

## Saudi Students' Perspective on Social Media Usage to Promote EFL Learning

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### ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a study into Saudi students' perspectives on social media usage to promote EFL learning. Sixty Saudi learners of English as a foreign language enrolled at Jazan University were participants in the study. To gauge the participants' perspective; a questionnaire was designed, adapted from Aifan (2015) and previous studies on social media and perceived attitude. We modified the questionnaire to our requisites to accomplish the real response on the use of social media to encourage collaboration and communication. The participants were asked to respond about their perceptions to use English on Social media, affective variables, and hypothetical usefulness of social media applications of what they learned in the class and reflecting on their learning experience in English. Results showed that students had a positive attitude toward social media usage, despite a few barriers, feeling more confident, less anxious, more competent, and more willing to communicate in English on social media. We suggest that the careful construction of tasks, activities and projects based on the use of social media integrate with the curriculum, workshops and faculty development programs on social media usage can have a positive effect on the language learning process.

### 1- INTRODUCTION

The paradigm shift from traditional whole class and teacher-centered approach to learners centered approach and the proliferation of new technologies have inspired language educators to adopt and explore these new technologies in creative ways across the wide range of teaching contexts especially in EFL learning. But out of the new technology tools, platforms, applications, and social media sites, Social media (SM) has created a significant buzz in language learning. Thanks to its spectacular innovation in technology and of course, the current hysteria surrounding Saudi students' interest in language learning. But will this buzz translate into numbers at the global level? We tried to explore Saudi students' attitude to understand the use of social media in prospects of language learning.

The affective filters, also known as negative psychological factors (unconstructive emotions, such as high anxiety, low motivation, low self-confidence, boredom, and frustration), have a substantial impact on learners' language development and communicative competence. Conversely, positive emotional variables are likely to have a strong influence on willingness to participate in communicative tasks using foreign/second language (L2) (MacIntyre, Clément, & Noels, 2007). Krashen

(1981) mentioned that low affective filter: the condition when learners have high motivation, positive attitude, high self-confidence, and low anxiety, is necessary for language acquisition to take place. Creating conducive learning environment may lower down these variables ensuring learners' willingness to communicate.

The students usually expose to language through; watching TV, videos, movies, listening to music, read books, classroom instructions, interaction and mobile-phone applications. Learners are updated with the latest technologies and the best can be seen students move with social media to complement and supplement classroom language instructions. The social media include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and Whatsapp, etc. It facilitates learners easy to access at any time at any place. Hence, the use of SM may be a panacea to the affective filters. The researcher feels that it's evidently going the titanic route. It's a genre if incorporated, followed and done in right spirit, works really well. There is certainly a degree of excitement among the learners for social media use, courtesy the launch of social media use in language learning by the educators and the EFL teachers. We hope that the teachers and learners both capitalize on this concept.

The study further, voyage through review of previous researches, concept of social media and current status of SM use in Saudi Arabia, hypotheses, research methodology, findings that unfold Saudi students' perception and attitude for SM usage as a computer-assisted language learning (CALL) activity, hypothetical usefulness of social media applications, accomplishment, barriers, and suggestions for encouraging low affective filter and increased levels of willingness to communicate among Saudi EFL learners for future use in academic milieus.

## 2-SOCIAL MEDIA FOR LANGAUGE EDUCATION

The concept of Social Media is top of the schema not only for the corporate world but also in academics today. Educators, as well as researchers try to identify ways in which learners can make profitable use of SM applications such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Wikipedia, and Snapchat. Despite these, there is a lot to learn about the cyber term SM exactly. Hence, it becomes imperative to shed light on this term to understand its classification by the characteristic: collaborative projects, blogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual social worlds (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Furthermore, Today's generation has become more vigilant, visual and virtual uploads innumerable pictures and sends all around the world in a click. But managers, users, educators, and academic researchers often consider the term 'Social Media' and Web 2.0 similar but truly differ in meanings.

