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Practicing English through Digital Devices: Perceptions of the Undergraduate Students Majoring in English Language

Khaled Elkotb Mahmoud Elshahawy
Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics-ELT
***University of Tabuk**, University College of Taymaa*
*Quality Education Academy, **Saudi Arabia***
elshahawy.smsm@yahoo.com

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Abstract

This research paper briefly considers the significance of practicing English through digital devices for EFL Saudi undergraduate university students majoring in English language. The main reason for this is that the Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) acronym is no longer suitable for investigating and describing EFL practices to improve the English language learners' macro skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing. This is because we are now in a 'post-CALL era' of Mobile Assisted Language Use (MALU) with digital literacy skills as a defining characteristic for the 21st century English language learners. The current study highlighted the practices and perceptions of Languages and Translation Department students majoring in English Language at a Saudi University College. In order to collect the necessary data, the study used a four- point options Likert scale questionnaire. The study used a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The participants of the study were 40 students (20 males and 20 females). The study was conducted in the first semester of the academic year 2018/2019. The findings of the study proved that the students were highly motivated to use the digital devices to improve their English language proficiency macro skills. Based on these results, the study recommends implementing the digital devices in the EFL curricular to improve the EFL learners' macro skills.

INTRODUCTION

It is obvious that employing the internet, through its networked and mobile functions, has changed the way that people find information and the way they communicate. Several researchers (Cardinali, et. al, 2009; Carr, 2011; Doidge, 2007; Thomas & Reinders, 2010) have a strong belief that the main innovations of nowadays adopted by the community, especially the internet, have major effects on the structure of the human brain. All those changes led to the change in the way of learning the students and particularly the language learners, specially English language learning either as ESL or EFL.

According to White and Cornu (2011,p.10), the term "Digital Resident" can be defined as someone who spends a significant amount of time online, usually using a range of programs, not only on established devices such as computer desktops and laptops, but typically also with mobile devices such as smart phones and tablets. Digital residents in contrast to 'digital visitors' tend to live out at least part of their daily lives as connected citizens with social media often being central to their activities (White and Cornu, 2011). This has its importance in English language instruction at the university level through using the portable digital devices such as smart phones and tablet computers by the university English language learners (Weaver and Nilson, 2005).

This can push all the researchers in applied linguistics, particularly in the field of TEFL or TESOL to state that for teaching English as a foreign (EFL) or second (ESL) language, students need to adapt themselves in every new teaching strategy in this area. One of the studies that supports this claim is the study of Hammou and Elfatihi (2019) which highlighted the significance of integrating information and communication technologies (ICT) in EFL teaching and learning practices by the EFL male and female instructors. The findings of the data analysis demonstrated that although female instructors used ICT in their teaching less than their male counterparts, there is no significant difference in employing ICT in English teaching practices between them. This demonstrates the efficient role of technology in acquiring and learning English language as it can provide important contributions to help meet the increasing needs of the L2 (ESL/EFL) learners (Wang & Winstead, 2016). Before reviewing the digital practices of the participants of the present study who were from the Languages and Translation Department, English language major, at a Saudi University College, it is worth highlighting the benefits of employing such digital devices in acquiring and learning English Language.

These digital practices and perceptions for learning foreign languages have several benefits.

These benefits have been illustrated in the previous and related literature that has been conducted in this area. The study of Amiri (2012) demonstrated that the use of technology, particularly, internet communication tools such as e-mails, web-based learning, web blogs, Skype, mobile devices, instant messenger, iPods improved the participants' efficiency in English language. Moreover, the study of Yuan Fan (2016) indicated that different strategies were employed by the EFL instructors to integrate digital technology to enhance the English language learners' learning and engagement in the classrooms. The researcher collected the study data through running semi-structured interviews with two elementary English language teachers. The findings indicated that using technology in delivering the materials in English, gave the English language learners more time to process information and complete work at their own pace, which led to increase in the learners' engagement and provide opportunities for the learners to express themselves in different ways. Moreover, in the experimental study that was conducted by Kim (2013), mobile assisted language learning improved the listening skills of the study participants. They were 44 university students of different disciplines divided into two groups: The control group 24 participants and the experimental one, 20 participants. The authentic listening material of apps illustrated effectiveness in developing the listening skills of the experimental group participants. As the mean score was M=422.19, SD= 114.69 in the control group; M=490.00, SD=87.09 in the experimental group, $p < .05$ which indicated significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in favor of the experimental group because the mean and the standard deviations of the experimental group were bigger than that of the control group and the P value, or the calculated probability is less than.05. Consequently, the statistical analysis indicated that technology treatment improved the listening skills of the university students majoring in English language.

