THE INTEGRATION OF WEB 2.0 TOOLS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract:
The present study aims at investigating the integration of Web 2.0 tools among EFL high school teachers in English language teaching. To evaluate the state of art in the Moroccan context; both, quantitative and qualitative data is collected with the help of a questionnaire and an interview administered to forty seven high school teachers in Fes city. The results of the study revealed that the integration of Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching is still in its infancy stage since only 12,77 % of the whole sample make use of Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices; especially, YouTube, and Facebook. This study also shows that the use of Web 2.0 tools among teacher is limited either to providing online resources for students or as teaching aids in classrooms. The low percentage of high school teachers who use Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices is attributed to the challenges that hinder the integration of Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching. This is so, because 93,62% of teachers state that there are certain challenges that hinder the integration of Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching. These challenges according to the respondents are categorized into the lack of knowledge in using Web 2.0 tools in teaching, the lack of digital materials in classrooms, and their negative attitudes toward the integration of Web 2.0 tools in educational purposes. Based on the findings of this study some pedagogical implications are directed to EFL teachers, and educational policy makers.

Keywords: Web 2.0, Web 2.0 tools, digital learning

1. Introduction

Since the 1990s the World Wide Web started to take its grips over all spheres of human life, and English language teaching and learning was not an exception. This urges English language teachers to reconsider their teaching methods and add Web 2.0 tools as a new ingredient in their teaching to cater for the needs of the 21st generation. The generation

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that Prensky (2001) refers to as 'digital natives' who have never known a time without technology in their life. This generation according to Tapscott (1999) process knowledge differently and the traditional educational system does not meet their needs. Thus, it becomes an urgent need for teachers to create a digital learning atmosphere where Web 2.0 tools make the basics of language learning and teaching. In the same line of thoughts, Prensky (2005) states that "*For the digital age, we do not need just to adopt technology into our schools. Let us adapt it, push it, pull it, iterate with it, experiment it, and test it, so the 22nd century does not catch us by surprise*" (p. 5). All these provide a solid ground for investigating Moroccan EFL high school teachers' awareness of the integration of Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Defining Web 2.0
The concept of Web 2.0 was first launched by the Web pioneer O'Reilly (2005). This concept refers to the second generation of the Web which is more collaborative and interactive (Shannon, 2006). To make the concept of Web 2.0 clear in mind, it is of paramount importance to compare it to the first generation of the Web (Web 1.0). In this regard, Web 1.0 is a static Web which does not allow interaction and collaboration between users. Put differently, Web 1.0 is referred to as 'read only Web which includes encyclopedia, and other Web pages that do not allow any kind of interaction between content users (Motternam & Sharma 2009). On the other side of the coin, we have the 'read/write' Web (Web 2.0) which allows users to interact, comment, and share their point of view regarding a certain issue (Thompson, 2008). In a nutshell, Web 1.0 is concerned more with content production and consumption leaving no room for interaction, while the second generation of the Web is devoted for collaboration and interaction between users on a shared content.

Social networks are part of the second generation of the Web since they share the same features of Web 2.0 tools. In this vein, social networks are defined as online communities that are based on a set of nodes which represent people or organizations connected together (Castells, 2004). These communities allow individuals who share the same interests to come together, communicate, interact, discuss and share items like pictures, video clips, and other files. (Boyd & Ellison, 2007)

2.2. Web 2.0 Tools
Trying to cover all Web 2.0 tools in a single study is like trying to pin down a moving target. This is so, because Web 2.0 tools are increasing immensely. In this regard, this study limits its scope to some of the well known and most used Web 2.0 tools in the 21st century; namely, Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. So, before embarking deeply in this study, it is essential to say few words on these tools that make the core matter of this study.