SM originated bit late prior to its journey from Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis creation *the Usenet*, Bruce and Susan Abelson's *Open Diary*, to later termed as *weblog* or *blog*. The avant-garde twenty-first century, in the beginning, created new terms *MySpace* and *Facebook*. These all requisites gave birth to an eminent and widely used expression *Social Media*. Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) defined social media as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content. Today, all want to use SM all the time abstaining from its negativity like you want to eat everything like junk food without gaining any weight (Allison Graham, Tedx). In a nutshell, SM is a set of net-based applications that enables learners (language) to partake, share their views, opinions (audio-visual), fortitude to cooperate-collaborate-coordinate-follow-up with community, peers or group/s at one with exclusive intent to explore, create, learn and transform to contribute in real-life situations. Therefore, it's being imperative to outline

some standards to regulate the SM usage process for users especially the language learners.

The rapid use of SM applications has become an order of the day for numerous purposes. The new users and apps emerge every day across the region enable one and all to express personal views, ideas, opinions, share research/educational projects, blogs writing, social networking sites, and cyber virtual space. The SM has a few well-established applications of social media. These apps are gaining a lot of interest among Saudi learners in academics alike, but there is no concrete evidence yet, which exhibits interest to fetch constructive results using these apps. We would try to explore its utility in EFL education in Saudi Arabia.

## 3- CURRENT STATUS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SAUDI ARABIA

Since Saudi Arabia is undergoing unprecedented social changes. The majority (84%) reside in urban using latest smartphones and technology. The proliferation of communication technology facilitated internet penetration to 91% people across the kingdom as evident from last year's social media statistics revealed the number of internet users in Saudi Arabia rose swiftly to touch 30 million people at the beginning of 2018. Social media and the high-speed internet connect its natives to other people across the world, creating awareness, and a more progressive mindset. The growth is not limited to teenager, but encompasses all ages. It is, therefore, reasonable to say that Social Media set and represent a revolutionary new trend that should be of interest to companies operating online. With this unique change, SM usage has also expanded rapidly bringing social change in Saudi society. The government also uses Twitter and Facebook accounts to drive for reforms across the Kingdom. A report entitled "Citizen Engagement and Public Services in the Arab World: The Potential of Social Media," stated that social media is still used in the Arab region as a one-way information source for the majority of those who use it to interact with the government (Arab News, 2014).



Social media usage statistics of Saudi Arabia: 2018 Infographics

Surprisingly, out of nearly 25 million total active users on social media, 18 million access these platforms through their mobile devices. This number accounts for nearly 72% of all social media users in the country.

The report shows that the public sector in a majority of Arab countries continues to “suffer from mounting deficiencies in terms of quality, efficiency and accessibility of government services, despite the continued growth of social media penetration in the Arab region and its increasing potential for governments to engage citizens on enhancing public services” (Arab News, 2014). People from all age group use SM freely for the professional, academic and entertainment purposes. Social media indubitably opens up a new space for learning, teaching, and thinking.

**4- LITERATURE REVIEW**

The rapid use of SM has obligated educators and researchers to study how social networks can contribute to their respective territory. Several studies have examined the integration of SM sites in education. A plethora of studies have been conducted on social media across the world but hardly any effort and studies that examined the use of SM in foreign language learning in Saudi Arabia. This article, therefore, aims to develop and carry forward the existing literature through its close focus on the use

<b>Total population of Saudi Arabia</b>	33.25 million	100%
<b>Internet users in Saudi Arabia</b>	30.25 million	90.98%
<b>Active social media users</b>	25 million	75.19%
<b>Active users accessing social medias from mobile devices only</b>	18 million	54.14%

of SM by Jazan university students in English as a foreign language education in Saudi Arabia. The

research also aligns with Saudi government’s leading several initiatives that have considered essential interventions and developments in politics, society, education, and various other aspects and the increased use of social media in Saudi Arabia has opened new opportunities in higher education teaching (Alsolamy, 2017).