Additionally, the study of Suwantarathip and Orawiwatnakul (2015) used the Mobile (M)- learning to assist the university students in acquiring English language vocabulary. The total number of the participants was 80 students divided into control group (40 students) and experimental group (40 students). The participants were from the first year students specialized in English language. Through using SMS, the experimental group students involved in several different exercises given to them on the basis of vocabulary acquisition, whereas the control group carried out their tasks through paper-based exercises. The mean score of the treatment proved significant differences in favor of the experimental group, as the experimental group included M = 33.25, SD = 5.67, whereas the control group included

M = 29.70, SD = 5.57 which indicated increase of vocabulary among the students in the experimental group because the mean and the standard deviations of the experimental group were bigger than that of the control group and the P value, or the calculated probability is less than.05.

Despite conducting such studies on the benefits of digital devices in the field of English language instruction, such area remains underexplored and needs more studies to be conducted to investigate the relation of the digital devices to the different areas of TEFL or TESOL (e.g. listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar and phonetics). Conducting the current study was an attempt to prove the efficiency of those digital devices (e.g. smart phones, tablets, iPods, play stations) in enhancing the university students' English language skills. Hence, this study contributed to addressing such a shortfall in the studies conducted in this area of L2 (ESL/EFL) by identifying the practices and perceptions of the targeted Saudi University College students majoring in English language and proposing an era of Mobile Assisted Language Use (MALU) in which digital literacy in instructing English Language is at the forefront.

Aim of the Study

The main aim of the study is to investigate to what extent Saudi students English language learners, particularly the targeted University College students (Male and Female) majoring in English language use digital devices to practice their English language.

Problem of the Study

Encouraging Saudi University English language majors who are digital residents to practice their English using digital devices such as smart phones, iPods and tablets instead of just focusing on Computer Assisted Language Learning.

Study Questions

The current study attempted to answer the following questions:
To what extent Saudi English majors use digital devices to practice their English?
2- What is the importance of English language for the study participants during using their digital devices?
3- What social media programs do participants use and in what language or languages?

Study Limitations

The study is limited to a Saudi University College students, Languages and Translation Department, (Male and Female), English language major, 4 academic levels (1,3,5,7) as the study year is divided into two levels. Each level is taught in one semester. Levels 1,3,5,7 are taught in the first semester and levels 2, 4,6,8 are taught in the second semester of the academic year. Because the study was conducted in the first semester of the academic year 2018/2019, its participants were from levels 1,3,5,7.

Study Instruments

A- Digital Devices Student Questionnaire (DDSQ):

The present study used the DDSQ (See Appendix 1) to collect the necessary data. It consisted of six parts. The first part was to collect general information about the participants such as their gender and age. The second part was to extract information from the participants regarding their ownership of the digital devices such as smart phones, tablets and iPods. The third one was to know what extent the participants use digital devices in their daily life. The fourth part was to indicate the importance of digital devices for the participants. The fifth part was to find out the language that the participants use during their use of the digital devices. The sixth part was to indicate the social media programs used by the participants and the language used as well.

B- Focus Group Discussions:

There were focus group discussions in which the researcher asked the questions and the participants presented their ideas as they responded to each other and the researcher (See Appendix 2). There were 15 students (7 males and 8 females) volunteered as a focus group to comment on a four questions based on the content of the questionnaire items after conducting it to give more reliability for the data collected from the questionnaire. Their responses were also used as qualitative evidence to sustain the statistics findings of the questionnaire.

