

## Classroom Instagram e-dictionary. A conceptual approach to its use in the classroom.

Ernesto Cortijo Rodriguez  
ISEN Centro Universitario

[e.cortijorodriguez@um.es](mailto:e.cortijorodriguez@um.es)

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### Abstract

The present project aims to prove that the improvement and assimilation of vocabulary in the subject of English as a Second Language, in the classrooms of final years of primary and initial courses of compulsory secondary education through narrative texts, is possible with the responsible use of the social network Instagram.

The choice of a resource within the scope of digital media enables the development and use of every type of codes, whether iconic, written, sound or movement. Being one of the main objectives the accommodation of contents and subsequent use of social networks as a tool for learning by discovery.

**Keywords:** Children. Dictionary. English as a Second Language. Instagram. Learning.

### Justification

The learning of the vocabulary associated with literary texts can be carried out through an annual group project developed in the classroom, based on reading and speaking skills that will be reinforced by the cooperative learning of writing & listening skills. The classroom project will consist in the fulfilment of an interactive dictionary in the social network known as Instagram. Providing assistance to users and answers to relevant questions is at the heart of putting any information tool to use (Bothma, T., Gouws, R., 2020)

During the English as a second language lessons, texts will be worked and the

most relevant vocabulary will be chosen in a cooperative way; then the teacher will create a daily page including a word and its associated working text in which the word and/or text is spoken with special care in its pronunciation.

Meaningful learning will be stimulated by the process of being involved in the creation of the student's own interactive dictionary. It's proven that we generate a synaesthesia experience when we transmit information by the simultaneous use of several sensorial channels. These are referred to as verbal and non-verbal modalities, Esposito (2009).

So main the questions we have to answer as teachers and guides would be if the development of these interactive and collaborative experiences are going to be carried out with the outmost care and also we have to think, are we ready as professionals in the teaching of English as a second language to introduce social media as an ICT resource in our classrooms?

## ***Theoretical framework***

### **Pros for students**

- Why Instagram?

It may become a useful tool to guide in the correct use of social networks as a first contact at an early stage in which children usually begin to interact with them. Therefore, they can achieve a broader learning concept considering social media as an educational resource and not only as a recreational tool; bringing the opportunity to raise awareness of the proper and responsible use. Professors Mohamad, Rashid and Yunus stated in 2015 that e-dictionaries can be a valuable tool in order to achieve the promotion and developing of learning outcomes as well as competencies where teachers play a role in helping students to realize the significance of using the ICT in learning processes.

- Upgrading Language Skills

Instagram aids students in encouraging and assisting them in learning English, it also has essential roles when improving their motivation in learning a second language and it eventually increases their English competence and skills. Pujiati (2019)

- A window to the real world from the classroom.

Building a vocabulary page day by day, being involved in the process, makes children discover the real world from the classroom, a feeling of belonging. Essentially, being a part of a vast social media community puts everyone using it in the position to learn more about the world they live in.

- Enhancing Emotional Disposition

When students interact with video clips and photos in order to respond to an stimuli designed in class, a connection is created and students have a belonging feeling which in the long term will increase their involvement in their learning process

- Building Interpersonal Skills

When it comes to multimedia and photography, there's nothing better than a visual social media platform. What's more, creating a safe environment for this type of engaging medium allows effective communication between the students inside the classroom, without the usual stress and pressure. Allowing them to know the significant difference between a friend as someone they know in person and a follower who they might just know from the photo comments.

- Learning Through Fun

One of our first priorities as teachers is being able to connect with our students, making sure both parents and school are engaged in that joyful process. Having Instagram to help children improve their second language skills ensures a fun way of learning as it's a very adaptive social media tool with limitless possibilities.

### **Context**

Usually, students work hard to communicate while learning a language. Therefore, it is very necessary to obtain a comprehensive and complete vocabulary so that they can understand themselves and express their thoughts freely. Learn and improve or improve skills and knowledge. Practicing language is essential, so learners should become familiar with it by sharing information, expressing ideas, and trying to understand transfer. This is where social media comes into play and can group people together. Common interests, which in turn promote collaboration and interactive learning.

