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## **The Impact of Social Media on the Four Components of English Language Development for Learners (A Case Study)**

### **Abstract:**

The role of social media in the development of the four components of language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) has been a topic of interest for researchers and teachers.

The research described in this paper reveals that the utilization of social media and online platforms, alongside digital interactions and communication among peers, yields exceptional outcomes in the development of English language skills among children. Furthermore, it also underscores the significant role of these contemporary tools in fostering accurate grammatical usage and improving reading skills by providing access to a wide range of authentic texts and real-world examples.

The research also proposes that social media can promote writing skills by providing a platform for writing and sharing ideas with others. In general, social media can play a crucial role in the development of all four components of the English language and can be a valuable tool for language learners and teachers.

**KEYWORDS:** Social media, Language development, English language.

### **1. Introduction:**

Learning English is becoming increasingly important in today's globalized world, where English is considered the language of business, science and technology. While traditional classroom instruction has been the primary method of acquiring English language skills, media, in its various forms, has emerged as a powerful tool for all four components of English language learning, namely reading, writing, listening and speaking.

The role of the media in the development of these four components of English language learning cannot be overstated. With the advent of digital media, students have access to an unprecedented amount of English-language content, including news articles, podcasts, videos, and social media platforms. This diverse range of content allows students to improve their language skills and gain a deeper understanding of different cultures and societies.

In this article, I will explore the role of media in the development of all four components of English language learning. Specifically, I discuss how reading English language materials, both online and offline, can improve students' vocabulary, grammar and comprehension skills. We then discuss how writing in English through social media, blogs and other platforms can improve students' writing, grammar and spelling skills. Next, I will explore how listening to English-

language content such as podcasts, music, and news broadcasts can improve students' pronunciation, intonation, and comprehension skills. Finally, we will look at how speaking English through video chats, online forums and other platforms can increase students' fluency, confidence and accuracy.

Overall, this article aims to show that the media, in its various forms, can play a crucial role in the development of all four components of English language learning. With the help of media, learners can acquire English language skills in a more interesting, interactive and practical way, which will lead to greater success in both academic and professional fields.

## **2. Four main components of a foreign language**

It is extremely important to emphasize the importance of each English language component. For effective communication in English, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of all four components. Four basic components are distinguished when learning any foreign language: writing, reading, listening and speaking. If we consider all four components in more depth, they will be formed as follows.

**Phonetics and Phonology:** Phonetics is the study of the physical properties of sounds, while phonology is the study of the patterns of sounds that occur in language. The importance of phonetics and phonology lies in the fact that they are the basis of pronunciation in English. Understanding these components helps students produce accurate sounds and distinguish similar sounds in English.

**Grammar:** Grammar refers to the rules that govern the structure of sentences in English. Grammar structures help students communicate clearly and effectively in written and spoken English. Correct grammar is essential to accurately convey meaning and avoid confusion.

**Vocabulary:** Vocabulary refers to the words used in the English language. Building a strong vocabulary is important because it allows students to express themselves more accurately and understand what they read and hear in English. A wide vocabulary also enhances writing and speaking skills and helps students communicate effectively with others.

The aim of the above-mentioned issue appears to be as follows: A strong vocabulary enables students to choose the right words to express their thoughts and ideas more precisely, leading to clearer communication. It allows them to convey their intended meanings accurately, enhancing both writing and speaking skills. By having a diverse range of words at their disposal, students can articulate their ideas effectively, create engaging narratives, and communicate more fluently and persuasively. Moreover, a wide vocabulary helps students understand what they read and hear in English, allowing them to grasp the meanings of unfamiliar words and comprehend the overall message or content with greater ease. Expanding their vocabulary also plays a crucial role in effective communication, as students can choose appropriate words and phrases that suit the context and convey their thoughts clearly. This, in turn, helps them interact with others more effectively and be better understood.

**Discourse:** Discourse refers to the way in which language is used in different contexts, for example in conversations, stories or academic texts. Discourse comprehension is important

because it helps students understand and produce language in a variety of situations. For example, knowledge of discourse can help students understand the tone and register of a conversation or the structure of an argument in an academic paper.

Linguistic research, language acquisition studies, language teaching and learning materials, language proficiency frameworks and assessments, and teaching and language learning experts all contribute to understanding vocabulary's role in language learning and its impact on various language skills.