The Participants

The participants were forty Saudi undergraduate students (20 Males and 20 Females) majoring in English language from four levels (1,3,5,7) aged (19) to (23) at a Saudi University College. The participants either males or females volunteered to participate in the current research. In other terms, the convenience sampling method was employed to gather the data, as the participants were selected based on their willingness to administer the digital devices student questionnaires (DDSQ). Moreover, the selected participants for the focus group discussions were chosen based on their willingness after conducting the DDSQ as well. The male participants completed the questionnaire in one of their English classes with the researcher assistance, as required. Concerning the female participants, one of the female English language instructors volunteered and completed the questionnaire with them. The female participants of the focus group volunteered as well to run the focus group discussions with the female colleague after conducting the questionnaire for the purpose of the qualitative data. The participants conducted the questionnaire in the first semester of the academic year 2018/2019.

Demographic Variables

The participants' demographic information are displayed with respect to their age, sex, academic level (i.e. in each study year two levels, 4 years with 8 levels in the Languages and Translation Program).

Table 1. ***Participants' Demographic Information***

Academic undergraduate level	Sex	Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
First	Male	18-19	5	12.5%	12.5%
	Female	18-19	5	12.5%	12.5%
Third	Male	19-20	5	12.5%	12.5%
	Female	19-20	5	12.5%	12.5%
Fifth	Male	20-21	5	12.5%	12.5%
	Female	20-21	5	12.5%	12.5%
Seventh	Male	21-22	5	12.5%	12.5%
	Female	21-22	5	12.5%	12.5%
Total			40	100%	100%

It is shown in Table (1), that the participants were from four undergraduate different levels from both male (50%) and female (50%) campuses. The percentage of the participants in each undergraduate level is equal (12.5%)

Validity and Reliability

Validating the questionnaire to make sure it was officially or legally acceptable or approved by the jurors in the field for using it in collecting the current research data. They were 6 English language assistant professors: 3 specialized in applied linguistics (TEFL), 2 in theoretical linguistics and 1 in translation studies. Their

recommendations have been considered and the required modifications based on their recommendations have been done in the questionnaire. In addition, the internal consistency of the coefficient reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's Alpha was found to be (.787). This estimated high consistency of the items included in a questionnaire.

Pilot Study

Before applying the study questionnaire on the whole group, the researcher piloted it on 5 volunteering students rather than the study participants and having the same characteristics of the main 40 participants of the study to make sure of the following:

-The language and instructions of the questionnaire were clear and understandable.
-The time needed for conducting the questionnaire, it was 45 minutes.
-The internal consistency of the coefficient reliability of the DDSQ which was .787.

PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

The related literature concerning the area of the study which is the efficient role of the digital devices in enhancing the English language learners' four skills was reviewed. The study instruments were designed and validated. The pilot study was conducted. A mixed method approach was employed using a paper-based questionnaire to generate the statistical data and the qualitative data came from the study focus groups, (15) Languages and Translation students, majoring in English language (7 males and 8 females).

In order to collect the quantitative data from the female participants, one of the female English instructors volunteered at the Female Campus to distribute the questionnaire to the students. The same female English instructor ran the focus group discussion with the female focus group participants to get the qualitative data as well.

The focus group participants either male or female were selected from those who during completing the questionnaire had indicated a willingness to participate and had availability to attend at a specified day and time. The questionnaire and the focus group sessions sought to address and answer the study questions.

To collect the statistical data of this study, the researcher used a Likert Questionnaire Scale, parts : B, C, D, E, from the study questionnaire (See Appendix 1). The focus groups comprised a total of 15 participants who for anonymity purposes and ethical considerations have had their comments coded as Male A (MA), Male B (MB), Female A (FA), Female B (FB) , etcetera. The focus groups answers were audio recorded, transcribed and then coded line by line in order to get the common themes and concepts to be emerged.

Section (A) of the questionnaire indicates that the participants were 40 students divided equally into females (50%) and males (50%) from levels 1,3,5,and 7 of the students of Languages and Translation Department, majoring in English Language. The whole sample took part in conducting the questionnaire items with no missing at all as indicated in Table (2).

Table 2. ***Sample Distribution According to Gender***

Valid Sample	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	20	50.0	50.0	50.0
Female	20	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Answering the First Study Question

Section (B) of the questionnaire data show that most participants were digital residents who owned and made frequent use of tablets, computers and smart phones. This is clear in

table (3) as just only (10%) of the whole sample, namely, (4) students (2 males and 2 females) out of (40) do not own one of the three digital devices.

