

Overview, Purpose, and Statement of the Problem and its Significance:

Traditional English language instruction often relies on lengthy lectures that lead to student disengagement and difficulty retaining information. It also focuses on textbook-based activities that impede students' understanding of the text due to comprehension and decoding that hinder the student's ability to comprehend, connect, and retain information. By implementing microlearning, these barriers and more can be broken down when teachers tailor instruction to meet individual needs and learning styles, ensuring better comprehension and engagement (Neal, 2023b).

Microlearning, characterized by concise, focused learning modules, offers a promising alternative. It leverages the power of chunking, a well-established learning principle that is intended to break down lessons and assist learners in understanding the content presented to them. By breaking down specific lessons and information into smaller, meaningful pieces, microlearning aids in better information retention and student performance (Fountain & Doyle, 2012). Unfortunately, limited research exists on the effectiveness and practical application of microlearning within the middle school English classroom. This study aims to address this gap by examining the lived experiences of teachers and students in this context and providing a detailed findings report to add to the limited data and research available.

The concept of microlearning is a promising and effective approach in education (Javorcik et al., 2023). This study seeks to explore how microlearning impacts student engagement and learning outcomes and identify the benefits and challenges associated with implementing microlearning units of study in the middle school English classroom.

Theoretical Framework:

A teacher transmits their knowledge; but how much one can absorb entirely depends on their capacity, efforts, beliefs, and motivation (Nehra, 2021). This study draws upon the principles of social constructivism, acknowledging that knowledge is actively constructed through social interaction and individual experiences. Microlearning aligns with constructivism by presenting information in small, manageable chunks that students can actively engage with and build upon. With its focus on core content and visuals, microlearning is a popular choice of learning with the modern learners of today who are used to consuming information quickly (Odhiambo, 2024).

Building on the principle of situated and social learning, the study highlights the importance of placing learning within meaningful activities and realistic scenarios relevant to students' interests and unique academic levels. Microlearning can foster autonomy by allowing students to learn at their own pace and revisit specific content as needed. It can also promote competence by providing opportunities for mastery of specific skills. Finally, microlearning can enhance relatedness by fostering collaboration and interaction in small group activities. School years not only sculpt our learning experiences, but our social connections and confidence as well (Clarke, 2023).

With a focus on technology integration, this study provides a structured approach for integrating technology into the middle school English classroom. The technology framework would be utilized to analyze how microlearning technology can be effectively integrated into English language instruction, considering factors like accessibility, pedagogical alignment, and student support. Using technology platforms to implement microlearning units, modules, and

lessons is a way for educators to intentionally support the process of storing information in student brains (Nehra, 2021).

Research Questions & Design:

This qualitative study will employ a case study approach, focusing on a single middle school English grade level where microlearning has been implemented. Questions that the study will look into and address are:

- How does the design and delivery format of microlearning units affect student engagement and learning outcomes?
- How does the impact of microlearning differ for students with varying reading abilities or special needs?
- Do individual student characteristics, such as learning styles, prior knowledge, or motivation levels, influence the effectiveness of microlearning?
- Does the use of microlearning contribute to the development of self-directed learning skills in students?
- How does the effectiveness of microlearning compare to traditional, lecture-based instruction in the English classroom?
- Did students find micro-learning activities helpful for understanding ELA concepts?
- How did the short bursts of information impact student focus and concentration?

Population:

The target population for this study will be middle school English teachers and their students within a single grade level setting.

Data Collection:

Data will be collected through the following methods:

- Audio-recorded interviews with teachers (individual and focus group) and students (individual and group).
- Field notes from classroom observations.
- Documents obtained from the teacher, including lesson plans, student work samples, and any relevant microlearning materials.
- Semi-structured individual interviews with each student with open-ended questions like:
 - Can you describe your experience with micro-learning activities in English class?
 - How do you think these activities helped you learn English concepts?
 - Did you face any challenges while participating in these activities?
 - What did you like or dislike about the micro-learning format?
 - How did these activities compare to your usual English class lessons?

