WHATSAPP AS AN INTERACTIONAL TOOL FOR ENHANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

This article focuses on the interactional impact of WhatsApp towards enhancing teaching and learning from the perspective of a practitioner. Conducted in the university level setting, this study involved a class of 19 undergraduate students who undertook the Technical Writing course. A WhatsApp group was then established by one of the students with request from the teacher (researcher). The data, which is in the form of WhatsApp postings, was retrieved from the WhatsApp group that was created in the beginning of the semester. The researcher made a connection between the predetermined 4 learning outcomes of the course with the categories within WhatsApp interaction adapted from Kuldip Kaur (2007) to find out whether they possess any kind of relationship. The findings revolve around the interaction in the WhatsApp group and its significance towards the learning outcomes as well as the categories within WhatsApp interaction. Conclusively, the results revealed that relationships coexisted between the two.

Introduction

The initial intent of this study was to find out whether WhatsApp would serve as a secondary interactional tool to assist in enhancing teaching and learning. Mainly, the general idea is to help learners to complete in-classroom assigned tasks outside class times with my assistance as the sole class teacher in real time. As according to Calvo, Arbiol and Iglesias (2014), digital communication between groups of students and between students and teachers has become popular during the last decade through various channels: Email, SMS, Facebook groups, Twitter, and recently WhatsApp. Each one of these tools has different characteristics that influence its suitability for learning purposes. This is of course in contrast with the previous technological mediators such as Facebook or online learning forums as the responses from teachers were not in real time but rather delayed. Having mentioned that, I need to stress that comparing the previous technological mediators with WhatsApp is not the interest of this study but I am going to focus more on the practicality of employing it as a secondary tool as to enhance the