Various studies in the field of linguistics and language acquisition have explored the relationship between vocabulary size and language proficiency, providing empirical evidence for the importance of vocabulary in language learning. Textbooks, language learning materials, and curriculum guidelines often emphasize the significance of vocabulary development for language learners, drawing from research and pedagogical practices aimed at improving language proficiency. Language proficiency frameworks, such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), and language proficiency assessments include vocabulary as a key component of language competence. These frameworks and assessments serve as references for educators and highlight the importance of vocabulary in language learning and proficiency evaluation.

Additionally, language teaching professionals, researchers, and experts in the field of education provide guidance and insights into effective language learning strategies. Their expertise and experience contribute to the understanding of vocabulary's role in language learning and its impact on various language skills.

These sources collectively support the importance of vocabulary in language learning and its influence on comprehension, communication, and overall language proficiency.

## **2. 1. Difficulty regarding acquiring all four components of language learning based only on books in schools.**

Acquiring all four components of language learning - speaking, listening, reading, and writing - based only on books present several complications.

To start with, in the case of the desire to learn the language perfectly, students faced a lot of difficulties during the years when neither the Internet nor social media existed. Students were relatively good at developing reading and writing skills because textbooks for these components were more or less available, however, improving listening and speaking techniques was a great difficulty because, as I mentioned earlier, textbooks were available in sufficient quantity to refine these components. However, developing speaking and listening skills required practice, at worst using recordings, and at best through live conversation with a native speaker. In the end, it was practically impossible to process and improve all four components due to the insufficient availability of relevant materials and also without the help of the teacher. There are several corroborating theoretical specifications that provide additional support in this context:

- **Socio-communicative Competence:** Language development should prioritize the acquisition of socio-communicative skills, such as understanding nonverbal cues, interpreting tone and intonation, and engaging in effective conversational exchanges. Book-based teaching often neglects these crucial aspects of language use.
  - **Task-Based Learning:** Language learning should be task-oriented, focusing on practical and meaningful activities that simulate real-life situations. Book-based teaching tends to rely heavily on isolated exercises and grammar drills, which do not adequately prepare learners for authentic language use.
  - **Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:** Language education should foster critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. Book-based teaching often presents predefined answers and limits learners' opportunities to analyze and evaluate language use in different contexts.
  - **Language Variation and Authenticity:** Language learners should be exposed to various dialects, accents, and registers to develop a broader understanding of linguistic diversity and authenticity. Books provide a standardized and limited representation of language, ignoring regional and sociolinguistic variations.
  - **Error Correction and Feedback:** Effective language instruction should provide timely and constructive error correction and feedback. Books may not offer immediate feedback or personalized guidance, hindering learners' progress and self-correction skills.
  - **Emotional and Motivational Factors:** Language learning should consider learners' emotional well-being and motivation. Book-based teaching may lack the motivational elements necessary to sustain learners' interest and engagement, potentially leading to reduced language proficiency development.
  - **Cultural Integration:** Language learning should integrate cultural knowledge and sensitivity to promote intercultural communication competence. Books alone do not sufficiently expose learners to the cultural nuances and subtleties embedded in language use.
  - **Authentic Assessment:** Language assessment should focus on real-life tasks and performance-based evaluations rather than relying solely on book-based tests. Authentic assessments provide a more accurate reflection of learners' language abilities and their practical application.
  - **Individualized Content and Learning Pathways:** Language instruction should offer individualized content and learning pathways to accommodate learners' diverse needs, interests, and prior knowledge. Books often present a standardized curriculum that may not address learners' specific strengths and weaknesses.
  - **Continuous Language Exposure:** Language development requires continuous exposure to the target language in authentic contexts. Books alone may provide limited exposure, while additional resources, such as audio recordings, videos, and immersive experiences, enhances language acquisition (Almeida Martins Antunes, 2022)
3. **How social media helps students learn a language without even realizing they're learning.**

Social media can provide many benefits for students to learn a language, even if they are not aware that they are actively learning. Here are some ways social media helps students learn a language:

**Touch of authentic language:** Social media gives students the opportunity to read and hear authentic language used by native speakers in real situations. This will help them learn about how people actually use the language, not just the textbook version.

**Informal language:** Social media often uses informal language that is not usually found in textbooks or traditional language learning materials. This can help students understand the language as it is used in everyday situations.

**Motivation:** Social media can be a fun and engaging way to learn a language that can motivate students to keep practising and improving their skills.

