language.

According to Keser et al. (2011), learners actively engage with one another in order to develop and innovate.

According to Keser et al. (2011), studies in which groups of students learned together to accomplish a common goal benefited from the technological advances of the 21st century because they increased the number of people within their global and local communities with whom they could practice and develop their language abilities. Technology and teacher education However, the gains that come from using computers do not materialize quickly or in an automatic manner. Therefore, its use in classes dedicated to the study of languages is dependent on the teachers' openness to embracing it. A different approach to instruction is responsible for bringing about the improvements that have been seen in language classrooms, as stated by Alzubi (2023 c). The teaching method known as "chalk and talk," for example, is almost universally regarded as insufficient for the purpose of instilling students with an effective command of the English language. According to Raihan and Lock (2010), teachers may play an important role in assisting students in comprehending how to study well by providing a well-structured classroom environment. Education has been vastly enhanced by the use of technology in previously established lecture-based techniques. Even though they can't possibly know all there is to know about technology, teachers nevertheless have a responsibility to find out how to use it in the classroom so that students may learn languages. They tried, but they simply couldn't take up technology like the computer-whizz kids, despite their best efforts. According to Patel (2013), there are ways in which current technology may be used as a complement to conventional methods of teaching in order to make the time spent in class more interesting and productive for all of those who are participating. Foreign language instructors traditionally provide lectures, instructions, and explanations to their classes while standing in front of their pupils and writing on a whiteboard. Arifah (2014) contends that in the modern world, educational practices have also developed as a reaction to improvements in technological advancements. With the assistance of various technological tools, students are able to feel more at ease with the grammatical structure and vocabulary of the target language. For instance, people used to look up the meaning of a word in a dictionary when they wanted to learn it, but now all it takes is a few clicks of the mouse to do the same thing. The use of technology in the learning environment enables teachers to engage their pupils and stimulate their interest in the language being studied more effectively. According to Dawson et al. (2008), language is the only route of communication, and English has emerged as the de facto global language in recent decades. If we want to witness advances

in students' ability to communicate in English, it is essential that language classes make use of the most recent technological advancements. According to Gilakjani (2014), technology has the potential to change the way we learn a new language by providing a learner-centered classroom environment in which instructors play a less important role. He claims that this might lead to a more efficient and effective method of acquiring a second language. According to Drayton et al. (2010), the use of computer-based technology distinguishes true learning experiences. These experiences extend the responsibilities of the learners.

Conclusion

While some research has focused on the positive aspects of adopting technology to assist with language learning, other studies have investigated the possible negative aspects of this practice. According to Hennessy (2005), information and communications technology serve as a driving force that motivates students to embrace new modes of functioning. Researchers seek clarity so that students may develop their own sense of independence, and teachers have the conviction that students can be reinforced by the activities and ideas they come up with on their own. According to the claims made, computer-assisted language learning (CALL) systems raise both students' and instructors' levels of confidence in their language teaching abilities. Despite this, there are some beneficial implications that the use of ICTs may have for education and teaching. The learner has a substantial amount of control over how much of what they take in they are able to recall. Costley (2014) contends that the ease of use afforded by contemporary technology makes it straightforward to teach and learn the language. says that the changes in language that have occurred as a result of advances in technology have had an effect on the way that language is taught in schools. The application of technology may be seen in every sphere of modern life. To improve their pupils' language skills and facilitate the learning of new tongues, language teachers need to make use of various technology tools in order to remain competitive in today's global market. According to Gillespie's (2014) argument, when students utilize technology in the classroom, not only do they enhance their language abilities, but they also advance more rapidly. When it comes to using technology in the classroom, there are two schools of thought: Some people feel that utilizing technology to gain authentic content from the internet helps language learners, while others believe that computer-based communications help language learners (Eaton, 2010). Nevertheless, digital media technology plays an essential role in Arabic and English language

classes in the Kingdom of Jordan. These classes offer improved opportunities for language learning, encourage the exchange of cultural ideas, facilitate multimodal learning, foster collaborative and social learning, and support the professional development of teachers. Language instructors in Jordan can develop language learning experiences that are engaging, real, and learner-centered by utilizing the power of digital media. This will prepare students for the demands of the digital age and enable them to successfully communicate in Arabic and English in a globalized world.

Limitations

One of the primary constraints of this research is the size of the sample. The study included conducting interviews with a limited sample size of just two instructors who specialize in instructing English language learners and Arabic language learners. It is important to note that this sample size is considered minimal for this particular phenomenon. Time emerged as a significant determinant for the restrictor since the study successfully conducted the research within a very short period of three months.

Declaration of conflicting interest

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