The widespread use of mobile devices facilitates the mobility of knowledge that is accessible anytime and anywhere. This reality makes it easier for students to access the social network even without other technical support methods, this reality makes it easier for students to access social networks, thereby narrowing the possible gap between the members of their classroom.

“One of the key roles of education is to prepare students to sharpen their 21st-century skills to fit the environments of the workplace by enhancing skills such

as creating, analysing, critical thinking, problem solving and innovation” (Alkutich, 2019)

After verifying that the characteristics of the class reference groups facilitated the incorporation of this social network to the dynamics of the classes the study by González, Lleixà and Espuny (2016), states that on the one hand, social networks continue to advance in their social use and on the other hand, there are no great reservations in students about incorporating them into school life normally.

Bringing social media to the schoolroom could be a challenge for educators because of varied issues, access issues, privacy and cyberbullying. Thus, it makes schools pay additional attention to students' negative behaviour concerning social media, though' colleges try to overcome these problems by making policies for behaviour and also the usage of social media. On different sides, student's protection of their privacy once victimisation social media is another challenge for schools, social media platforms try to typically reply to this issue by providing users with more management of privacy settings.

### **Advantages**

One of the main advantages of learning a language through social networks is the motivation that produces in students, they provide students with access to the various materials they enjoy and the fields they are interested in, so that they can absorb and learn the vocabulary they are dealing with more quickly and meaningfully. Getting in touch with concepts and ideas every day and frequently, these will soon become part of their regular tasks.

Since new technologies have been introduced into classroom dynamics, there's been a constant search for the way of connecting with students, of making them part of the teaching learning process and that leads to improve student's motivation; social media is something especially attractive for them as it feels like something private which at the same time is engaging and allows them to know a bit more about each other. Recent studies have proven that “the use of social media as a learning media increases student motivation” (Hygi, P. 2020) as it expands the methodological possibilities hugely and, may be for the first time, teachers have the chance to use a tool for teaching that is not only in direct connection with their students interests but also with what is trending and will be that way for at least a few years more as traditionally learning methods have always been something imposed by institutions and never in coordination with the way students think, feel or desire.

So it's fascinating to discover that new ways of engaging with students keep appearing, disregarding the age; it's a true necessity these days that lack of motivation is spreading among new generations, so to effectively educate them,

teachers need to have a complete understanding their overarching characteristics, perspectives and styles as Seemiller, C., & Grace, M. (2017) state; finding a common ground like the context and the way of being connected.

Social media and other virtual environments have the potential to play a role in stimulating intellectual curiosity and promoting the civic voice while meeting people and cultures from around the world.

In the look and development of tutorial pedagogies that use social media to market society dialogue, lecturers could enjoy structured opportunities to replicate on however their attitudes concerning mass media and in style culture may form their course of study selections and use of digital tools and technologies as stated Tuzel, S. & Hobbs, R. (2017).

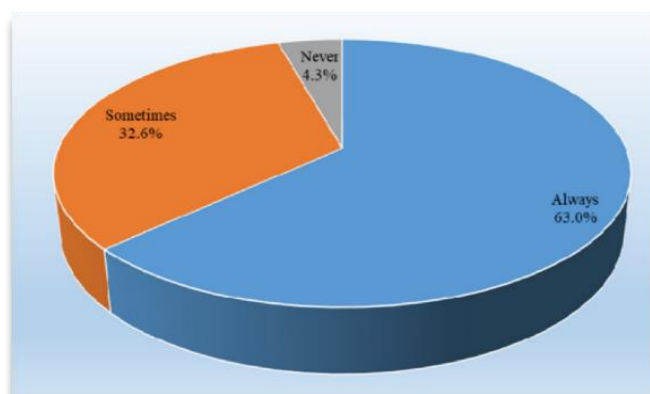
The educational potential of social media, as well as high-level responsiveness and improved student learning outcomes are undoubtedly challenges faced by teachers at all levels.

