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Digital Teaching-Learning Technologies: Fostering Critical Thinking in Language Classrooms in Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the wide variety of the current digital teaching-learning technologies that Saudi EFL teachers use to engage students' critical thinking skills. Furthermore, this research also explores the critical thinking skills that developed as a result of the use of technology in the Saudi context. Data were collected through a questionnaire to get teachers' feedback and opinions about digital applications used and the critical thinking skills employed. Forty teachers from six English language institutes and four English departments in different cities of Saudi Arabia participated in this study. Results indicate that the use of technology tools /applications, and popular game and pool apps in teaching English including games and pools using Kahoot!, Quizziz, and Quizlet is highly favored in language classes. Moreover, following instructions and applying language rules are the priority critical skills targeted by language teachers when they use games and pools, and breakout groups using Blackboard, Zoom, Google Meet, Chat, Online Forum, and Instant Messaging are most employed by language teachers for collaboration and discussion purposes in their classes. This study also found that applying language rules, following instructions, brainstorming, determining facts and opinions, stating opinions and analyzing problems are the more frequently targeted critical thinking skills. It is recommended that teachers and trainers with an insight on how to harness and perhaps integrate these technological tools in their teaching-learning.

Keywords: 21st century education, critical thinking, digital teaching-learning, engagement