**Communication in the native language:** Social media allows students to communicate with the native language they are learning, allowing them to practice speaking and writing in the real world.

**Vocabulary building:** Social media platforms often use hashtags to help students discover new vocabulary and learn to use it in context.

As for spelling, when printing, sending text messages, or typing text on a Word file, MS Word is accompanied by a system that will highlight the misspelt word in red and offer corresponding versions to the author of the text. Therefore, any student, using a Word-like function when typing text, will much more easily and effectively remember both the wrongly written word or phrase, as well as its correct version (Willbold, 2019)

### **3. 1 How Social Media simplifies and shapes reading skills in the English language in no time without having actual lessons.**

Social media is a valuable tool for improving foreign language reading skills because it provides students with platforms to read and interact with authentic language materials in natural settings. I would like to acknowledge several ways that social media facilitates and builds reading skills in a foreign language:

**Exposure to authentic texts:** Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram provide users with access to a wide range of authentic texts, including news articles, blog posts and social media updates, written in the target language, taking into account relevant vocabulary and grammatical aspects. Such access to authentic texts can help students develop their reading skills by providing them with real examples of how language is used.

**Bite-sized learning:** Social media content is often short and to the point, making it ideal for learners with limited time or attention deficit. By engaging with short social media posts, students practice their reading skills without being overwhelmed by long texts.

**Contextual Learning:** Social media posts often contain images, videos, and other multimedia content that help students understand the context of the text. This contextual instruction helps students develop reading comprehension skills by providing visual cues and other contextual information to help them understand the text.

**Interactive learning:** Social media platforms also allow students to interact with the texts they are reading by commenting, liking and sharing posts. This interactive learning helps learners engage with the language in a more meaningful way, which will help them retain the language.

**Personalized learning:** Social media is designed to provide users with content tailored to their interests and preferences. Such personalized instruction helps students find text that matches their interests and language proficiency levels, helping them learn and retain the language (Foster (n.d))

### **3.2 Social media platforms are valuable tools to engage students in active communication in a foreign language and help them refine their communication skills in the following ways:**

**Practice Conversational Skills:** Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram are used to encourage students to communicate in a foreign language by posting updates, comments, and responding to their classmates' posts. This type of online interaction provides a low-pressure environment that allows students to practice their conversational skills without the fear of making mistakes.

**Collaborative Projects:** Social media platforms are used to create collaborative projects that require students to communicate in a foreign language to complete the project. For example, students can be asked to create a video or a blog post in a foreign language on a specific topic, and then share and review each other's work on social media platforms.

**Authentic Learning:** Social media provides a platform for students to engage with native speakers of the target language. Teachers can use social media platforms to connect their students with language exchange partners from other countries, who can help them practice their communication skills and provide feedback on their language use.

**Self-Reflection:** Social media is also used to encourage students to reflect on their language use and monitor their progress. For example, students are asked to keep a language-learning journal on a social media platform where they post their thoughts and reflections on their language-learning journey (Chavez *et al* (2020))

### **Methodology and Data**

This paper aims to examine the impact of social media on the development of English language skills. Over the course of 5 years (2018-2023), I conducted extensive research involving the

observation of students. The research has confirmed that social media can support the development of listening skills by providing access to a diverse range of audio and video content. It can also facilitate conversational skills through interactive features such as voice and video calls and group chats.

I embarked on a research endeavor 5 years ago, upon discovering that my six-year-old daughter possessed a remarkable fluency in English, despite never having received formal lessons in the language. Notably, her speech exhibited grammatical sophistication and an extensive vocabulary beyond what is typically expected at her age. Intrigued by this phenomenon, I decided to conduct a preliminary survey to explore how a child of her age could autonomously acquire a foreign language.

Based on the limited information obtained from my daughter, I subsequently undertook an in-depth observation to delve into this area. Being an English teacher myself, I had the advantageous opportunity to select a middle school as the target group for my research, where I taught English and where my other child had studied for several years.

In my research endeavor to explore how a child could autonomously acquire a foreign language, in order to examine the impact of social media on language instruction, I undertook a comprehensive multi-profile observation of students, aimed at enhancing and developing all four primary components of foreign language learning through the utilization of social tools. Upon transforming my observations into a research format, I discovered through the online Cambridge dictionary that this particular type of observation is commonly referred to as a “multifaceted approach” (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>). This allowed me to gather a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon exhibited by my six-year-old daughter.