Table 3. Ownership of Digital Devices

Ownership of Digital Devices	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
No	4	10.0	10.0	10.0	2	2
Yes	36	90.0	90.0	100.0	18	18
Total	40	100.0	100.0		20	20

In section (C), the students were asked how many hours per day they spend on computers, smart phones and tablets or iPods, (hereafter when used in combination referred to as digital devices) , the male and female were to somewhat similar as indicated in table (4).

Table 4. Time Spent Using Computers, Smart Phones and Tablets

Time	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
Every day	24	60.0	60.0	60.0	11	13
4/6 days	8	20.0	20.0	80.0	6	2
1/3 days	7	17.5	17.5	97.5	3	4
Never	1	2.5	2.5	100.0	-	1
Total	40	100.0	100.0		20	20

Concerning the first option of the digital devices everyday use, (60%) of the total sample reported using digital devices daily divided as (11)male students to (13) female students. Regarding the second option of 4-6 days use of digital devices, (20%) reported using digital devices from 4 to 6 days, divided as (6) male students and (2)female students. Then the option of using digital devices from 1 to 3 days a week, (17.5 %) reported that, divided as (3) male students and (4) female students. After that, the option of never using digital devices,(2.5 %) reported this which was (1) female student. Regarding the ownership of the different types of the digital devices. Among the male participants, (70 %) owned a laptop, (80%) a Smartphone and (70%)a desktop, but considerably fewer (35%) iPod or tablet. Moreover, among the female participants, (75%) percent owned a laptop, (70%) a Smartphone and (77%) a desktop, but considerably fewer (30%) iPod or tablet. Owners of smart phones are almost by definition digital residents in that their devices are highly mobile and tend to be online (24/7) and in this study (27.5 %) of males and (32.5 %) of females reported using digital devices daily which indicates that they are digital residents. These digital devices are used for different purposes as indicated in table (5).

Table 5. ***Purposes of Using Digital Devices***

Use Purposes	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
Internet	6	15.0	15.0	15.0	3	3
Chatting	13	32.5	32.5	47.5	7	6
work study	11	27.5	27.5	75.0	5	6
Games	5	12.5	12.5	87.5	2	3
Entertainment	5	12.5	12.5	100.0	3	2
Total	40	100.0	100.0		20	20

It is obvious from table (5) that (15.0 %) divided as (3) males and (3) females of the participants use digital devices for the purpose of internet. For the purpose of chatting (32.5%) divided as (7) males and (6) females of the participants. Concerning using digital devices for work study, (27.5%) divided as (5) males and (6) females of the participants. For the purpose of games, (12.5%) divided as (2) males and (3) females use digital devices. Finally, for the purpose of entertainment, (12.5%) divided as (3) males and (2) females. It is clear that the males and females are similar in their use of the digital devices for different purposes as indicated in the above table. Moreover, most of the participants use for the digital devices is for the purpose of chatting. All this gives an evidence that those students are digital residents. Furthermore, the qualitative data provided some insights into how the participants are digital residents not just visitors as they spend most or all of their time on line with their own digital devices. For examples, MA reported '... yes I am online all the time, but I am not using it all the time ...' . Besides, FA stated "I spent most of time online and this is one of my preferences". These comments explain the difference between residents and visitors - it is not that residents are necessarily always using their digital devices, rather it is that they are more online all the time than digital visitors. There is a clear correlation of digital visitors with participants who did not own digital devices as the data in table (5) indicated that (5%) Male and (5 %) Female and never made use of one female (2.5 %).

In addition, the statistics combined with the qualitative data, give a clear evidence that many participants see smart phones primarily as a social aspect of their lives with desktops and laptops having a more academic role. For examples, MB stated 'I use computer for study, Smartphone for social'. FB reported "Computer is very important for study, Smartphone for social media and connecting with friends". Moreover, the students' responses for chatting (32.5%) provide some further evidence of the digital devices social aspect. For examples, MC reported 'I always keen on using digital devices for chatting, especially Smartphone, as it's easy to chat with a Smartphone' .Another participant, FC stated "chatting daily is part of my life and smart phones make it easy".