Starting with blogs, these are online journals which present a set of personal comments and links to other Websites (Campbell, 2003). For Wikis, which are another

Web 2.0 tools covered in this study, are defined as a collection of Web pages which enable any user who have access to share and modify the content (Raman, Ryan, & Olfman, 2005). Concerning podcasts, these are audio recordings that can be in the form of talks, interviews, or lectures distributed over the internet. These recordings can be downloaded and/or played on a computer, an iPod, a smart phone or an MP3 device (Anderson, 2007). Moving to the audio-visual part of Web 2.0 tools, we have YouTube which is a very popular video sharing Website where users can upload, view, and share video clips. Regarding social networks, this study covers Facebook and Twitter. Facebook is one of the most popular Social Networks. It offers an online platform on which users create profiles, generate and share contents and information, and interact with other known or unknown contacts (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). On the other side of the coin, we have Twitter which was defined as an online social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based messages of up to 140 characters, known as 'tweets'.

3. Learning Theories Supporting Digital Learning

They are two learning theories supporting digital teaching and learning. These learning theories are namely constructivism and connectivism. In what follows there will be a brief discussion of each. Constructivism is a learning theory which advocates that knowledge is socially constructed through discussion and interaction between people (Ally, 2004; Bruner, 1990; Fosnot, 2005; Fosnot & Perry, 1996). This learning theory regards the learner as a knowledge constructor who actively creates his/her ideas from previous experiences, shared knowledge, and collaborative activities. In the same line of thoughts, constructivism as a learning theory regards a language classroom as a space which supports self-directed learning, learner autonomy, collaboration, discussion, reflection, authentic learning, and scaffolding (Bellefeuille, 2006). The second learning which supports digital learning and teaching is connectivism. This learning theory is based on the premise that learning occurs through forming networks and people need to be connected to receive knowledge. In other words, knowledge is constructed through interaction between people via Web technologies (Siemens, 2005).

4. Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age

In the digital age teaching and learning have taken different ways. Web 2.0 tools including wikis, blogs, podcasts, social networks, and other tools become very essential for collaborative learning and teaching in the 21st century (O'reilly, 2005). These tools make the 21st century learners more than just passive receivers of information since they can collaborate, interact, share, and construct their own knowledge from their past experiences, or their teachers' and peers' feedback. (Thompson, 2008; Huang, Yang, Yueh-Min, & Hsiao, 2010; Baker-Doyle & Yoon, 2011. In the same concern, Brown and Adler (2008) note that even the pace of learning has changed in the digital age; learning

becomes quicker and ubiquitous. In simpler terms, a learner can have access to information anywhere, anytime, any long with people all around the world.

As learning patterns change in the 21ˢᵗ century, learning styles continue to develop and transform as well. The new Web 2.0 technologies which have invaded the realm of teaching and learning in the digital age have forced the 21ˢᵗ century teachers to reconsider their teaching methods and adapt new digital techniques into their classrooms to meet the needs of 21ˢᵗ century learners (Gunawardena et al., 2009).

5. Web 2.0 in Education

Web 2.0 tools Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, Facebook, Twitter, or Youtube have made their place in the realm of education. These tools offer many innovative ways for English language teaching and learning. For instance, blogs give students an opportunity to engage students in authentic learning and help them develop creative, critical, communicative, digital, and collaborative skills (Duffy & Bruns, 2006). The same for wikis, they provide learners a platform for knowledge sharing and give them a chance to learn new concepts and topics, and develop the ability to evaluate online resources (Downes, 2009).Podcasts is considered as the magical tool for developing students' pronunciation and listening skills due to its flexibility and playback to assess pronunciation and pick up new vocabulary (Lafferty & Walch, 2006). In the same vein, YouTube is an efficient pedagogical tool in language teaching since it is a rich source of information that can be used by teachers as a teaching aid to expose students' to the target language and authentic pronunciation (Embi, 2011). This tool can serve as an audio-visual aid for language learning to meet the needs of both auditory and visual learners.

For the social networks discussed in this study; Facebook and Twitter, can be used to connect students with their peers creating a learning community. They can also be used among students to collaborate on assignments and group projects in an online environment. Moreover, social networks can help instructors connect with their students and share assignments, upcoming events, useful links, and unique classroom hashtags (Anderson, 2007).