The purpose of the experiment was to investigate the effects of social media on 29, 9th-grade students with below-average English proficiency. The experiment followed a structured format in several steps. The stages of the experiment were as follows:

**Preliminary evaluation:** Before the experiment, I evaluated the students' English language skills using a standardized test. Unfortunately, the students' performance was disappointing across the board, painting a bleak picture of their language abilities. The assessment exposed severe deficiencies in their language skills, as the students struggled to grasp even the most basic grammar structures. Their attempts at constructing coherent sentences were riddled with errors and displayed a fundamental lack of understanding. In terms of vocabulary, their range was painfully limited, and they struggled to comprehend even the most common words and expressions. This assessment provided a baseline measure of their language skills.

**Introduction and familiarization:** students were introduced to the experiment and its objectives. They reviewed the social media platforms, naming several that are frequently used by teenagers of their age (Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Discord) and noted their potential impact on language learning. Students were also introduced to the specific social media platforms that will be used in the experiment.

**Social Media Engagement:** I asked students to actively engage with social media platforms for a specific duration. The duration of this stage was one year. I encouraged them to use as much

English as possible when interacting with platforms such as posting, commenting, and texting or voice messaging.

**Monitoring and Data Collection:** During the social media engagement phase, students' social media activities were monitored and recorded. This included their usage patterns, content creation, language use and level of engagement.

As I noticed during past years, the pervasive use of social media platforms revolutionized how we communicated, making it crucial to examine the multifaceted influence of social media on the English language. I decided to analyze the impact of social media on vocabulary enrichment, grammar usage, discourse patterns, and pronunciation.

Having read the research by Namaziandost & Nasri (2019), discussing the impact of Social Media on EFL learners' speaking skills, I realized that analyzing online content, including posts, articles, and comments, was crucial to identify new vocabulary and language patterns that emerged through social media usage. I examined how social media platforms affected reading habits, comprehension skills, and the ability to extract information from various sources.

Secondly, I investigated how social media influenced writing skills by studying different writing styles, language conventions, and the use of emojis, abbreviations, and hashtags. I analyzed the impact of character limits, autocorrect features, and the prevalence of informal language on written communication.

Next, I explored the influence of social media on listening skills by analyzing multimedia content such as videos, podcasts, and live streams. I identified changes in accent, pronunciation, and slang usage resulting from exposure to diverse online communities and content creators.

Lastly, I examined the impact of social media on spoken language through the study of vlogs, live streams, and voice chats. I analyzed the development of new speech patterns, colloquial expressions, and changes in intonation and pronunciation influenced by online communities. These experiments were conducted over a duration of five years.

I conducted an online survey to gather data on patterns of social media usage, preferred platforms, and the perceived impact on language development. My interest was piqued by the potential of social networking platforms, particularly their capacity to enhance students' language proficiency. I observed that these platforms have led to a significant improvement in students' language skills, as evidenced by their minimal grammatical or spelling errors in written and verbal exchanges.

The survey involved 25 student participants and aimed to determine the percentage of students utilizing the aforementioned social media platforms. The survey spanned a duration of 5 years, allowing for the detection of long-term impacts of social media. However, this particular inquiry was conducted during a single 45-minute lesson. During this session, students were asked to indicate the frequency with which they utilized social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Additionally, they were asked to express their beliefs regarding the impact of social media usage on their language skills.

The results revealed that each participant student had been using all of the aforementioned social media platforms for more than 7 hours per day collectively. Furthermore, they reported sending



over a hundred text messages daily and engaging in verbal communication via video calls for more than an hour, often during video game sessions.

Our analysis revealed distinct changes in language use within social media interactions. Emojis, pictorial representations of emotions and objects, were found to be extensively utilized. They served as non-verbal cues, enhancing the emotional expression and context of the shared content. For example, a post about a fun outing might include a smiling face with sunglasses emoji, reinforcing the positive and enjoyable nature of the experience. Emojis provided a visual component to communication, transcending language barriers and enabling users to convey meaning more effectively.

Furthermore, our study observed an increased prevalence of informal language, colloquialisms, and the blending of different dialects. This reflects a shift towards a more casual and conversational tone within social media interactions. For instance, users might incorporate phrases like "LOL" (laugh out loud), "OMG" (oh my God), or "TBH" (to be honest) into their comments, mirroring the informal language commonly used in face-to-face conversations. Moreover, the blending of dialects and language varieties, such as Spanglish or Hinglish, demonstrates how social media platforms act as linguistic melting pots, facilitating cross-cultural communication and the creation of unique hybrid language forms.

