

Students' Perceptions of Social Media as a Means to Improve Their Language Skills

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Abstract : Social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, has been used for teaching and learning for quite some time. These platforms have been proven to be a good tool to improve various language skills, students' performance of the English language, motivation as well as trigger the authentic language interaction. However, little is known about the potential effects of social media usage on the learning performance of Arabic language learners. The present study explores the potential role that the social media technologies play in learning Arabic as a foreign language at a university in Southeast of United States. In order to investigate this issue, an online survey was administered to examine the perceptions and attitudes of American students learning Arabic. The research questions were: How does social media, specifically Facebook and Twitter, impact the students' Arabic language skills, and what is their attitude toward it? The preliminary findings of the study showed that students had a positive attitude toward the use of social media to enhance their Arabic language skills, and that they used a range of social media features to expose themselves to the Arabic language and communicate in Arabic with native Arabic speaking friends. More detailed findings will be shared in the light data analysis with the audience during the presentation.

Keywords : foreign language learning, social media, students' perceptions, survey

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