Data Analysis:

Qualitative data analysis requires structured approaches, critical thinking, and effective communication. Most importantly, however, it requires an open-mind willing to accept the unexpected (Elliott, 2018). Thematic analysis offers a clear and systematic framework for analyzing qualitative data, allowing for uncovering valuable insights into the lived experiences of teachers and students regarding microlearning (Braun & Clark, 2006). This will contribute to a deeper understanding of this approach's potential and challenges within the middle school English language learning environment. Therefore, thematic analysis will be employed to identify recurring themes and patterns within the collected data. This will involve coding the data, identifying key categories, and developing a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences with microlearning. For this step in the process, exploring the

experiences of teachers and students will provide valuable insights into the potential of this approach for enhancing student engagement and future learning outcomes (Carter & Youssef-Morgan, 2022). Implementing thematic analysis will provide a structured approach for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting recurring themes within the data.

1. Familiarization and Coding:

- Coding and analysis are central to qualitative research (Pratt, 2023). Despite the demanding nature of the process, the results and benefits of coding are quite rewarding. Researchers will immerse themselves in the findings and read and review transcripts, observation notes, documents, survey findings, etc. to find recurring topics and themes.

2. Generating Themes

- After coding, similar codes will be placed into potential themes, considering their coherence and relationship to research questions. This may involve refining and merging codes as overarching patterns are identified

3. Reviewing, Defining, and Naming Themes:

- Themes will be evaluated to ensure that they adequately represent the data. This step may involve revising or merging themes to achieve a clear and comprehensive understanding.
- Themes, concepts, and categories will be identified before, during, and after data collection and analysis as Ryan and Bernard (2003) explain in their Themes will be clearly defined with concise labels that accurately capture their essence, which will facilitate communication and understanding of findings.

4. Writing the Analysis:

Braun and Clark (2006) offer a clear and systematic framework for analyzing qualitative data, based on the lived experiences of teachers and students regarding microlearning. Combined with the data analysis steps listed above, this will contribute to a deeper understanding of the approach's potential and challenges within the middle school English language learning environment. Researchers will integrate the identified themes into a research report, providing rich descriptions and supporting evidence from both the literature and the data. The relationships between themes and how they contribute to the overall understanding of microlearning in the middle school English classroom will be discussed and explained in the analysis report and findings.

Assumptions:

- This study assumes that the researcher is well informed with the current literature on the topic of microlearning as not only is this important, but extremely essential to the findings and reportings (Mishra & Dey, 2022).
- This study assumes that the researchers clearly identify and explain the purpose, process, and protocol of the research to all participants and addresses any questions or concerns they may have.
- Building rapport and trust with the participants is important to the research process.

Based on positive relationships between researchers and participants, the study assumes that teachers and students provide honest feedback during and after the implementation of the research design.

- With qualitative research and findings, the issue of bias is undeniable and inevitable and may impact the interpretation or analysis of findings (Mehra, 2022). It is important with qualitative research that researchers avoid any judgment or bias that may affect the responses of participants. Therefore, this study assumes that researchers remain neutral when conducting the research, reviewing and analyzing the findings, and presenting the final report.
- This study assumes that the researchers adhere to ethical guidelines and ensure the well-being of all participants involved.

Chapter Summary:

This proposal outlines a qualitative study that delves into the incorporation of microlearning in the middle school English classroom. It aims to demonstrate that microlearning can be an effective tool to support the academic progress of students. By exploring the experiences of teachers and students, the study aims to contribute valuable insights into the potential of this approach for enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. The findings will inform educators and curriculum developers about the effective implementation of microlearning strategies within the middle school English language learning environment. The study's goal of understanding the lived experiences of participants and the contextual factors influencing their perceptions of microlearning will lead to meeting students' needs promoting a healthier and accessible learning environment that boosts their motivation to learn (Al-Zahrani, 2024).

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