A third participant MD mentioned 'Digital devices either smartphones or laptops or tablets always help me to contact with my friends or relatives, through telephone call or What's up' , imo, or any other software social program'. A fourth one, FD said, " I cannot live my life without digital devices as they are very important for What's up texts and other programs such as lion". A fifth one, ME mentioned," digital devices and particularly Smartphone is with me all the time, when I need it. The only problem is sometimes weak battery". A sixth one, FE reported, "I cannot go anywhere without my world, my smart phone".

All this qualitative data and the statistical ones beforehand give a conclusion that the participants are residing in digital devices and particularly smart phones are generally the preferred devices for residing in . All this answered question one of the study questions.

Answering the Second Question

A clear and overwhelming evidence of the importance of using English language when using all digital devices is indicated in the statistical and qualitative data of the participants. This is clear in the participants' responses on part D of the Digital devices students questionnaire. In the students' responses on the first statement in part D which is the importance of digital devices to their university studies in English language, (90%) distributed as (18) males and (18) females agreed and (2%) distributed as (1) male and (1) female disagreed and (2%) distributed as (1) male and (1) female not sure. This obvious in table (6):

Table 6. ***Digital Devices are Important to my University Studies in English Language***

Statement 1	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
Agree	36	90.0	90.0	90.0	18	18
Disagree	2	5.0	5.0	95.0	1	1
Not sure	2	5.0	5.0		1	1
Total	40	100.0	100.0	100.0	20	20

Concerning the second item of part (D) which is the importance of digital devices to help them improve their English outside their university studies, (87.5 %) distributed as (18) males and (17) females agreed; (7.5 %) distributed as (2) males and (1) females disagreed and (5.0 %) distributed as (2) females not sure. Table (7) illustrates this.

Table 7. ***Digital Devices are Important to Help me Improve my English outside of my University Studies***

Statement 2	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
Agree	35	87.5	87.5	87.5	18	17
Disagree	3	7.5	7.5	95.0	2	1
Not sure	2	5.0	5.0		-	2
Total	40	100.0	100.0	100.0	20	20

As for the third statement which is Getting information in English language from computers, smart phones and tablets is easier than reading paper books and articles(87.5%) distributed as (16) males and (19) females agreed; (7.5 %) distributed as 3 males disagreed and (5.0 %) distributed as (1) male and (1) female not sure. This is demonstrated in table (8).

Table 8. ***Getting information in English language from computers, smart phones and tablets is easier than reading paper books and articles***

Statement 3	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
Agree	35	87.5	87.5	87.5	16	19

Disagree	3	7.5	7.5	95.0	3	-
Not sure	2	5.0	5.0		1	1
Total	40	100.0	100.0	100.0	20	20

Regarding the fourth statement of part (D) which is English is not important for me when using computers, smart phones and tablets, (4%) distributed as (2) males and (2) females agreed; (82.5%) distributed as (16) males and (17) females disagreed and (7.5%) distributed as (2) male and (1 females. Table (9) demonstrates these statistical results.

Table 9. ***English is not Important for me When Using Computers, Smart Phones and Tablets***

Statement 4	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
Agree	4	10.0	10.0	10.0	2	2
Disagree	33	82.5	82.5	92.5	16	17
Not sure	3	7.5	7.5		2	1
Total	40	100.0	100.0	100.0	20	20

Concerning the fifth statement in terms of using the digital devices of computers, smart phones and tablets to do English language exercises online: (7.5%) of the participants distributed as (2) males and (1) female agreed; (87.5%) distributed as (17) males and (18) females disagreed and (5.0%) distributed as (1) females and (1) male not sure. This is clear in table (10).

Table 10. ***Computers, smart phones and tablets have did not help me to practice my English***

Statement 5	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
Agree	3	7.5	7.5	7.5	2	1
Disagree	35	87.5	87.5	95.0	17	18
Not sure	2	5.0	5.0		1	1
Total	40	100.0	100.0	100.0	20	20

As for the sixth statement which is using English language for chatting with friends from English speaking countries, table (11) demonstrates the results. (92.5%) distributed as (19) males and (18) females agreed. Moreover, (7.5%) distributed as (1) male and (2) females were not sure.