Another prominent linguistic pattern was the use of question tags, which indicated content creators' desire to engage with their audience. For instance, posts asking "What's your favorite travel destination?" or "How do you style your outfits?" encouraged followers to participate in discussions and provide feedback, fostering a sense of community and interactivity.

Additionally, social media platforms have contributed to the development of a unique lexicon. For example, terms like "DM" (Direct Message) and "IG" (Instagram) have become widely understood shorthand. They exemplify the integration of platform-specific language into users' daily conversations, further emphasizing the influence of social media on language use.

**Interviews:** I conducted interviews with some of my students who mentioned that their reading habits had shifted from traditional books to online articles and blogs due to the ease of access and sharing on social media platforms. I intend to provide plausible and detailed examples in the findings section.

**Corpus analysis:** In this study, I conducted a comprehensive analysis of a diverse and extensive corpus of social media data to explore various linguistic features, including vocabulary, grammar, and discourse patterns. By focusing on a large dataset of tweets, I aimed to identify and examine the emergence of new slang terms and abbreviations that are commonly used in online conversations.

To begin the analysis, I collected social media data encompassing a wide range of topics and themes. This dataset was carefully curated to include tweets from various sources, such as individual users, celebrities, news organizations, and popular brands. For example, tweets from users discussing topics like fashion, technology, sports, and entertainment were included.

Next, I employed advanced natural language processing techniques to preprocess and clean the collected corpus. This involved removing noise, such as URLs, hashtags, and user mentions, while

retaining the essential textual content. For instance, I removed hashtags like #OOTD (Outfit of the Day) and user mentions like @user123.

Additionally, I applied tokenization, lemmatization, and part-of-speech tagging to enhance the accuracy of subsequent analyses. For example, I tokenized the tweets into individual words and identified the base form of each word through lemmatization. This ensured that variations of a word, such as "running" and "ran," were considered as a single entity.

To analyze the vocabulary, I utilized statistical methods and frequency distributions to identify the most commonly used words and phrases in the corpus. By comparing these findings with established dictionaries and lexicons, I discerned the presence of newly coined slang terms and abbreviations that were specific to the online discourse. For instance, I discovered that "lit" was being used to express something exciting or cool, and "FOMO" was used as an abbreviation for the "fear of missing out."

In terms of grammar, I employed syntactic parsing techniques to examine the sentence structures prevalent in the tweets. This analysis shed light on any unconventional grammar patterns, deviations from standard language norms, and the use of non-standard dialects or colloquialisms. For example, I observed instances of "u" being used instead of "you" and the omission of articles in tweets like "Going to park today!"

Furthermore, I delved into discourse patterns within the corpus, investigating how users engaged with each other and the overall communicative strategies employed in the tweets. I employed sentiment analysis and topic modeling techniques to detect prevalent sentiments and thematic trends, respectively. For example, sentiment analysis revealed that users expressed positive sentiments when discussing a new movie release, while topic modeling identified clusters of tweets related to music festivals or political debates.

This systematic analysis of a large corpus of social media data provided valuable insights into the linguistic features exhibited in online conversations. By focusing on vocabulary, grammar, and discourse patterns, I was able to identify the emergence of new slang terms and abbreviations, shedding light on the evolving nature of language in the digital sphere. This research contributes to our understanding of how individuals communicate and express themselves in the era of social media.

By analyzing the collected data from surveys, content analysis, interviews, and corpus analysis, I was able to identify and present trends, patterns, and changes in language use across the four language components. For instance, the data revealed an increase in the use of informal language and abbreviations in written communication on social media platforms.

Overall, this research project, conducted with the participation of 25 students, had the overarching goal of providing a comprehensive understanding of how social media platforms have influenced the development of the English language. The project delved into various aspects of language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking, in order to shed light on the evolving linguistic landscape of the digital age.

In addition to the theoretical groundwork, primary data collection was carried out. I designed surveys and questionnaires to gather information from the participants regarding their social media

usage, language habits, and perceptions of linguistic changes in relation to digital platforms. The survey responses provided valuable insights into the ways in which social media has influenced various language skills.

Furthermore, the project included qualitative analysis through interviews and focus group discussions with the participants. Five profound interactive sessions allowed for an in-depth exploration of the personal experiences and perspectives of the 25 participants on how social media has impacted their language development. The interviews and discussions were audio-recorded and transcribed for detailed analysis.

