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Social Networking Sites and Grammar Learning: The Views of Learners and Practitioners

Abstract

This study examines the impact of online English Teachers' Stroking Behaviors on L2 grammar learning through online learning of L2 grammar for EFL learners. Sixty intermediate EFL learners were chosen for this reason and split randomly into three telegram groups. A researcher-made grammar test was administered as a pre-test prior to beginning the online course. For all three groups during one month, the determined grammar points were instructed in the same manner by one teacher. The instructor also used some pre-planned terms and phrases in the first category that suggested a positive conditional stimulation in her input during the teaching process. The researcher often used some per-planned terms and phrases with negative conditional stimulation for the next group, and the instructor provided the students with the input for the last group as the control group, suggesting no emotional themes. Another researcher-made grammar test was given as the post test for three groups at the final session. The findings showed that the positive verbal conditional stimulation of the teacher was substantially more efficient than the negative conditional stimulations; however, the negative ones were more efficient than no stimulation. Interview results revealed that, compared to receiving no stimulations, the participants prefer to receive stimulations from the instructor, including harmful ones.

Keywords: Social Networking Sites, No Stimulation (ns), Online Learning, Social Networks, Verbal Stimulation.

Introduction

As regards education quality, the contact between the teacher and the student is regarded as a fundamental part of the educational process, either in face-to-face or far away form. Bacha et al. (2021), Hall and Walsh (2002) believe that the quality of interaction between teacher and learner in the context of language learning is seen as a key factor in an efficient and effective teaching and learning process (Kumar, 2020; Ajmal & Kumar, 2019; Aldridge and Fraser, 2016; Kato, Tscholl & Kunnen, 2018). Emotional factors are integral components of teacher-learner interaction; thus, the quality of teaching and teaching process may

be influenced by these factors in the education sector (Watkins, 2019). Transactional Analysis (TA), which was originally developed by Eric Berne, will analyse teacher-learner interaction (1958). The notion of stimulation is one of the key principles within the TA scope that is specifically related to teacher-learner interactions. Any gesture to affirm the life of others may be stimulation (Shirai, 2006). The main goal of humanistic and psychological education is to turn a learner into a suitable decision-maker in his life and to develop some of his psychological aspects, such as self-determination, rational thinking, emotional

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skills and autonomy (Pishghadam, Zabihi, & Shayesteh, 2015). Therefore, a language teacher needs to be trained in some psychological aspects to provide an appropriate recognition of the psychological, mental, emotional, social and ethical needs of the learner to improve the quality of his general life (Pishghadam, Zabihi, & Kermanshahi, 2012). Recently, rapid technological growth has opened the doors to several new dimensions of pedagogy (Yedla, 2013), and language teachers should not neglect this unparalleled development in education. Due to their unique benefit of studying and teaching outside the classroom setting, the use of social networks for educational purposes has drawn the interest of many teachers and learners. This style of learning will empower learners to have their own speed in the learning process, and in this case an instructor has the primary function of persuading learners to be autonomous and self-learners; thus, it is likely that affective factors are involved in this type of learning and teaching that has not been adequately discussed so far.

It is important that special attention should be provided to the interactions between teachers and teachers based on TA theory by applying modern technology in the field of education. The researchers of this research have agreed to study the effect of the stroking behaviours of English teachers on the L2 study of EFL students through online grammar learning.

Background of the Study

Transactional Analysis (TA) was originally introduced by Eric Berne (1958). TA is a theory within the field of psychology and psychotherapy, and "Transactional analysis is a personality theory and a systematic psychotherapy for personal growth and personal change," according to Stewart and Joines (1987). It is necessary to identify transactions to elucidate the notion of transactional analysis. A transaction is called the unit of social intercourse. If two or more people meet one another, one of them may talk sooner or later, or offer some other sign of understanding the presence of others. This is known as transactional stimulation. Another person will then say or do something that relates to the stimulus in some way, and that is called the transactional response (Berne, 1964). TA allows teachers and learners to create meaningful engagement in educational contexts in order to provide a beneficial learning experience (Stewart & Joines, 1987).