6. Digital Natives Vs Digital Emigrants

The advent of new technologies, bring new technical concepts that we need to be fully aware of to catch up we the digital age. Some of these new concepts mentioned in this study are 'digital natives' and 'digital immigrants'. Digital natives are those people who have grown up using digital technologies. On this issue, Prensky (2001a) refers to 'digital natives' as "*native speakers of the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet*" (p.1). On the other side of the coin, we have digital immigrants who were born after the 1990s and hence have not grown using digital technologies. In trying to provide a metaphoric comparison between 'digital natives' and 'digital immigrants', Prensky (op.cit) states that a digital native is like a native speaker of English language, who does not find any difficulties producing fluent and accurate language, since he/she has

acquired it unconsciously, while a digital immigrant is like a second language learner, who straggles to learn the language following a set of stages with a limited chance to develop a native like competence.

7. Research on Web 2.0 and Language Teaching

Research on the integrating of Web 2.0 tools in language teaching and learning is providing conflicting views. The findings of some studies reveal that educators perceive Web 2.0 tools as effective and hence they integrate them in their teaching practices, while others view that Web 2.0 tools have no room in language teaching.

In this regard, Shin and Son (2007) conducted a study on EFL high school teachers' integration of Web 2.0 tools in language teaching and the perceived effectiveness of these tools in education. The finding of this study revealed that a high percentage of teachers integrate Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices and perceive that these tools are very effective in language teaching and learning in the digital age. A similar study conducted by Canole, de Laat, Dillon, and Darby (2006) on the effectiveness and integration of Web 2.0 tools; especially, wikis in language learning. The findings of the study showed that the majority of teachers interviewed are using wikis in their teaching practices. The results also indicate that wikis help students develop evaluation skills.

On the contrary, the findings of a study carried out by Majhiand Maharana (2011) to assess teachers' familiarity and use of Web 2.0 tools in learning and teaching revealed that the usage of Web 2.0 tools is not very significant among teachers due to certain challenges: the luck of training, and insufficient skills to use Web 2.0 tools in teaching. The paradoxical results of previous studies give another reason to evaluate the integration of Web 2.0 tools among Moroccan high school teachers in language teaching so as to have a clear idea about the issue in the Moroccan context.

8. Methodological Framework

8.1. Research Design
The research design adopted in this study is a mixed method research design. This research design allows the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data and get into deep analysis of the two sets of data to obtain valid and reliable results avoiding the bias of using one set of data (Creswell & Plano Clarck, 2008).

8.2. Research Questions and Hypotheses
This study seeks to answer three main questions;
1) Do Moroccan high school teacher include Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices?
2) How Moroccan high school teachers use Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices?
3) Are there any challenges that hinder the integration of Web 2.0 tools in the Moroccan context?
    The previous research questions yield to the following research hypotheses;

H1 The integration of Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching is still in its infancy stage in the Moroccan context.

H2 The way high school teachers use Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching is limited.

H3 The Moroccan context is not a promising ground for integrating Web 2.0 tools in teaching.

8.3. Participants and Sampling Method

The study follows convenient sampling method that takes into consideration the willingness of the participants to take part in a study and the ease of accessibility (Dörnyei, 2007). Therefore, from the total number of high school in Fes, Boulmane region which is 43 as publish in the guide of Moroccan high schools (2013), the researcher had access only to 13 high schools. Based on the number of English language teachers in the high schools the researcher had access to which varies between 3 to 4 teachers in each school, the researcher ends up with a population of 51 teachers which turn to 47 participants who were willing to take part in the study.

8.4. Instruments for Data Collection

To collect data for this study two instruments were used; a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data, while the interview serves to collect qualitative data. The questionnaire included two parts. The first part is concerned with collecting demographic data of the participants, whereas the second part is composed of 20 close-ended questions which help get data to answer the research questions. The interview included only open-ended questions to get more in depth data for this study.

8.5. Data Collection and Analysis

To collect data, the researcher consults teachers in the institutions where they work and distributed the 47 questionnaires which took only 15 minutes to be filled. All the questionnaires were filled but only 15 of the respondents accepted to be interviewed. After collecting the data, SPSS (Statistical Package of Social Science) was used to analyze quantitative data collected by questionnaires providing descriptive statistics; namely, frequencies to answer the first two research questions, while interviews were analyzed qualitatively to answer the third research question.