Table 11. ***I use English in chatting with online friends from English speaking countries***

Statement 6	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
Agree	37	92.5	92.5	92.5	19	18
Disagree	3	7.5	7.5	100.0	1	2
Total	40	100.0	100.0		20	20

In addition to the descriptive statistics data that were collected from the participants concerning the importance of the English language when using digital devices in section D from the questionnaire, there was a qualitative data extracted from the focus group to sustain this claim as well. For examples, MH said ‘I think it is very difficult to connect and chat with friends from English speaking countries using my smart phone without having good English to help me understand and communicate with them". Another FH said" Of course my study

is in English so I have to use English to my University assignments using my tablet and my laptop" A third MI said" I always keen on using English when using my smart phone because this helps me to improve my speaking and listening skills". All this quantitative and qualitative data answers the second study question.

Answering the Third Question

Regarding the social media programs used by the participants and the language they use when they use their digital devices to log into those programs, tables (12) and (13) demonstrates the results.

*Table 12. **The Language Used During Logging into Social Media Programs***

Used Language	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
Only Arabic	3	7.5	7.5	7.5	2	1
Mainly Arabic and some English	4	10.0	10.0	17.5	2	2
Mainly English and some Arabic	10	25.0	25.0	42.5	4	6
Only English	23	57.5	57.5	100.0	12	11
Total	40	100.0	100.0		20	20

It is clear from table (12) that (7.5%) distributed as (2) males and (1) female use only Arabic language when log into social programs. Moreover, (10.0%) distributed as (2) males and (2) females went for the option of mainly Arabic and some English. Furthermore, (25.0%) distributed as (4) males and (6) females use mainly English and some Arabic when logging into social media programs. Finally, (57.5%) distributed as (12) males and (11) females use only English language when browsing social media programs. This means that the preferred language for the participants when browsing social media programs is English. Table(13) illustrates the preferred social media programs for the participants.

*Table 13. **The participants' Preferred Social Media Programs***

Preferred Social Media Programs	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Gender Distribution	
					Males	Females
1,3	1	2.5	2.5	2.5	1	-
1,2	1	2.5	2.5	5.0	-	1
1,4	2	5.0	5.0	10.0	1	1
1,5	1	2.5	2.5	12.5	1	-
2,4	2	5.0	5.0	17.5	1	1
2,5	1	2.5	2.5	20.0	-	1
1,2,3	1	2.5	2.5	22.5	1	-
1,2,4	1	2.5	2.5	25.0	1	-
1,2,5	2	5.0	5.0	30.0	1	1
1,3,4	1	2.5	2.5	32.5	1	-
1,3,5	3	7.5	7.5	40.0	1	2

1,4,3	1	2.5	2.5	42.5	-	1
1,4,5	3	7.5	7.5	50.0	1	2
2,3,4	1	2.5	2.5	52.5	1	-
2,3,5	1	2.5	2.5	55.0	-	1
2,4,5	1	2.5	2.5	57.5	1	-
1,2,3,4	2	5.0	5.0	62.5	1	1
1,2,3,5	1	2.5	2.5	65.0	1	-
1,2,4,5	2	5.0	5.0	70.0	1	1
1,2,3,4,5	12	30.0	30.0	100.0	5	7
Total	40	100.0	100.0		20	20

In the first column of table (13):
1 = Massaging using Whats App, immo 2= Face book, Instagram, Twitter
3= YouTube 4= Skype 5= Games

It is obvious from table (13) that the participants either males or females log into all the five types of the social media programs as (30.0%) of the participants use all the programs and this is highest percentages. The distribution of the other 70% as in table (13) goes for example as one male (2.5%) uses Whats App, Immo and Youtube; one female (2.5 %) uses Whats App, Immo and Youtube, Face book, Instagram, Twitter ; one male and female (5%) use Massaging using Whats App, immo, Skype. The most frequent language that they use during logging into these programs is English (57.5 %) as mentioned above in table (12). The qualitative data that was extracted from the focus group of the participants during the focus group discussions support this claim as well.