To put it in better perspective, a few studies in Saudi Arabia include: Salih & Elsaid (2018) aimed at recognizing the attitudes of using the social networking sites among learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Saudi context; Alsolamy (2017) examined faculty members’ attitudes, motivations, and concerns about using social networking sites (SNSs); Alnujaidi (2017) analyzed the educational and instructional implications of Social Network Sites (SNS) in the ESL/EFL teaching and learning context; Allam & Elyas (2016) demonstrated perceptions of using social media as an ELT tool among EFL teachers in the Saudi Context; Aifan (2015) investigates factors and barriers affecting the attitudes toward using social media; Alwagait, Shahzad & Alim (2015) research on social media usage and their academic performance; Alseriehy & Youbi (2014) studied applying social networking in higher education; and Al-Khalifa & Garcia (2013) discussed social media in education in terms of its roles, used in different settings, and its policies and management in accordance with Saudi culture.

Likewise, mostly in Saudi Arabia, EFL learners often feel anxious about English language learning and

communicating (Sharma, 2018 & 2016) and many scholars in their studies have demonstrated EFL learners lack confidence in their speaking skills (Sharma, 2016; Boonkit, 2010; Grubbs, Chaengploy, & Worawong, 2009); have low motivation to participate in English (Sharma, 2018; Maneechao & Tepsuriwong, 2009); feel shy to use English (Wiriyachitra, 2001); and feel unwilling to communicate in English (Kamprasertwong, 2010; Pattapong, 2013; Wattana, 2013).

The concept, hereafter, when applied to language learning, the learners may get plenty of opportunities using cyberspace to share their feelings, views, and opinions on various language topics on SMNs: including blogs, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Wikis, Video and virtual worlds (online games) as already investigated and proved creditable for language learners (Blattner & Fiori, 2009; Brick, 2011; Forlano, 2009; Lamy & Zourou, 2013; Lomika & Lord, 2009; Meskill & Quah, 2012; Mills, 2011; Stevenson & Liu, 2010). Consequently, a systematic amalgamation of language courses on reading and writing skills, social media has a great pedagogical potential for improving language awareness, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency (Wu & Wu, 2011), developing language competence (Dieu, 2004), and offering learners increased opportunities for language skill practice (Lee, 2010). Besides, many studies discovered that well-established social media apps usage facilitated learners to interact with others using L2 (Thorne, 2009; Toetanel, 2014). Many studies revealed social media as remedy to lower affective variables, increase confidence and better communication in L2 (Thorne, 2009; Wu & Wu, 2011), increased motivation (Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Lee, 2010), reduced anxiety (Stevenson & Liu, 2010), decreased shyness (Bosch, 2009), and positive attitudes towards language learning (Thorne, 2009; Toetanel, 2014).

Major studies emphasize that SM usage allows ample opportunities; greater relaxation, increased participation and a greater amount of L2 output reflect higher levels of language competence. The findings from previous studies, therefore, seem to point to the possible contribution that the SM can make in increasing EFL learners' interest, readiness and will to attain and enhance their language skills.

From the literature review above, it is clear that SM plays a potential role in encouraging language learners to attain requisite language skills. Although a few studies have approved benefits of the use of social media for improving language skills and lowering affective filter, there seem to be no significant and consistent efforts examining Saudi students'

inclination to use SM in EFL perspective. Furthermore, most of the literature is exploratory, limited in scope (here KSA in context), small sample sizes, focusing on anecdotal and descriptive evidence and exploring the characteristics of general social media applications rather than specific in their effects on EFL learning, providing subjective views only. The research will carry forward the previous research investigations on EFL learning and the succeeding paragraphs will explain the purpose of the study, research questions, hypotheses, findings, discussion and conclusion with a few recommendations to justify SM usage in EFL learning.

## 5- METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the perspectives of Saudi Students on Social Media Usage to promote EFL learning at Jazan University. This study also examines a few social media and networks that Saudi students usually use and interact with peers, groups and community and its purpose. It also looks at some barriers that face Saudi students during SM usage to sustain their target language learning.