9. Findings of the Study

This study seeks to answer three main research questions. The first question is concerned with the integration of Web 2.0 in English language teaching. The second research question examines the way high school teacher use Web 2.0 in their teaching practices, while the last research question sheds light on the challenges that hinder the integration of Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching. This part provides the findings of each research question.

9.1. Web 2.0 Tools in English Language Teaching

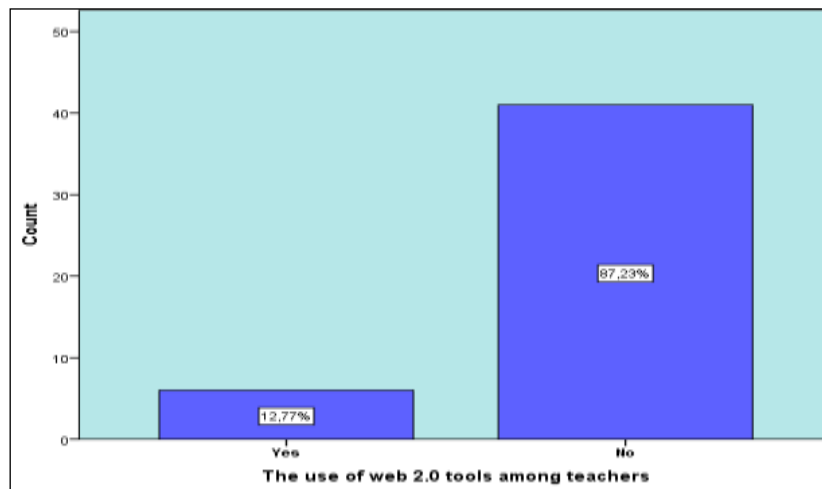The results of the first research question are displayed in figure (1).

Figure 1: The Use of Web 2.0 Tools in English Language Teaching

The findings in figure (1) show that 87.23% of the participants in the study do not make use of Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices, while only 12.77% relay on Web 2.0 tools in their teaching. This indicates that the use of Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching and learning is still in a low rank among Moroccan high school teachers. Providing more details on the use of Web 2.0 tools in teaching practices, figure (2) provides teachers' preferences of integrating Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices.
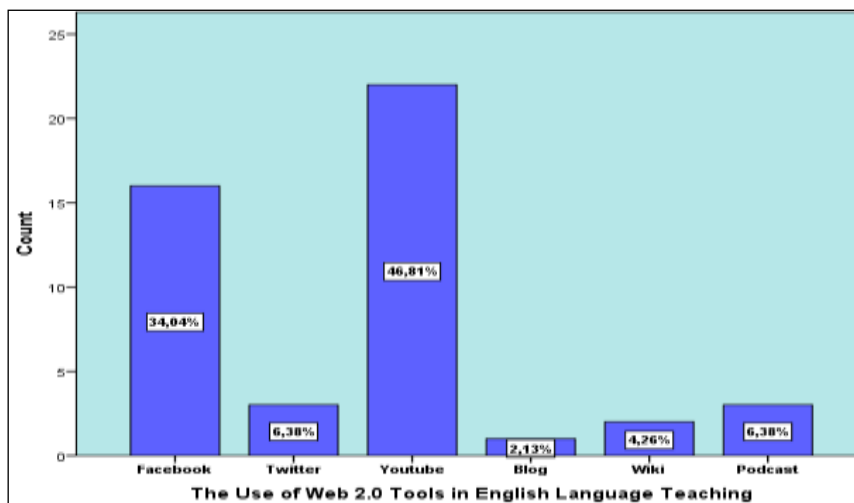
Figure 2: Web 2.0 Tools Used in English Language Teaching

The results displayed in figure (2) pinpoint that there is a strong tendency toward the use of YouTube as it comes first with a percentage of 46,81% followed by Facebook 34,04%, while twitter and podcast come at the same rank of use 6.38% for each. Wikis and Blogs have limited use among teachers since they have a percentage of 4,26% and 2,13%, respectively.