Stimulation is a device of recognition or a "fundamental social action unit" (Berne, 1964). In other words, any behaviour related to verifying the presence of others could be involved. To preserve physical and psychological solidity, we need stimulations. Berne suggested the first

sense of stimulation applied to the need for children to touch objects and later accepted that adults often search for certain kinds of physical stimulation. Adults, however, are searching for other forms of stimulations, like laughing, complimenting, or even a frown in certain cases, which may show that their existence has been noticed (Stewart & Joines, 1987).

Three channels will exchange stimulations: positive or negative, verbal or non-verbal, conditional or unconditional. In both oral and written forms, verbal stimulation is known as adding vocabulary and terms that range from saying hello to a long conversation. Actions like smiling and frowning are alluded to by non-verbal stimulations. The acts that result in good feelings in the recipient of stimulation are positive stimulations; athwart, negative stimulations result in unpleasant experiences. Conditional stimulations signify what an individual does, while unconditional stimulations apply to what an individual is (Stewart & Joines, 1987). Berne (1964) thought that in contrast to the absence of stimulations, despite the unwanted aspect of negative stimulations, they are more fun because you can feel that others have seen you.

Distance Education

Distance education is characterized as a "takes place when a teacher and student(s) are separated by physical distance, and technology is used to bridge the gap" (Willis, 1993). The separation of teachers and students can often be troublesome in the process of learning and teaching because it imposes an obstacle to interaction.

Technology is rapidly developing and promoting pedagogical strategies for teachers and learners for the sharing of knowledge and communication, moving the course of the learning process from teachers to learners. Today, technology is used around the world as a learning platform and learning sources are not only limited to the textbooks available, but have also extended to digital and the internet, which have been widely used in distance learning and teaching. In this method of learning, learners can get the knowledge they need whenever and wherever they want. The Internet can, in fact, be used as the centre of online learning (Suhirman, 2019).

In the area of learning and teaching, distance education has achieved remarkable prominence worldwide. Despite the physical distance and often the time difference between them, it has introduced a variety of innovative new ways of exchanging information between teachers and learners. Distance education varies from the conventional one in which there is face-to-face contact between teacher and

learner in the same location. Many reviews have been done in the domain of distant learning but they have taken distant learning into account generally and they paid less attention to online learning more particularly (Alotaibi & Kumar, 2019; Gibson, 1990; Moore and Thompson, 1997). Online learning occurs when learners use the internet and face an educational sequence to conduct such learning tasks and to obtain the objectives of learning (Ally, 2002; Ritchie and Hoffman, 1997; Sun, 2011); while this method of learning often has its own challenges (Wang, 2004; Coverdale-Jones, 2000). Researchers in the area of online language learning and teaching have performed several research on discrepancies in face-to-face classroom and online learning and the need to use emerging technology in the process of teaching and learning (Tratnik, Urh and Jereb, 2019; Hampel and Stickler, 2005; Bennett and Marsh, 2002; Wilson and Stacey, 2004; Compton, 2009; Barker, 2002) More and more educators are becoming involved in incorporating social media and virtual environments, such as vocabulary teaching, into their respective fields of language teaching and learning (Noor Al-Deen, 2016, Lawrence, 2018).

Research Objectives

In order to point out the aim of the study the following research questions were posed:

- How does the application of positive verbal conditional stimulation and negative verbal conditional stimulation by the English teacher affect the online L2 grammar learning of the learners?
- If there is a significant impact, which form of online L2 grammar learning is most successful for learners?
- What are the attitudes of EFL students towards the effects on their L2 grammar learning of the application of positive verbal conditional stimulation and negative verbal conditional stimulations by the English teacher?