### 5.2 Hypothesis

The researcher hypotheses are:

- H1: Saudi students use social media for personal, social and academic purposes.
- H2: Saudi students at Jazan University have positive attitudes toward using social media to support their EFL learning.
- H3: Social Media usage affect Saudi EFL learners' *affective variable* in the target language.
- H4: Saudi students have hypothetical usefulness Social media application.
- H5: Students using SM face certain barriers to support their EFL learning.

### 5.3 Research Question

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of participating in social media on learners' affective or psychological variables in English. Our research questions are

1. Which social media applications do Saudi students use, and what are the purposes for which they use these SM tools/apps?
2. What are Saudi students' attitudes toward using social media to support their EFL learning, mainly at Jazan University?
3. How does Social Media usage affect Saudi EFL learners' *affective variable* in the target language?
4. What is the hypothetical usefulness of social media applications of Saudi Students in EFL learning at Jazan University?

5. What barriers do Saudi students at Jazan University face while using social media to support their EFL learning?

#### 5.4 Instruments

The researcher prepared a set of questionnaire based on the operational definition of social media, a review of the literature identifying the variables believed to contribute to individuals' EFL learning and teachers' observations. Items were adapted from Aifan (2015) dissertation but a few of them were modified for the present study. The questionnaire was aimed to know the learners' general interest and attitude in using English for the purpose of communication in the classroom. The questionnaire was administered at the end semester in which participants were asked more specific questions relating to SM usage in English in and beyond the classroom. The data collected from responses were analyzed using the SPSS program for descriptive statistics (to calculate the means (M) of the items and standardized deviations (SD) to report the participants' responses to the research questions and the hypotheses of this study.

#### 5.5 Participants

The study was conducted with 60 Saudi EFL learners in two semesters in the preparatory year at Jazan University. The participants were native Saudi speakers and had limited exposure to the use of English. The researcher who taught these participants, tried to create a conducive environment for SM usage in language context providing ample opportunities for project collaboration, peer and group interaction, and to interact with the community. The features of social media complement the constructive philosophy of teaching and learning that allows learners to create, co-create and share knowledge with global audiences beyond classroom walls (Seo, 2013). SM usage has brought radical changes and transformed our lives and now it must be utilized in academic learning as Barnes & Tynan (2007) affirmed that social media tools have the opportunity to change education, many institutions still wonder how to adapt to these tools (Barnes & Tynan, 2007).

## 6- RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The subsequent explanations investigate each research question based on the content and variables. In analyzing the questions, participants were asked to state the frequency of using social media as 1= Never Use, 2= Rarely, 3= Sometimes, 4= Often, 5= Frequently and to rate their degree of agreement were measured using a five-point Likert-type scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree.

1. Which social media applications do Saudi students use, and what are the purposes for which they use these SM tools/apps?

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Examples of Social Media Networking Sites

Social Media	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. YouTube	4.41	0.94
2. WhatsApp	4.72	0.68
3. Facebook	3.76	1.18
4. Snapchat	4.38	0.82
5. Twitter	3.08	1.61
6. Wikipedia	1.82	1.65
7. Skype	2.16	1.39
8. other	1.98	1.21

Scales: 1=Never Use, 2= Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5= Frequently

Participants, in the first part of the question, were asked to rate their most favorite social media tool: YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, Wikipedia, Skype, and/or other tools. Table 1 presented the number and percentage for these eight items. The results show that the most frequently used SM app/tool by Saudi students at Jazan University was WhatsApp. Almost all the participants reported the use of WhatsApp frequently and the result displays students' highest experience with WhatsApp (M=4.72). The researcher and students very often use this app to convey class information, assignments, quizzes, tests, answering and asking questions related to the class work or courses. This coincides with Reuters (2013) who also preferred it since unlike some other instant messaging apps, WhatsApp has the option for only administrators to know the identity of group members. Participants reported Youtube as second most frequently used SM app/tool (M=4.4) which is further supported by Perlov and Guzansky (2014) who affirm that the number of Twitter and YouTube users in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the highest per capita in the world, which indicates how connected the kingdom's residents are. The surprising tool used frequently for social communication and other purposes by students was Snapchat (4.38) and followed by Twitter (M= 3.08) which is comparatively less used than the abovementioned tools. However, the students do use