9.2. The way EFL Teachers Use Web 2.0 Tools

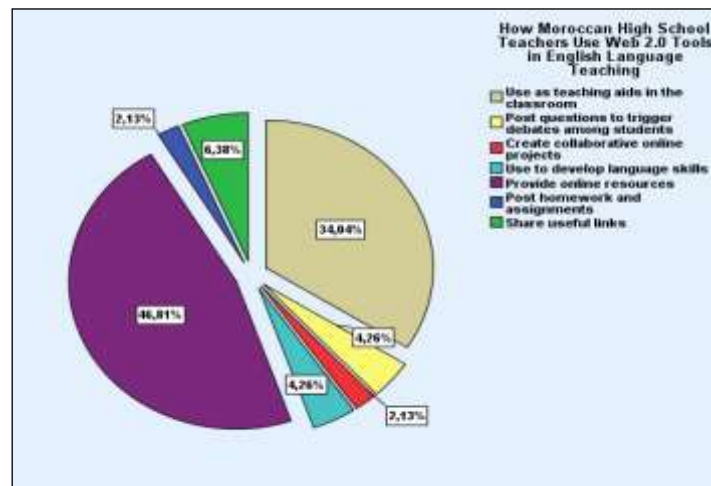The results of the second research question are displayed in figure (3).

Figure 3: Ways of Using Web 2.0 Tools in Teaching Practices

The findings in figure (3) illustrate that the way Moroccan high school teachers use Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices is very limited to providing online resources to students which takes a percentage of 46,81% and as teaching aids in the classroom which comes second with 34,04%. For other uses of Web 2.0 tools, they take very low percentages as shown in figure (3). The use of Web 2.0 tools to share useful links is represented by 6.38% followed by the use of Web 2.0 tools to post questions to trigger debates among students, and the use of Web 2.0 tools to develop language skills which take a percentage of 4,26% for each. The use of Web 2.0 tools to create collaborative projects and post assignments comes last with the same percentage 2.13%.

9.3. Challenges of Implementing Web 2.0 Tools in English Language Teaching

The results of the third research question are represented quantitatively as displayed in figure (4) and qualitatively following a set of themes.
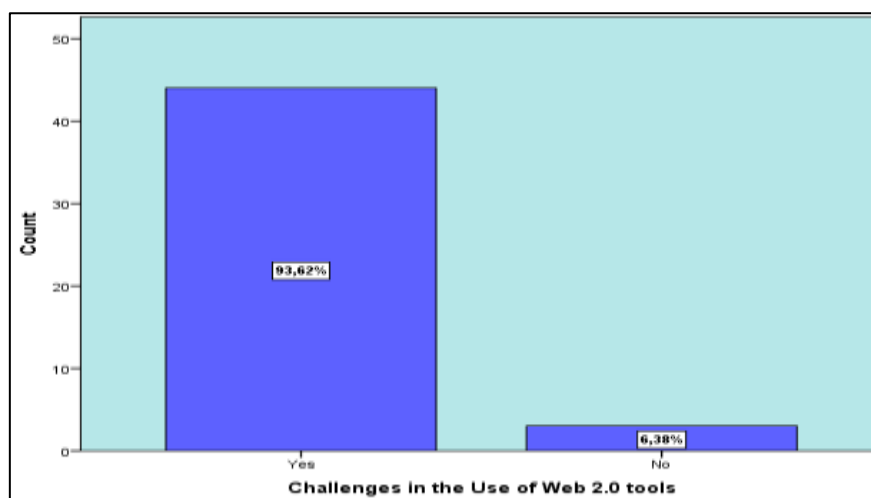

Figure 4: The challenges of Using Web 2.0 Tools in English Language Teaching

The results demonstrated in figure (4) reveal that 93.62% of the participant in this study face challenges integrating Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices, whereas only very few participants 6.38% do not encounter problems implementing Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching.

9.3.1. Qualitative Data

The qualitative data for the third research question is represented under three themes: Lack of training, lack of materials, and negative attitudes. In what follows there will be a representation of the views of some teachers who set for the interview.