Research Methodology

Participants

The researchers used three groups for this analysis, each consisting of 20 male or female intermediate EFL learners. Complete number of participants was sixty Indian EFL learners from a University in New Delhi. They ranged in age from 22 to 30 and had various socio-economic backgrounds. In various majors such as: agriculture, architecture, administration, physical education, law, tourism, librarianship, electronics

and business, their training levels ranged from BA to MA degree.

Instrumentations

Objective Placement Test for the intermediate was first used for homogenization of the subjects (Lesly, Hasen & Zukowski, 2005). This test is a multiple choice assessment kit consisting of 70 items in 3 parts: 20 items (15 minutes) listening, 20 items (20 minutes) reading, and 30 items using language (15 minutes). According to the guidelines, EFL intermediate level learners were considered to be learners whose scores ranged from 37 to 49.

Two grammar tests, including adjective and adverb clauses exercises, were designed by the researchers to evaluate the pre-existing differences between the learners in terms of L2 grammar knowledge (specifically adjective and adverb clauses knowledge) and to explore these knowledge differences after the treatment was implemented. Two relevant experts validated the contents of the researcher-made tests, consisting of filling the blanks, unscrambling items and multiple choice items; of 24 intermediate EFL students, they were also deployed and their Cronbach alpha was calculated (pretest: 0.783 and posttest: 0.806).

Procedure

First of all, the researchers used the 'Interchange/Passages Objective Placement Test' to make sure that the chosen subjects were at around the same level of English proficiency (Lesly, Hasen & Zukowski, 2005). The required participants were chosen for the study according to the findings. Then, three telegram groups were generated and these three groups were randomly allocated to the participants. 20 female intermediate EFL learners were the members of each group. At the time, the participants had no issues with the availability of telegrams in Malaysia. One of the researcher-made grammar tests including adjective and adverb clauses activities were the pre-study for the three group members before beginning the online course to investigate whether there are any gaps between the awareness of adjective and adverb clauses of the learners of all three groups before fulfilment of treatment. For all three classes, these grammar points were taught and exercised by one instructor in the same way for one month, twice a week. In the first session, by sending a picture to three groups and presenting some definitions, examples and exercises in this regard, the instructor pointed out the differences between adjective and adverb clauses (as you can see in figure 1). The instructor taught the learners how to construct the adjective and adverb clauses in the subsequent sessions, and the learners were able to ask their questions in each session and were assigned to do some

similar activities for the same session and for the next session. In each session, the instructor reviewed the content of the previous session and tested the responses of the learners to the corresponding assigned exercises.

In the first group, the instructor also used some pre-planned terms and expressions in her feedback that indicated positive conditional stimulation, such as "you did well or excellent" and "I am satisfied with your tasks" in each group session or in the PV of each learner. "The teacher often used some pre-planned words and expressions with a negative conditional stimulation in her feedback for the next group, such as "you didn't do well, you should do it again" and "I'm not pleased with your projects, so do it again. "Finally, the teacher provided the students with the feedback for the last group, implying no emotional themes such as "it is not right, pay more attention" or "it is right to think about the other. Another researcher-made grammar test, including adjective and adverb clauses exercises, was conducted for three groups at the final session to analyze the impact

of using two stimulations on the L2 grammar learning of the EFL learners after completion of therapy.

Analysis and Results

The pilot study of the motivation questionnaire is the first stage of data processing. As three independent variables are included in the sample, the ANOVA test was used to answer questions within the first two tests. It is used to assess if there are any variations between the three groups following the implementation of the procedure.

Data obtained through the post-test and pre-test and certain statistical methods were applied to the data to answer the first two research questions of the report. SPSS, Version 19, was used for this reason. Second, the pre-test descriptive statistics shown in table 1 were added.

Table 1.