Skype (M=2.16), Wikipedia (M=1.82), but in very less frequency, which differ with the findings of Aifan (2015) and Wang's et al. (2012) giving more preference to Facebook, Skype and Wikis for various purposes. This all depends upon the latest innovation and applications, trends, flexibility and ease of using tools, culture, and region. The participants also reported other tools that included Instagram, Line, online games, Tango, Google plus, chat sometimes on Yahoo, Hotmail and Gmail sources.

*Table 2*  
*Descriptive statistics for purposes of using SM apps/tools by Saudi students at Jazan University*

Purpose	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. News	3.51	1.12
2. Education or Learning	4.01	1.02
3. Fun and Entertainment	4.26	0.78
4. Social communication with peers, family, community	4.58	0.72
5. others	2.08	1.61

1= Never Use, 2= Rarely, 3= Sometimes, 4= Often, 5= Frequently

To answer the second part of question, results in table 2 above, expose that participants in item 4 use social media most frequently for social interactions with peers, family, community (M=4.58, SD= .72), followed by item 3, "Fun and Entertainment" (M= 4.26, SD= .78). The third most frequently mentioned purpose of using social media by participants was Item 2, "Education or Learning" (M= 4.01, SD= 1.02) and for news (M= 3.51, SD= 1.12). However, the least frequently mentioned purpose of using social media technologies was for others (M= 2.08, SD= 1.61). Participants reported shopping, requisite contents on mobile phones, cars, culture and tradition, and sports programs.

*2. What are Saudi students' attitudes toward using social media to support their EFL learning, mainly at Jazan University?*

*Table 3*  
*Means and Standard Deviation of Saudi students' attitudes toward using social media to support their language learning*

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
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1. I prefer to use social media for learning purposes.	4.16	0.92
2. Learning using social media is fun and pleasing	4.31	0.94
3. I use SM to join classmates in collaborative projects.	3.98	1.09
4. I prefer to use social media for learning purposes.	3.82	1.22
5. Teacher using SM in teaching is worth and interesting.	3.91	1.01
Average	4.03	0.74

The scale was: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

The first question was designed to explore Saudi students' attitudes toward using social media to support their language learning. Table 3 presented the descriptive statistics for these five attitudes items. Participants were asked to rate their degree of agreement by responding to five items determining their attitudes. Participants' responses were measured using a five-point Likert-type scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. A high score indicates the more positive attitudes that the participants hold toward using social media to support language learning, and a low score indicates the least positive attitudes that the participants hold towards using social media to support learning. Participants' responses in this scale ranged from 3.82 to 4.31, which indicates positive attitudes based on the Likert scale.

Descriptive statistics were conducted to analyze the data in this question by calculating the means of the items and standardized deviations to report the participants' responses. The overall attitude of Saudi students at Jazan University toward using social media to support their learning was positive with a mean M= 4.03 (SD= .74). As shown in Table 3, the most frequently mentioned attitudes were items number 2, 1, 3, 5, and 4 respectively. "Learning using social media is fun and pleasing" (M= 4.31, SD= .94), "I prefer to use social media for learning purposes" (M=4.16, SD= .92), "I use SM to join classmates in collaborative projects"(M= 3.98, SD= 1.09), and "Social media are important because they support my learning" (M= 4.07, SD= .93). Furthermore, item 5, "Teacher using SM in teaching is worth and interesting" rendered a mean of 4.05

(SD=1.03). However, the lowest frequently mentioned attitude was, "I prefer to use social media for learning purposes" (M=3.82, SD= 1.22).