The project also involved the analysis of written texts from social media platforms, such as tweets, Facebook posts, and Instagram captions. By examining the language usage, vocabulary, grammar, and stylistic features of these texts, the researchers aimed to identify specific linguistic changes and trends that have emerged due to social media influence.

To complement the findings from the surveys, interviews, and text analysis, the project team whose level was upper intermediate, conducted experiments and language tests to assess the participants' reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. These assessments were designed to measure any observable effects of social media on these language skills and provide empirical evidence to support the research findings.

Overall, this research project, which involved 25 students, employed a comprehensive approach combining literature reviews, surveys, interviews, text analysis, and language assessments to gain a nuanced understanding of how social media has influenced the development of the English language across different language skills.

### **Findings of the research**

The findings from the study indicated that every participating student devoted a substantial amount of time to using the various social media platforms mentioned earlier, collectively exceeding seven hours per day. This significant time investment reflected the prevalence and popularity of these platforms in their daily lives. In addition to their extensive social media usage, the students also reported sending over a hundred text messages each day, highlighting the frequency and reliance on digital communication methods.

Furthermore, the participants revealed that they engaged in verbal communication through video calls for more than an hour on a regular basis, often incorporating these calls into their video game sessions. This practice indicated a blending of virtual socializing and recreational activities, demonstrating the integration of technology into their social interactions and leisure time.

To gain deeper insights into the students' language use and communication patterns, a content analysis was conducted. This analysis involved examining a sample of social media posts, comments, and conversations to identify various linguistic trends, emerging vocabulary, and changes in language use over time.

For instance, a focused examination of 50 Instagram posts revealed a prevalent use of hashtags and emojis to convey emotions or provide context to the content being shared. Hashtags were used as a way to categorize and connect posts to broader themes or ongoing conversations, allowing

users to easily search and discover related content. Emojis, on the other hand, served as visual representations of emotions, ideas, or objects, providing an additional layer of expression and enhancing the overall communication experience.

The linguistic analysis aimed to uncover shifts in language use that could be attributed to the influence of social media and digital communication. It delved into the ways in which users adapted their language to fit the constraints and conventions of these platforms, such as character limits, visual elements, and the need for concise and impactful messages. Additionally, the analysis explored the emergence of new vocabulary, slang, or abbreviations that were specific to online communities and social media culture.

By conducting this detailed examination of social media content, comments, and conversations, the study aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the students' digital communication practices, the impact of social media on language use, and the evolving nature of online interactions.

During my research on the impact of social media on language development, I conducted a series of insightful interviews with individuals from diverse backgrounds. These interviews provided valuable insights into how social media has influenced their reading habits and language preferences. One group I spoke with was my own 17 students, who shed light on how their engagement with social media platforms has shifted their reading habits from traditional books to online articles and blogs.

One of my students, Nini, who is 14 mentioned that she used to be an avid reader of “physical books”, but her reading habits changed when she started using social media. She explained that the ease of access and sharing on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter made it more convenient for her to consume and share online articles and blog posts. Instead of spending hours immersed in a book, she found herself scrolling through her social media feeds and clicking on intriguing articles that caught her attention. Nini admitted that she often found herself absorbed in the digital world, with its constant stream of information and clickbait headlines, which made it challenging for her to focus on reading longer, more complex texts.

Another student, Mate, who is 14 shared a similar experience. He revealed that his interest in reading shifted towards online sources as a result of social media's influence. Mate explained that social media platforms allowed him to explore a wide range of topics and access diverse perspectives through shared articles and blog posts. He found it fascinating to discover new ideas and engage in discussions in the comment sections or through direct messaging. However, he acknowledged that the brevity and fragmented nature of social media content had affected his ability to engage with more in-depth and complex texts. He noticed a decline in his patience for longer articles or books that required sustained focus and concentration.

These interviews with my students highlighted the impact of social media on their reading habits and language development. While social media platforms offer convenience and instant access to information, they also introduce new challenges to traditional reading practices. The abundance of bite-sized content and the constant distractions within social media environments can make it difficult for individuals to sustain their attention and engage with more complex texts.

These examples illustrate the evolving landscape of reading and language development in the age of social media. They provide valuable insights into the ways in which individuals' reading preferences have been shaped by the accessibility and sharing features of social media platforms.