Analysis of the pretest of grammar

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
PVC	20	11.9000	1.51831	.33950	11.1894	12.6106	9.00	15.00
NVC	20	10.9500	2.11449	.47281	9.9604	11.9396	8.00	15.00
NS	20	11.4000	1.53554	.34336	10.6813	12.1187	8.00	14.00
Total	60	11.4167	1.75916	.22711	10.9622	11.8711	8.00	15.00

On the other hand, in order to determine whether the grammatical awareness of the three groups was significantly different prior to the initiation of treatment and was acceptable for analysis, the average results of the three groups in the pre-test were compared with the one-way ANOVA. The F-value was 1.483 and p-value was .235. This amount of F-value was lower than the critical F-value of 2 and 57 degrees and p-value was higher than .05. (see Table 2).

According to Table 2, there was no substantial difference between the mean pre-test scores of the three groups ($F(2, 57)=1.483, p>.05$); these groups are therefore acceptable for this analysis.

The Levene Test results indicate that the three groups have a homogeneous variance; it implies that the variances of the three groups were not substantially different (see Table 3).

Table 2.

One-Way ANOVA at the pretest of grammar on the three groups

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9.033	2	4.517	1.483	.235
Within Groups	173.550	57	3.045		
Total	182.583	59			

Table 3.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances at pretest

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
2.235	2	57	.116

The results of the one-way ANOVA were accurate ($F(2, 57) = 1.483, p>.05$) referring to Table 3.

Table 4.

Descriptive Statistics at the Post-Test for the three Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
PVC	20	18.3000	1.38031n	.30865	17.6540	18.9460	15.00	20.00
NVC	20	14.1500	2.41214	.53937	13.0211	15.2789	10.00	19.00
NS	20	12.7500	1.48235	.33146	12.0562	13.4438	10.00	15.00
Total	60	15.0667	2.97371	.38390	14.2985	15.8349	10.00	20.00

The mean of PVC group at the post-test is higher than the other two.

The average score of the three post-test groups is compared with the single-way ANOVA application in order to assess if the treatments contributed to differences. The F and p values were 50,383 and 0,000 respectively. This F-value was higher than that of F at 2 and 41, and the p-value was lower than the .05 (F(2,57) = 50.383, p<.05) significance. (see Table 5):

Table 5.

One-Way ANOVA at the Post-Test for the three groups

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	333.233	2	166.617	50.383	.000
Within Groups	188.500	57	3.307		
Total	521.733	59			

The findings of Table 5 show that the average scores of the three post-test classes are substantially different.

The theoretical eta squared effect size was calculated to be .639. (see table 6).

Table 6

Degree of association between the dependent and independent variables

	Eta	Eta Squared
posttest * group	.799	.639

This table shows the extent to which the dependent (post-test) variable is correlated with independent variables that are wide (three types of stimulation) (Dornyei, 2007).

The Leven homogeneity test shows that three classes had uniform variation (F (2, 57) = 50,383, p> .05) (See table 7).

Table 7

Test of Homogeneity of Variances at posttest

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
3.473	2	57	.038

The outcomes of the one-way ANOVA are thus accurate. This means that the variances of the three classes did not vary significantly.

The test results show a disparity between the means of the three sides, but the exact positions of the differences are either unclear or unknown. An analysis was performed to support the location of the adjusted parameters (See Table 8).

Table 8

Bonferroni test of the three groups for the comparison of posttest means

(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PVC	NVC	4.15000*	.57507	.000	2.7315	5.5685
	NS	5.55000*	.57507	.000	4.1315	6.9685
NVC	PVC	-4.15000*	.57507	.000	-5.5685	-2.7315
	NS	1.40000	.57507	.044	-.0185	2.8185
NS	PVC	-5.55000*	.57507	.000	-6.9685	-4.1315
	NVC	-1.40000	.57507	.044	-2.8185	.0185

* At 0.05, the mean difference is important.

The Bonferroni test was then used and the findings show that there were substantial variations at the level of 0.05 for all three PVC, NVC and NS classes.