### Disadvantages

One of the most complex challenges we can find when we plan to promote the use of social media as a resource, is how to decide if developing a didactic unit with an ICT in the classrooms will really make a difference, as it usually depends on how motivated or familiarised with the tech the teacher is; firstly we shall find out if the staff is generally receptive, for example, Elnagar, B. (2020) tested English Language Institute (ELI) teachers and found out that about 63% of them already use technology in the teaching of English as a second language (see figure 1) and 32% of them use it occasionally. Therefore, it seems reasonable to think that most of the teachers will have no objection when the use of a new technological tool is implemented in their routines.

**Figure 1**

*Technology in the teaching of English as a second language*



However, due to the love-hate relationship between educators and the media, popular culture and digital media, this relationship will inevitably come into play when digital technology is used in education.

A common grievance among educators is that social media is distracting within the classroom. These teachers maintain that tools like Instagram and Twitter divert students' attention aloof from what's happening at school and are ultimately troubled by the educational process. With the chance that the utilization of social media tools is a request for college kids to goof off, instructors ought to ensure they won't be abused.

Mattson (2016) made a comprehensive review of digital citizenship courses taught in schools. In his research, Mattson defines digital citizenship as what students need to know and be able to do in order to effectively and safely navigate the digital world.

Another focus for future analysis is digital citizenship info in schools. The majority of the present digital citizenship info is created to easily show students what to try and do on- line and show them the results of not following the rules as Mattson (2016) said, while not providing any positive experiences on social media.

Teachers of all subject areas would like research-based strategies to include social media into their info instead of merely telling students how they ought to use social media (Mattson, 2016).

In the end, although the debate about what role social media should play in the classroom continues, no one can deny the impact of social media on today's students. This generation spends most of its time on social media and it's the teacher's responsibility to guide in the fair and correct use of them.

### ***Reflection, limitations and assessment***

The proposal of introducing social media as a tool for the process of teaching-learning in the classroom is a way of improving the communication among the affecting agents in children's education, as it is also one direct channel to connect with student's interests from an inclusive perspective and not from a differentiating one.

Therefore, it eases the work of the teacher, reducing the effort of finding a common ground with the students and establishing a link with their motivation while they become part of a project that belongs to their learning process.

The catching environment of Instagram or social media plays an important role as it combines both ludic and didactic environments and assists in the development of the privacy, risks and digital identity awareness of the learners, allowing the school to participate in the process of discovering the digital world through a safe window, helping to prevent future collisions or disconnections from teachers and students.

If there's a will to develop the implementation of the tool, few mechanisms are needed but an internet connection and basic smartphone devices; both accessible for any collective, the proposal is designed for the widest diversity, not only of the students but of the teachers as well.

When talking about its limitations, it's necessary to say that this is a proposal that hasn't been tested to the date in real classrooms. The fact that it requires internet connection might be restrictive for certain environments but the whole project is oriented to the good use of the social media by teachers and students so it's advisable to implement it in a context where both have the minimum means to that end.

Since it hasn't been developed in a real context yet, the specific strategies for the attention to the diversity or specificity of each student with special educational needs are not defined, as it has been designed so that these are considered at all times and the activity can be not only inclusive but developed from the beginning so that that specific attention also serves for the whole class. That is the main purpose of the whole project.

As a strong advice, the author recommends the responsible use of the tool considering, always, a kind approach in the classroom and never a restrictive one, it's completely up to the teacher's criteria for the proper development of the children's awareness regarding the social media topic.

Finally, as a result of the use of the tool, students are expected to gain trust in the school for the non-formal education, wishing they acquire enough knowledge to choose when their teachers can be better counsellors for the matter of their social lives and not agents disconnected from their reality.

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