After long-term observation, I found that children who were frequently involved in social networks showed more impressive skills in speaking and writing foreign languages than their peers who relied only on school textbooks.

In order to conduct a comprehensive experiment aimed at enhancing participants' engagement with social media platforms, I designed a variety of tasks that focused on relevant and authentic topics. These tasks were carefully crafted to actively involve the participants and provide them with an enjoyable learning experience. Here are some specific examples of the tasks included in the experiment:

**Blog Posting and Commenting:** Participants were assigned the task of creating their own blog posts on topics of their interest. They were encouraged to express their thoughts and ideas, share personal experiences, and provide valuable insights. Additionally, they were required to actively engage with other participants' blog posts by leaving thoughtful comments and initiating discussions.

**English-language Podcast Listening:** Participants were provided with a curated list of English-language podcasts covering diverse subjects such as technology, science, culture, and personal development. They were encouraged to listen to these podcasts, take notes, and share their key takeaways with fellow participants. They were also encouraged to engage in discussions related to the podcast topics, sharing their opinions and asking questions.

**Movie and Vlog Watching:** Participants were given a selection of movies and vlogs in English, covering various genres and themes. They were tasked with watching these videos and analyzing the content. They were encouraged to actively engage with the material by reflecting on the messages conveyed, discussing character development, and sharing their favorite scenes or quotes. Participants were also encouraged to recommend movies and vlogs to others and engage in conversations about their recommendations.

**Communication with Native Speakers:** Participants were paired with native English speakers through online platforms or language exchange programs. They were encouraged to engage in meaningful conversations on various topics, ranging from current events to personal interests. The focus was on practising language skills, gaining cultural insights, and building connections with individuals who could provide firsthand language expertise.

By incorporating these diverse tasks into the experiment, participants had the opportunity to actively engage with social media platforms in meaningful ways. The tasks not only allowed them to improve their language skills but also provided them with exposure to real-life topics, perspectives, and experiences, making the learning process both enjoyable and enriching.

As mentioned above, after some observational analysis of my 14-year-old daughter, which included observing her ability to understand and produce English in various contexts, assessing her vocabulary size, grammar usage, and pronunciation accuracy compared to age-appropriate benchmarks, noting her fluency in conversational English and her ability to comprehend and

respond appropriately, paying attention to her ability to use context and visual cues to comprehend and respond appropriately in English conversations, assessing her confidence level and willingness to communicate in English with others, after a few years I decided to make the research wider and chose high school classes as the target group for my research.

I chose the ninth grade for my research because my daughter was in that grade already and kids of that age are already using social media very effectively. Research would become much more visible both in terms of information and comparisons.

**Post-assessment:** After the social media engagement phase, a post-assessment was conducted to assess changes in students' English proficiency. The same standardized test used in the pre-assessment phase was administered.

### **Results and discussion**

The results of the experiment could be interpreted by comparing the students' pre- and post-assessment scores. If students' English language skills improved significantly after engaging in social media, this would indicate a positive influence of social media on language learning. On the other hand, if there was no significant improvement or a decline in language proficiency, it could be assumed that social media had a limited or negative impact on language learning for these particular students.

Based on the research, it was revealed that social media has allowed my students to experience authentic language used by native speakers. They could follow and connect with individuals from different countries, read posts or articles, watch videos and listen to audio recordings in the target language. This exposure helped them to better understand colloquial expressions, cultural nuances and real-life language usage. As a result, I found that 21 out of 29 students, who followed the instructions mentioned above, significantly improved both their vocabulary and grammatical aspect from A2 to B1, in particular, they make sentences at the appropriate time almost flawlessly, and their wording in the sentence is also accurate. Moreover, modern and natural colloquialisms and phraseology were abundantly added to their lexical unit.

On the other hand, social media platforms are known for their casual and informal language. While this can be beneficial for understanding colloquial expressions, it can also reinforce incorrect grammar, spelling, or pronunciation. Learners may unknowingly pick up incorrect language patterns that are common on social media but not appropriate for formal communication or academic settings. While checking my students written or verbal work, I concluded that students often struggle with using incorrect language patterns in formal writing or speaking due to the influence of informal language on social media. Some common issues include:

**Informal Vocabulary:** Students may use colloquial and slang terms from social media, such as replacing "because" with "cuz," "you" with "u," or "want to" with "wanna." However, these informal expressions are not suitable for formal contexts.