9.3.1.1. Lack of Training

"I cannot use social networks with my students because I do not know how these digital tools work". (Teacher 1)

"I thought once of creating a Wiki page for my students to share with them some online resources but I did not know how to do it". (Teacher 2)

"I have been told by a colleague that subscribing students to hashtags of a certain theme make them learn a bunch of vocabulary related to that theme, but I did not know how to do it though my colleague tried to explain to me that." (Teacher 1)

9.3.1.2. Lack of Materials

"I would like to use those social networks with my students because they love technology, but the problem is that my classroom is not equipped with digital tools." (Teacher 4)

"I tried once to make my students watch a video that I downloaded from YouTube, but when I launched the video the sound was not well heard. So, my students could not hear the content and I was frustrated. If I had load speakers, things would have been better for my students". (Teacher 5)

"My students are fans of Web 2.0 tools. Thus, I tried once to set a Facebook group for my students to establish a kind of virtual interaction and debate among them by posting some questions which they need to answer, but the problem was that not all my students were taking part in that Facebook page because not all of my students have smart phones or computers." (Teacher 6)

9.3.1.3. Negative Attitudes

"…those social networks are a waste of time they have nothing to do with language teaching". (Teacher 7)

"I know how to use social networks with my students, but I do not think that these tools have an added value". (Teacher 8)

"These tools can be only used for chatting and making new virtual friends". (Teacher 9)

10. Discussion of the Findings

The findings of this study reveal three interesting issues about the integration of Web 2.0 tools among EFL teachers in the Moroccan context; namely, the extent to which high school teachers use Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices, the ways they use these tools in their teaching, and the challenges they face while integrating Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching. The findings about these issues are going to be given a thorough discussion to describe the state of art in the Moroccan context.

The results for the first research question indicate that the integration of Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching is still in its infancy stage since only 12,77 % of the participants state that they use Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices with a large tendency toward of the use of YouTube videos and Facebook which take a huge percentage of use 46,81% and 34,64%, respectively. This tendency toward the use of YouTube and Facebook can be due to their practicality in language teaching, teachers' familiarity with the use of these tools, and their ability in providing plenty of online educational resources.

The findings for the second research question demonstrate that the way teachers use Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practice is still restricted to providing online resources and the use in the classroom as teaching aids since the two types of use take big percentages 46,81% and 34,04%, respectively, compared other suggested uses which did not exceed 6,38% of use. This implies that though some teachers try to integrate Web 2.0 tools in their practices, their way of using these tools is very limited. This can be attributed to their luck of knowledge about the ways Web 2.0 tools can be integrated in education.

For the last research question, the findings have proved that the Moroccan context is not a promising ground for implementing Web 2.0 tools in teaching practices as 93,62% of the respondents declared that there are challenges that hinder the integration of Web 2.0 tools in English language teaching. These challenges as reported by teachers are restricted to their lack of knowledge about the integration of Web 2.0 tools in language teaching, the lack of digital tools in classrooms, and their negative attitudes toward the integration of Web 2.0 tools in teaching practices.

11. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, some pedagogical recommendations are directed to educational policy makers and Moroccan EFL high school teachers.

For educational policy makers, there is an immense need to design free professional development programs which provide effective training about Web 2.0 tools and their integration in language teaching practices for Moroccan high school teachers.

In addition, it is high time for policy maker to transform the traditional classrooms into digital ones where teachers find the necessary materials which facilitate the integration of Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices.

For Moroccan high school teachers, there is a need to go through self-professional development to construct basic knowledge on the use of Web 2.0 in teaching and learning if their institutions do not offer any opportunities for professional development. Moreover, an urgent call is directed to EFL teachers to integrate digital technologies in their teaching practices to meet the needs of the 21st century digital learner.

12. Conclusion

The present study aims at investigating the integration of Web 2.0 tools among EFL high school teachers in English language teaching. Doing so, both qualitative and quantitative data was used to answer research questions and meet the objectives of this study. The findings of the study revealed that Moroccan high school teachers are not in a high use of Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices due to certain challenges that hinder the integration of these tools in English language teaching. Based on the findings of this study, some pedagogical implications were directed to Moroccan educational policy makers and EFL teachers who are in an immense need to integrate Web 2.0 tools in their teaching practices to meet the needs of the 21st century learner.

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