For examples, MJ participant said 'When I log into face book or twitter to chat with my friends from everywhere and because they speak different languages, therefore chatting in English is the best medium of communication between us '. A second FJ participant stated " Firstly, I try to chat with my friends in Arabic and English because I have so many friends, and we connect to each other through chatting. However, if they do not understand my Arabic I use only English in chatting with them ". A third MG reported 'I like to play Games such as Warcraft, with friends from all over the word, that is why I use English '. A fourth FG mentioned " I like to watch programs and movies on YouTube in English as this can improve my listening and help me acquire new vocabulary".

For more elaboration on section E of the questionnaire, Face book and YouTube were used in both the participants' L1(Arabic) and L2(English) by every respondent with the role of English being highest of all for YouTube – its entertainment value was a common theme in all the focus group students statements: MK '… it's fun …', FK '… for comedy …', FL '… for relax …', MM '… easy to understand good visual …'. When asked what participants did when they did not understand English language either on YouTube or any other social media program, MN participant stated '' Never mind if I cannot get 100%, I can understand enough or through using online translation programs". After this analysis for the quantitative and qualitative data obtained from table (12) and (13), question three was answered.

To conclude, the obtained data demonstrated extensive and recurrent uses of various digital devices and programs for a wide range of reasons focusing on the significance of the English language when using those devices and programs. The quantitative and qualitative findings proved that there were similarities between the female and female participants concerning their perceptions and uses of the digital devices. For example, there were just only

(10%) of the whole sample, namely, (4) students (2 males and 2 females) out of (40) do not own digital devices. In addition, there was similarity between them as well concerning the importance of these digital devices and programs to assist them practice their English language skills as (57.5%) distributed as (12) males and (11) females use only English language when browsing social media programs. Furthermore, the participants considered using digital devices is invaluable for their undergraduate studies and practicing their English outside their classrooms as (90%) distributed as (18) males and (18) females stated that they use digital devices for their university studies in English language. All these are indicators that the participants are digital residents particularly in terms of using their smart phones and tablets to log into their preferable social media programs. Therefore, it could be stated that with more encouragement for the English language learners in Saudi Arabia universities, majoring in English language, they can be transferred from the era of computer assisted language learners (CALL) into the 'post-CALL era' of Mobile Assisted Language Use (MALU) with digital literacy skills as a defining characteristic for the 21st English language learners.

CONCLUSION

The data provides insights into what Languages and Translation Department students of English language at the specified Saudi University College of the current study do with digital devices in both their L1 (Arabic) and L2 (English) outside the classroom and their relevance for classroom EFL practices as well. Whereas some EFL viewpoints attempt to separate language teaching in classroom contexts from its use in the real world outside the classrooms and argue that English language instructors mission in class is to teach specified items such as grammar, vocabulary and the four skills. It was indicated in this study that there is no separation between English language teaching practices within the classrooms environments and the practices of English outside the classroom contexts using the digital devices as they complement each other. This goes in line with the results of several studies in this area of TEFL (e.g. Amiri, 2012; suwantarathip and orawiwatnakul , 2015 ; Yuan Fan, 2016).

Because the teaching practices of English language within the classrooms are not sufficient, thus it is a must to practice it every time even outside the classrooms. Here comes the efficient role of using digital devices, as most of the students spend their times using their smart phones, laptops or tablets….etcetera. They use these devices to log in their preferable social media programs such as Twitter, Face book, YouTube, What's up, Skype. Their preferred language in using these programs is English language . As illustrated in the results of the present study (57.5%) of the participants use only English to allow them to communicate with a wide range of friends all over the world. For these reasons, we could say that the digital residents of today have a great opportunity to improve their English language through their language practices outside their classrooms.

For more elaboration on this point, much of the use of English language today is used as a medium of communication as L2 through digital devices by the English language learners who are not located in English- speaking countries. Those learners are not surrounded by the target language wherever they go beyond the classroom, but they are in their home native country. The invaluable role of the digital devices here is that they give them historically unprecedented access to practice their English. As indicated in the results of this study that the participants used digital devices most of their time for different purposes such as logging into the internet, chatting, playing games, study and watching video tubes. The preferred language most of the participants (57.5%) used to practice these activities is English language. This goes in line with Kuree (2011) that technology and particularly digital devices provides L2 (EFL/ESL) with authentic opportunities to practice English language

beyond the classrooms. After all the data collected from the findings of this study, it could be concluded that practicing English through digital devices and acquiring digital literacy skills are prerequisites for the 21st century English language learners.