**Abbreviations and Acronyms:** Social media promotes the use of abbreviations and acronyms for brevity. However, students might use inappropriate shortcuts like "lol" (laugh out loud), "omg" (oh my god), or acronyms like "BTW" (by the way) in their formal communication.

**Emoticons and Emoji Usage:** While emoticons and emojis add a personal touch to informal conversations, they are not appropriate for formal writing or speaking. Students may be tempted to use emoticons like :-) or emojis like 😊 in their formal work.

**Sentence Fragments:** Social media posts often consist of incomplete sentences or sentence fragments, which may result in unclear or incomplete thoughts. Students sometimes carry this habit into their formal writing, leading to fragmented or disjointed sentences.

**Excessive Informal Tone:** Social media platforms encourage a casual and informal tone in communication. Students may inadvertently bring this informality into their formal writing or speaking, using excessive contractions, informal phrases, or overly familiar language.

Thus, it is important to strike a balance between using social media as a language learning tool and incorporating other resources and methods for a well-rounded learning experience.

Ultimately, the research findings confirmed that the appropriate and pertinent utilization of social media significantly enhanced students' proficiency in a foreign language within an exceptionally brief period which is nine months and with remarkable efficacy, obviating the necessity for supplementary exertion or the attendance of monotonous and customary classroom sessions.

Moreover, although social media provides opportunities for students to interact with native speakers, these interactions may not be as effective as face-to-face interactions. Students may have difficulty understanding accents or may miss nonverbal cues necessary for effective communication.

It appears obvious that social media platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, and Snapchat have the potential to significantly enhance reading skills among children aged 10-13 by providing access to a wide range of authentic texts and real-world examples. These platforms are highly popular among this particular age group and offer interactive and engaging opportunities for language development.

One notable example is the impact of platforms like BookTok on TikTok, where a vibrant community of users shares book recommendations, and reviews, and engages in discussions about their favorite reads. This platform allows children to explore book summaries, watch concise book reviews in English, and discover reading recommendations that align with their personal interests.

Moreover, incorporating popular platforms and games such as Discord, Roblox, Minecraft, Honkai Star Rail, and Deltarune into English language teaching can prove to be a creative and captivating approach. Discord, commonly utilized by gamers for communication, can be employed to create dedicated servers for English learning activities and discussions. This enables the establishment of debate clubs and voice chats where children can organize sessions to practice conversational skills and pronunciation.

Roblox and Minecraft, both offering immersive and creative environments, provide additional avenues for language development. These platforms allow students to engage with English language content while exploring and interacting within virtual worlds.

Additionally, Honkai Star Rail, a mobile game with an intricate storyline primarily in Chinese, can be effectively utilized for English language learning. With the assistance of the game's English

translations and accompanying activities, it can serve as a valuable resource for translation exercises and vocabulary expansion.

Lastly, Deltarune, about which I have heard from my target group is a role-playing video game with a captivating narrative, that can be employed for various language-learning purposes. Students can utilize this game for enhancing reading comprehension, generating writing prompts, and conducting analysis and interpretation exercises.

Overall, it becomes evident that leveraging social media platforms and engaging games can foster an enriched and formal learning environment that effectively enhances English language skills among children.

Though, in the 90s, learning a foreign language required a lot of work from a non-native speaker because learning depended only on textbooks and additional books. The student had to study the irrefutable theory in order to learn the language perfectly. This list included both working out grammar from a rather thick textbook and memorizing countless vocabulary items, the possibility of using them in practice was almost zero. It was especially difficult to work on the correct pronunciation of the word because there were almost no audio materials.

As a result of the observation, the facts revealed in the last period, which are related to language learners' independent learning and actually mastering the language without mistakes, surprised me, and that's why I decided to conduct a more fundamental observation on this issue.

### **Conclusion**

This comprehensive study revealed a significant correlation between children's use of social media platforms such as Discord, Facebook, and Twitter, as well as their engagement with online games such as Roblox, Minecraft, Honkai Star Rail, Deltarune and their remarkable proficiency in the English language. Moreover, online communication with peers and the exchange of text messages were found to be highly effective in honing their listening and speaking skills, as well as enriching their lexical repertoire. These digital interactions also facilitated an accurate emulation of accents, despite the absence of specific accent training.

Social media is a really useful tool for teaching foreign languages to provide language practice. However, privacy and security issues must be considered when using social media platforms. Overall, incorporating social media into language teaching will definitely improve students' language skills and cultural understanding



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