

Chapter 26

INSTAURWRITING

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Abstract

The 21st century of learning and teaching not only emphasises on core competencies such as collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving but as well as on the digital literacy aspect. The integration of technological advancement like Instagram application in the classroom is believed to be able to contribute to many beneficial impacts on the students. However based on previous findings, it is claimed that in the Malaysian school context, students' face real struggle in producing grammatically correct pieces of writing. Therefore, it is crucial to efficiently respond to this writing accuracy issue among students by identifying the most comprehensible features on Instagram which could work as the trailblazer. This current study is intend to unearth the theoretical underpinnings on the potential that Instagram features own. In this intervention, 50 lower and upper secondary school students from 2 schools in Perak were selected as the participants. A few Instagram-based writing activities were carried out to explore the effectiveness of Instagram features. Pre and post observation as well as questionnaire were also used as methods of data collection. The findings indicated that the students responded effectively to Instagram based activities thus it boosts their motivation in writing learning. Based on this finding, more studies are expected to be conducted in the future too as students should be well armed with sufficient writing skills to thrive in today's world.

Introduction

The seventh shift of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 emphasises on the idea of leveraging ICT to scale up quality learning across Malaysia. Since the Internet penetration in Malaysia currently stands at 67%, the shift seems highly achievable due to the presence of technological advancement in education field too. However, the advancement does not seem to go in line with the majority of deteriorating students' writing performance which might be due to many contributing factors. According to Mukundan et.al (2013) writing was not seen as one of the goals of language learning which was worth spending the time of class since the dominant idea was that as far as language learners had enough knowledge of grammar and spelling, they would have the ability of writing. In order to change this perception towards a betterment of educational perspective, it is vital to integrate the current trend of popular social networking application.

Exploiting the features introduced by Instagram, one of the leading applications in the social networking world, is believed to be able to bring out the best of resolutions for the issue highlighted earlier. According to Instagram (2018) it provides a free photo and video sharing app which is made available on Apple iOS, Android and Windows Phone. This application allows its users to upload photos or videos and share them with their followers or with selected group of friends. They can also view, comment and like posts shared by their friends on Instagram. Therefore, noticing how impactful these features might bring about positive effects on one's educational learning progress, the idea to design a few Instagram based activities has been carefully proposed to resolve many language learning issues. However, in this project, the writing accuracy and proficiency aspect is selected to be the main focus. This study aims to investigate the potential of Instagram to enhance students' writing

skill therefore allows more interactive activities to be carried out in the classroom.

Problem Statement

Malaysian secondary school students are academically assessed based on grades attained in the national examination like Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga (PT3) and Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM). In both examinations, the Ministry of Education has set up a fair allocation of assessment for all the skills including writing, reading, speaking and listening. Writing assessment turns out to contribute the highest marks allocation of all. Realising the fact that students face huge obstacles in producing grammatically correct sentences in their written examination, the presence of popular social networking application like Instagram has been brought into consideration to turn it into a platform to enhance students' writing proficiency and motivation in writing.

Objectives

The objective of this study is to investigate the potential that Instagram features have in enhancing students' writing proficiency. A few Instagram based activities were designed to be conducted during language learning classroom and some were also carried out outside of the classroom. The effectiveness of each activities in improving students' writing is presented towards the end of this paper.

Novelty

Instagram is a common social network application which has been widely used all over the world. Many people use Instagram as a platform for social conventions to take place. With Instagram's very high influential elements found in its features, Instagram is chosen to be an application to enhance students' writing performance though the designation of several activities that require maximum involvement of the students and the participants. The authenticity in terms of the audience, has provided a real motivation for students to get involved in the activities and enjoy the lesson.

Benefit to the User

InstaUrWriting is a project based activities via Instagram that allows users to share their writing on photos and videos on its own platform as well as other networks like Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Flickr. Using this online tool, students can use it to share information, interact with fellow classmates and even seek feedback from teachers.

InstaUrWriting is designed to give many benefits not only to the teachers but also the target users, the students. It is aimed to maximise the acquisition of English language through the creation of a few Instagram-based writing activities inside and outside the classroom. The activities should be carried out in a fun learning environment that builds the confidence level of students to use the language more frequently. This will create a positive behavioural change in the students towards learning English. Besides, learning English through InstaUrWriting will be more engaging as the teacher could creatively utilise the features of Instagram and at the same time, integrate the skill of ICT among students. It is believed that this InstaUrWriting could be the best platform to learn English in more meaningful contexts rather than teachers' talk and chalk only.

Students will be able to improve their linguistic skills through InstaUrWriting activities. Using this tool, students can exchange opinions and views on different topics. They can do it by articulating their thoughts into the right words and sentences. Students can also participate in an individual and a group activity where each student asks the others to comment on a photo or video. In this way, students can improve their word usage as well as sentence structure skills. Students can also be in charge of their own learning as they can give comments and feedback to their friends' answers. This will promote students to be independent learners.

Benefit to the Society

InstaUrWriting is a free and friendly tool to the users. It has some outstanding features that will help teachers and students to carry out-of-class activities. Therefore, it has powerful networking all around the world. Through InstaUrWriting activities, students will connect with other students around the world. Teachers could collaborate with other English teacher and expand their networking. This will help to improve the students' communication skills as well as develop their interpersonal skills. As the students learn through Instagram tool, the students will practice a healthy culture of learning and they will encourage their peers at the same time to learn and think critically and innovative like them. This will encourage them to learn English in a fun way and meaningful context and avoid them from misusing the features of Instagram.

Commercialization

Instagram can be a powerful learning and communication tool for teachers to carry out activities. Through InstaUrWriting activities, teachers help students to maximise the use of Instagram. This will be an eye-opener for the students to learn English through Instagram and realise that Instagram is not just for posting photos of food or place they have visited. Through InstaUrWriting, it will help students to create value of learning and at the same time, the students will be skilful in ICT. It is like killing two birds in one stone as the students could improve their ICT skill via Instagram as well as improve their writing in English. InstaUrWriting is one of the platforms which also allows students to expand their creativity in writing. Collaboration or participation in a advertising competition for example, exposes students to a real life experience and networking. Since technology is omnipresent in everyday life, InstaUrWriting could work as a benchmark for other types of language learning to follow suit. Speaking, listening and reading activities could also be done through proper designing and planning phases. Suitable procedures and activities could be designed and developed to meet the requirement of students' language needs hence gives them more opportunities to learn not just English but other languages too.

a. Figures and Tables

Table 1
InstaUrwriting Satisfaction Questionnaire

<i>Q</i>	Strongly disagree	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither agree or disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>
□			2	18	9
2			1	18	11
3			1	20	9
4		1	3	8	18
5			3	21	6
6			6	12	12
7			8	16	7
8			2	15	9
9		1	6	15	8
10			3	18	7
11		1	5	13	11

Conclusion

InstaUrwriting activities have proven that involvement among students via social media like Instagram will leverage technology to recruit and retain students' motivation in writing, increase engagement of students in the designated activities and build authentic networking between students, teachers and community. InstaUrWriting could also possibly be adapted to other types of language learning that involves speaking, listening and reading. Replication and innovation on these Instagram based activities is also attainable for other types of language too.

References

Mukundan, J., Mahvelati, E. H., Din, M. A., & Nimehchisalem, V. (2013). Malaysian Secondary School Students' ESL Writing Performance in an Intensive English Program. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 22(12), 1677-1684.