Recommendations and Further Research

Based on the results of this small scale study, it is recommended for English language instructors at the Saudi universities to encourage their English language students majors to use digital devices such as smart phones, Tablets and iPods to practice their English language. In the same vein, there are some topics for further research in this area. For example, the digital devices can be used to improve English language learners' macro skills, namely, speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Furthermore, digital devices could be used to enhance English language learners' motivation and attitude towards English language and the culture of its native speakers. Additionally, they could be effective in reducing the English language leaner's' anxiety when speaking with the native speakers through the different digital apps.

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AUTHOR'S BIO:

***Dr. Khaled Elshahawy** is an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics-ELT at the English Language Center at the University of Albaha in Saudi Arabia. He is currently teaching English language courses in Applied Linguistics-English language skills. His main areas of interest include sociolinguistics, communicative language teaching (CLT), computer assisted language learning (CALL) and second language acquisition(SLA).*

APPENDIX A
DIGITAL DEVICES STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

English language use on computers, smart phones, and tablets: Insights from Languages and Translation Department students, English language major, at Tayma University College:

Male (50%) and Female (50%) Age: All participants were 19 or 23

B - Ownership of computers, smart phones and tablets

Tick (□) yes or no

I own a computer desktop	Yes ( )	No ( )
I own a computer laptop	Yes ( )	No ( )
I own a Smartphone	Yes ( )	No ( )
I own an iPod or other tablet	Yes ( )	No ( )

If you do not own any of the above then you do not need to complete the rest of this questionnaire please return it

C - Use of computers, smart phones and tablets

About how many hours per day do you spend in total on computers and/or smart phones and/or tablets? _____ _____

In a normal week how often do you use the digital devices below and for what purposes?

Digital devices	Every day (□)	4/6 days a week (□)	1-3 days a week (□)	Never (□)	***Please list the main use –***
Computer desktops and laptops					% Internet , % Chatting, % Work/study, % Games, % Entertainment (music, YouTube, Face book)
Smart phones, iPods and Tablets					% Chatting, % Internet, % Games % Entertainment (music, YouTube, Facebook), % Work/study

D – Digital Devices Importance in Practicing English Language

For each statement below please show whether you … Agree (A), or Disagree (D), or Not sure (N)

No.	Statement	A	D	N
1	Digital devices are important to my university studies in English language			
2	Digital devices are important to help me improve my English outside of my university studies			
3	Getting information in English language from computers, smart phones and tablets is easier than reading paper books and articles.			
4	English is not important for me when using computers, smartphones and tablets			
5	Computers, smartphones and tablets have did not help me to practice my English			
6	I use English in chatting with online friends from English speaking countries			

E – Used language With Social Media Programs
Generally, when using computers, smart phones and tablets which languages do you use with social media programs? (**tick one letter only**)

( ) A = Only Arabic
( ) B = Mainly Arabic and some English
( ) C = Mainly English and some Arabic
( ) D = Only English

Indicate whether you make use of following and if so use the **letter key** above

(A-D) to show what language or languages you use.

Social Media Programs	***Tick or to show if you do or do not use this***		***Enter one letter A-D, or leave blank if you do not use this***
Messaging using Whats App, immo			
Face book, Instagram, Twitter			
YouTube			
Skype			
Games			

Thank you so much for completing this questionnaire

APPENDIX B
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Thank you so much for volunteering to take part in this group discussion. Please feel free to prepare your answers in five minutes on the following questions and then you will have two minutes to

present your answers in front of your peers and be ready to get feedback from them after your presentation:

1- Could please tell me your full name, your major and your educational discipline i.e. your academic level 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,or 8?

2- What are the uses of the digital technology like smart phones, tablets, iPods, laptops etcetera in your everyday life?

3- In your opinion, what is the importance of English language for you during using these digital devices?

4- What social media programs like Twitter, Face book, Skype, Games, What's up etcetera do you use and in what language or languages?