Table 3 above shows the overall attitudes of Saudi students at Jazan University toward using social media tools to support learning was positive with a mean of 4.03 (SD= .74 ). This is consistent with the findings from Wang et al. (2012) and Aifan (2015) when carried out studies on course participants' attitudes toward using social media to support/improve learning and both studies had exhibited positive attitudes toward using social media for educational purposes. The result of this research also goes with the social learning theories of Bandura (1977) and Vygotsky's (1962) as both accentuate that all learning is social and accomplished through social modeling and social interaction Aifan (2015). The findings show that Saudi students are keen to interact, chat and have fun using SM applications to socialize and learn which aligns with the findings of Swan and Shea (2005) where students perceive themselves as interacting socially using online tools and that this social interaction was meaningful to their learning. Students are usually busy studying other subjects, and despite this, they use SM because of its utility and good features. They can create the group and follow teachers, peers, groups for their assignments, tasks, projects or any information they look for.

3. How does Social Media usage affect Saudi EFL learners' affective variable in the target language?

Table 4  
Means and Standard Deviation of social Media usage affecting Saudi EFL learners' affective variable in the target language

Statement	Mean	SD
1. Use of social media increases confidence towards EFL learning.	4.14	0.94
2. Social media enhances motivation towards EFL learning.	4.19	0.96
3. Social media reduces learners' anxiety towards EFL learning.	3.98	1.06
4. It helps minimize hesitation to learn and participate in EFL learning	3.96	1.04
5. Social media increases positive attitude towards EFL learning	4.22	0.92
6. It promotes/ increases willingness to communicate in the English language.	3.89	1.04

Average	4.06	0.68
Scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree.		

The second question of this study was designed to investigate social Media usage affecting Saudi EFL learners' affective variable in the target language. Participants were asked to rate their degree of agreement with six statements. Participants' responses were measured using a five-point Likert-type scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree. A high score indicates SM usage lowering of the affective variables, and a low score indicates the higher affective variables in EFL for Saudi students at Jazan University. Descriptive statistics were computed to analyze the data of this question by calculating the means of the items and standard deviations to report the participants' responses. The affective variables on social usage of Saudi students shown in table 4 are at lowest (M=4.06, SD=.68). Items 5, "Social media increases positive attitude towards EFL learning" (M= 4.22, SD= .92), Items 2 "Social media enhances motivation towards EFL learning" (M= 4.19, SD= .96), Items 1 "Use of social media increases confidence towards EFL learning" (M= 4.14, SD= .94), Items 3 "Social media reduces learners' anxiety towards EFL learning" (M= 3.98, SD= 1.06), and Items 4 "It helps minimize hesitation to learn and participate in EFL learning" (M= 3.96, SD= 1.04) reveal signs of lowering of the affective variable. Item 5 was "It promotes/ increases willingness to communicate in the English language" (M= 3.89, SD= 1.04); exhibits the least social Media usage affect on Saudi EFL learners' affective variable in the target language. Item 3 explicitly shows that participants had striking lower levels of state anxiety when it came to communicating in English during SM usage than they did during class time.

Results show that the participants feel less anxious, more confident, more motivated, and more competent and show greater enthusiasm to use L2 in and beyond the classroom. SM usage breaks the barrier of nervousness and shyness being informal to other people we aren't acquainted with before. It connects people, allows conversation and discussion with experts, and gets requisite information instantly we look for. Therefore, the researcher feels that the use of SM tools may be integrated into the extensive curriculum so that it helps students to develop and learn more to achieve the course objectives.

4. What is the hypothetical usefulness of social media applications of Saudi Students in EFL learning at Jazan University?