In order to determine the effect of three types of stimulation on L2 learning more specifically, the difference in both pre-tested and post-test scores was calculated (gain results),

and corresponding statistical tests were conducted. Table 9 displays the descriptive statistics of benefit scores for the three classes.

Table 9

Statistical analysis of the Experimental and Control Groups in Grammar

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
PVC	20	6.4000	2.03651	.45538	5.4469	7.3531	2.00	9.00
NVC	20	3.2000	1.39925	.31288	2.5451	3.8549	1.00	5.00
NS	20	1.3500	.87509	.19568	.9404	1.7596	.00	4.00
Total	60	3.6500	2.57646	.33262	2.9844	4.3156	.00	9.00

The average scores for PVC are higher than the other two categories.

To assess average disparities in patient benefits, a one-way ANOVA has been used. The F-observed value was 57.00 and the p-value of that observation was .000. The total value for F was 2 and 57 degrees of freedom when F and p-value were below the value of .05 (F(2, 57) = 57.00, p < .05) (see Table 10).

Table 10

Analysis of one-way ANOVA on the three groups

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	261.100	2	130.550	57.000	.000
Within Groups	130.550	57	2.290		
Total	391.650	59			

According to Table 10, the mean values for the three gains are substantially different (F (2, 57) = 57.00, p < .05).

The statistical significance, measured via eta squared, was found to be 0.667. (See table 11).

Table 11

Degree of association between the dependent and independent variables

	Eta	Eta Squared
Gain score * group	.816	.667

Table 13

Bonferroni test for the comparison of gain scores means

(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PVC	NVC	3.2000*	.47858	.000	2.0195	4.3805
	NS	5.0500*	.47858	.000	3.8695	6.2305
NVC	PVC	-3.2000*	.47858	.000	-4.3805	-2.0195
	NS	1.8500*	.47858	.001	.6695	3.0305
NS	PVC	-5.0500*	.47858	.000	-6.2305	-3.8695
	NVC	-1.8500*	.47858	.001	-3.0305	-.6695

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

This effect size examines the level to which independent variables (three forms of stimulation) are correlated with dependency (gain value), which is a large size (Dornyei, 2007).

The Levene's test of homogeneity of variance suggested homogeneous variance among the three groups (See table 12).

Table 12.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances at gain scores

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
7.049	2	57	.002

The outcomes of the one-way ANOVA are, therefore, accurate. The F-value which was 57.00 was lower than the critical value at 2 and 57 degrees of freedom. Therefore, there was no substantial difference between variances of three classes (F (2, 57) = 57.00, p > .05) as a result of the underlying assumption of one-way ANOVA.

The Bonferroni test was used to recognise the position of variations (see Table 13).

There were substantial differences between the three PVC, NVC and NS groups at the levels of 0.05.

Figure 2 below indicates the means of Group 1, Group 2 and group 3.