*Table 5*  
*Means and Standard Deviation Values for hypothetical Usefulness of Social Media applications in EFL learning responded by Saudi Students at Jazan University*

Statement	Mean	SD
1. I find many educational resources, links, programs, and topics of discussion when using social media.	4.28	0.89
2. Social media motivate me to learn more than classroom teaching.	4.03	1.06
3. I developed my reading & writing skills using social media.	3.89	1.09
4. Watching videos on social media develops my listening skills.	4.15	0.94
5. I creative my course projects and assignments using social media Apps.	3.86	1.09
6. Debating ideas and exchanging opinions with others through social media enhances my critical thinking skills.	3.93	1.02
7. Learning through the Internet using social media reinforces self-independent learning for me.	4.08	0.95
8. I express my opinions and thoughts more freely with social media than in face-to-face discussions with my instructors and classmates in the classroom.	4.21	0.83
9. Social media help me to learn collaboratively with those who have similar interests.	4.14	0.87
10. I can learn anytime and anywhere using social media.	4.29	0.81
11. Interacting with class group on social media helps me to improve my social skills.	3.98	1.06
12. Overall, using social media for learning purposes improves my academic performance.	4.19	0.92
Average	4.09	0.69

Scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly

Participants were asked to rate their degree of agreement with twelve statements. Participants' responses were measured using a five-point Likert-type scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree. A high score indicates participants' most hypothetical usefulness of SM applications in EFL learning responded by Saudi Students at Jazan University, and a low score indicates least hypothetical usefulness of SM applications in EFL learning responded by Saudi Students at Jazan University. The average hypothetical usefulness of SM applications in EFL learning responded by Saudi Students at Jazan University was high (M=4.09, SD=.69). As shown in Table 5, the results reveal that the highest rated item was "I can learn anytime and anywhere using social media." (M=4.29, SD=.81). Other highly rated items include: "I find many educational resources, links, programs, and topics of discussion when using social media." (M=4.28, SD=.89), "I express my opinions and thoughts more freely with social media than in face-to-face discussions with my instructors and classmates in the classroom." (M=4.21, SD=.83), "Overall, using social media for learning purposes improves my academic performance." (M=4.19, SD=.92), "Watching videos on social media develops my listening skills." (M=4.15, SD=.94), "Social media help me to learn collaboratively with those who have similar interests." (M=4.14, SD=.87), "Learning through the Internet using social media reinforces self-independent learning for me." (M=4.08, SD=.95), and "Social media motivate me to learn more than classroom teaching." (M=4.03, SD=1.06). Item 5 "I create my course projects and assignments using social media Apps." (M=3.86, SD=1.09) shown moderate hypothetical usefulness of SM applications than other items but still appreciable while using social media to support, develop and enhance their language skills. SM empowers the learners; in turn, the learners empower others to strengthen the society. The students' interaction on SM enables them to produce the target language; listening, reading and then write comments, and ask questions. It follows a learner-centered approach, augments motivation and creates a well-controlled active learning environment. The learners have their ownership and less-dependency on others in the learning process, remain alert and informed in the process, and inculcate value in learning. They know when, how and which applications to use social media for language learning. SM becomes a valuable and useful resource, which complements to learners' present knowledge and skills. The researcher feels that SM usage not only helps learners to be more efficient and expert but also be dynamic, and societal. No teacher around the world think aloud using social networking for



language learning in and beyond the classroom but our learners indubitably do.

5. *What barriers do Saudi students at Jazan University face while using social media to support their EFL learning?*

Table 6

*Means and Standard Deviation of barriers Saudi students face at Jazan University while using social media to support their EFL learning*

Statement	Mean	SD
1. I'm efficient in using social media networks.	1.62	0.79
2. I'm free to use social media at home.	1.36	0.72
3. I'm concerned about privacy and security problems using social media.	3.97	1.09
4. I can understand the social media websites that are in English.	3.11	1.16
5. Use of social media by teacher in class increases my interest.	2.87	1.02
6. Activities integrated with the objectives and curriculums develop learning.	2.67	1.24
Average	2.60	0.54

Scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

Participants, in the last question, were asked to rate their degree of agreement with six statements that represent the foremost barriers that might affect attitudes of Saudi students at Jazan University toward adopting and using social media to support learning. Table 6 above, presented the descriptive statistics for the six barrier items. Participants were asked to rate their degree of agreement with six statements. Participants' responses were measured using a five-point Likert-type scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree. However, items 1,2,4,5, and 6 were reverse coded. A high score indicates the factor is considered a barrier for Saudi students at Jazan University to use social media to support learning, and a low score indicates the factor is not considered a barrier for Saudi students at Jazan University to use social media application to support EFL learning. Descriptive statistics were computed to analyze the data of this question by calculating the means of the items and standard deviations to report the

participants' responses. The overall barriers that Saudi students at Jazan University faced in using social media technologies to support learning were positive and moderate ( $M=2.6$ ,  $SD=.54$ ). As shown in Table 6, the most frequently mentioned barriers was item 3, "I'm concerned about privacy and security problems using social media" with a mean of 3.97 ( $SD=1.09$ ). The lowest frequently mentioned barriers were items 2, 1, 6, and 5. Item 2 is "I'm free to use social media at home" ( $M=1.36$ ,  $SD=.72$ ): a good number of Saudi students strongly agreed to have trouble-free access to the Internet at their homes. Item 1 was "I'm efficient in using social media networks" ( $M=1.62$ ,  $SD=.79$ ); most of the students approved that they can use social media efficiently and effectively. Item 6 was "Activities integrated with the objectives and curriculums develop learning" ( $M= 2.67$ ,  $SD= 1.24$ ); the students settled on developing their language skills when they find activities largely cover course objectives and curriculum. Item 5 was "Use of social media by teacher in class increases my interest" ( $M= 2.87$ ,  $SD= 1.02$ ); this demonstrates that the teacher using social media in language instructions have a positive impact to the students and makes the lecture more interesting. The item 3 result coincides with the findings of Lo (2013); Chakraborty et al. (2013); Lenartz (2013); and Boyd (2012); that reveal the concerns on using social media tools regarding risky issue, privacy leakages, users' confidentiality, information sharing hazards and privacy as an obstacle between the learners and the teacher.

## 7- LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study has some limitations. It was not wished-for to generalize the findings of the current study but conducted only on Saudi students of Jazan University. Certainly, further studies may be conceded by researchers with samples taken from all over Saudi Arabia exploring opportunities and implications in other realms of expertise.

## 9- CONCLUSION

The use of social media as a means to improve language learning and student achievement is a move that educators, students, and community support and value, as indicated by Saudi students perspectives of impact as cited in this appraisal. The findings and discussion above have shown that Saudi students have the first-class perspective on SM usage and its usage have shown remarkable development and advancement in Saudi students' language learning in and beyond the classroom. The results were able to confirm its hypothesis and answer all research questions. Firstly, the learners have shown tremendous interest in social media applications and

almost all are using social media for social communication, fun, educational learning and get informed for the future. Secondly, students do have a significantly more positive attitude toward SM to develop their communication skills. Thirdly, social media usage have lowered Saudi EFL learners' affective variable in the target language that enables them to concentrate, focus and dedicate to attain requisite language skills. Educationists, think-tanks and course designers must step forward to develop curricula and programs to keep abreast with the new technological advancements to increase instructional effectiveness and learners' efficiency. Fourthly, Saudi students have hypothetical usefulness of social media applications for various purposes including EFL learning. And lastly, Saudi students are concerned about the security of their personal data and private information; a concern acknowledged globally and would surely be addressed to shortly. Thinking of amalgamating social media into course specification, course objectives, and curriculum may seem a relatively new field but surely have a great potential to carve niches in students' EFL learning not only in Saudi Arabia perspective but across academic milieu. Quality Assurance and Curriculum Committee at English Language Institute, Jazan University has recently taken initiatives to conduct workshops, training programs, and seminars to train faculty on various teaching-learning practices and a workshop on how to use social media effectively to support students' EFL learning was also a constructive step as a part of this initiative. Effective methods that help instructors to successfully use social media for instructional delivery purposes need to be studied. Administrators should also provide students with training programs and workshops on how to utilize social media technologies for learning purposes. The researcher reckons that this study opens up new boulevards for future studies to explore more developing and advancing effective instructional methods that fit in social media usage across the academic spectrum.

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