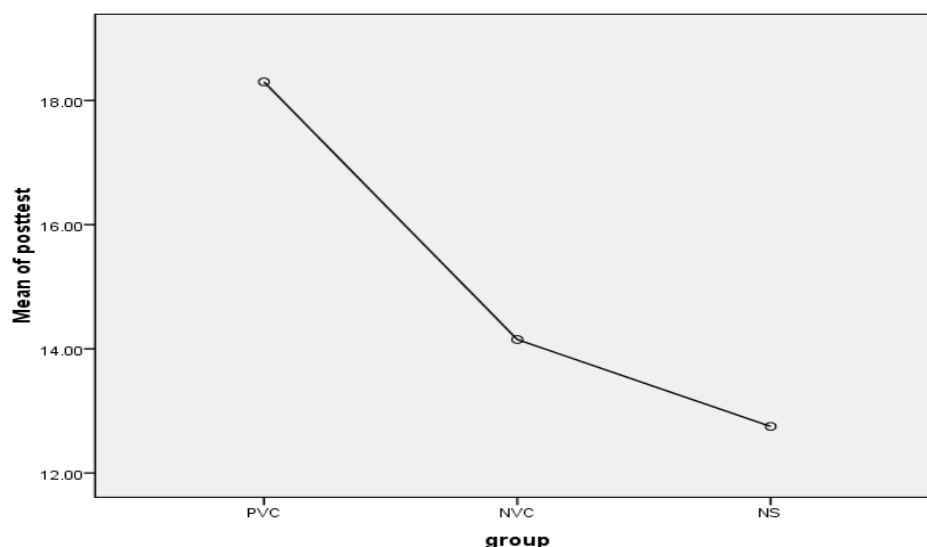


Figure 2.

The means of group 1, group 2 and group 3

As the figure 2 shows, the mean of PVC category is higher than the other two. Tables 4, 8, 9, and 13 can also be used to infer this finding. We can infer that the most advantageous are PVC stimulations and the NS is the least advantageous or even disadvantageous one in the development of L2 grammar learning for learners.

According to the results of the interviews, the EFL students felt that the PVC stimulations might have a positive effect on their learning. They did not like NVC stimulations and NS, but compared to no stimulations, they favoured NVC stimulations. Based on their ideas, it could be intended to be ignored by her to receive no stimulations from the instructor.

Discussion and Conclusion

The consistency of the learning and teaching process can be influenced by emotional variables of teacher-learner interaction in educational environments (Kato, Tscholl and Kunnen; 2018; Aldridge and Fraser, 2016). According to Hall and Walsh (2002), the quality of interaction between teacher and learner in the context of language learning is regarded as a fundamental factor in the successful teaching and learning process. Transactional Analysis (TA), suggested by Eric Berne, will test teacher-learner interaction (1958). The notion of stimulation is one of the key principles in the field of TA that has a major role in teacher-learner interactions. Stimulation may be any activity

relating to verifying the presence of others (Shirai, 2006). According to Pishghadam, Zabihi, and Shayesteh (2015), considering its psychological dimensions, education seeks to make a learner more independent within the humanistic and psychological context. Pishghadam, Zabihi, and Kermanshahi (2012) assume that to assess their criteria for promoting the quality of general life, a language teacher should be familiar with the psychological aspects of the learners. Rapid technological growth has recently involved the field of education, so the psychological aspects of education have also been affected. Therefore, this research attempted to investigate the impact of the stroking activities of online English teachers on the L2 grammar learning of EFL learners by online learning of L2 grammar.

The results of the study showed that the use of positive verbal conditional stimulation and negative verbal conditional stimulations by the online English teacher had major effects on the online L2 grammar learning of the learners. Regarding the results, online English teacher's application of positive verbal conditional stimulations was substantially more successful than the negative conditional stimulations; however, the negative ones were more effective than no stimulation. The results of the interviews showed that among the three, EFL learners favour positive verbal conditional stimulations and they believe that this form of stimulation will have a positive effect on their learning process. They did not like both negative verbal conditional

stimulation and absence of stimulation, but in contrast to no stimulations, they prefer the negative verbal conditional stimulation because they feel that getting no stimulations from the instructor means not being seen by her.

Regarding the area of this research, attention should be paid to certain weak points. In this study, some constraints on the use of stimulations are involved; for example, the researcher aims to examine merely the effect of positive verbal conditional stimulation, negative verbal conditional stimulations and lack of stimulation in this study due to some distance learning restrictions. Since a comfort sample was used for the study, we should be careful in generalising the findings of this study. Today, due to its popularity among Malaysian citizens, there are different types of online social networks among which the researcher of this study chooses telegrams. The researchers aim to choose the female participants, taking into account the psychological disparities between male and female learners. Other types of problems that the researcher may face may be small sample, age, private variable, restricted educational context, and family history. For more studies in the same field in the future, each of these variables could pose new questions.

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