



The Role of Social Media in English Language Learning in Libya

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of social media on English language acquisition among Libyan students, focusing on its effects on language learning, motivation, and engagement. The results demonstrate that social media platforms are essential for English learners, offering significant access to linguistic resources, authentic communication chances, and interactive educational experiences. Data indicate that students substantially enhance their vocabulary, listening comprehension, and pronunciation through social media while acquiring more confidence in spoken English. The study emphasizes the motivational elements of social media, wherein features like quizzes, multimedia content, and real-time engagement with native speakers promote students' practice and improvement of language abilities.

Despite its advantages, the study also identifies several challenges associated with using social media for educational purposes. Distractions, exposure to informal language, and difficulties in identifying credible learning resources hinder effective language learning. Furthermore, the overwhelming nature of information available on social media can sometimes hinder structured and goal-oriented learning.

A comparison between social media and traditional learning methods reveals a preference for digital platforms due to their accessibility, updated content, and interactive nature. However, while students recognize the benefits of social media, the study suggests that a blended learning approach, incorporating both structured classroom instruction and social media tools, may yield the most effective results.

The study concludes that social media has a transformative impact on learning English in Libya. It offers a dynamic, engaging, and flexible environment for language acquisition but requires guidance and structured implementation to maximize its educational potential. Based on these findings, the study recommends that educators and policymakers integrate social media into formal education while addressing its challenges to ensure a more effective and comprehensive learning experience. Future research should explore strategies to optimize social media use in English language education, focusing on balancing engagement with academic rigor.

Keywords: Social Media, English Language Learning

1. Introduction

The 21st century is frequently considered the age of technology, where advancements significantly shape various aspects of life, including education. Technology has rendered learning more accessible, interactive, and engaging by dismantling geographical obstacles and delivering education directly to

students' doorsteps. Digital tools, such as mobile devices, online platforms, and educational applications, provide students instant access to information anytime and anywhere. According to Raja and Nagasubramani (2018), technology serves as a foundation for economic growth and plays an essential role in education, particularly in language learning. Interactive platforms, virtual discussions, and multimedia tools cater to individual needs, allowing learners to practice language skills more enjoyably and effectively.

Social media has become a pivotal tool in English language education by offering platforms where students can interact with native speakers and access diverse content. Abbas et al. (2019) argue that social media supports students during the learning process and is a helpful resource for educators. Students build confidence and fluency through regular engagement while enhancing their linguistic skills.

Social media is widely available and used by people of all ages, from young children to senior citizens, demonstrating the progress of contemporary technology. Its integration into English language learning provides numerous benefits. Students can connect with native speakers and be exposed to contemporary expressions and linguistic styles, which help them acquire practical language skills. Moreover, social media offers access to valuable educational resources, including interactive videos and live discussions, enriching the learning process. Kabilan et al. (2010) emphasize that using social media effectively can accelerate language acquisition and make the learning experience more engaging.

2. Statement of the Problem

Sari and Abrar (2024) highlight the growing interest in integrating technology into English language education due to its potential to enhance learning outcomes. However, its implementation poses challenges, including limited access to technology, insufficient digital literacy, and pedagogical obstacles.

In Libya, students face additional challenges when using social media for English learning. The researcher observed several issues, such as:

1. Lack of clarity in learning materials provided by teachers in both audio and text formats.
2. Difficulty in pronouncing English words.
3. Limited English vocabulary.
4. Reduced opportunities for practical application.
5. Challenges in developing writing skills.

Some students still rely on traditional learning methods due to a lack of interest in innovative approaches. Additionally, the informal nature of communication on social media may hinder grammatical accuracy and vocabulary development. For instance, students often adopt abbreviations and slang commonly used in online communication, such as replacing "the" with "d" or "you" with "u," which negatively impacts their ability to use proper English in academic and professional settings.

The excessive use of informal language in social media communication has also led to communication barriers and a decline in language proficiency. Many students struggle with grammar and fail to develop the ability to communicate effectively in formal contexts.

3. Aim and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to look into the impact of social media on English language learning,

concentrating on its influence on the language competencies of Libyan students, encompassing reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. It explores the positive aspects of social media, such as exposure to real-world English, interaction with native speakers, and access to diverse linguistic content. It also identifies English department students' challenges, including distractions and exposure to informal or incorrect language. Ultimately, the research seeks to provide insights into how social media can effectively improve English language proficiency.

4. Research Questions

In order to accomplish these goals, the study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How often do Libyan students use social media as a tool for learning English?
2. What positive or negative impacts does social media have on Libyan students' English language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking)?
3. Does using social media improve Libyan students' ability to interact in English in everyday situations?

5. Literature Review

This section reviews previous studies on the impact of social media on students' English language learning, the challenges they face, and the solutions to overcome these problems. It also explores strategies to help students succeed academically while improving their English language skills.

6. The Use of Technology in Education

Technology's effect permeates practically every domain, with education being one of the most profoundly affected sectors. Education, in its most expansive definition, is a learning process whereby knowledge, skills, and habits are transmitted between generations via instruction, training, and study. Today, educational technology plays a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, leveraging information and communication technologies (ICT) for better outcomes. This systematic approach integrates modern tools to effectively conceptualize, implement, and evaluate educational processes.

Advancements in technology have made education more engaging and accessible. New software and gadgets continually emerge to improve learning experiences. Compared to traditional methods focused on rituals or customs, modern education emphasizes reading, writing, arithmetic, and critical thinking, supported by technological innovations [8]. However, applying technology in education raises specific concerns, as Puyo (2024) identified. These include issues like digital platforms, digital books, investment in educational technology, and the potential for technology-related distractions and addictions. Addressing these concerns is essential for adequately integrating technology in educational settings and comprehending its implications for educators and learners.

7. The Function of Technology in English Language Acquisition

Technology has become essential to English language acquisition within and beyond the classroom. It assists educators in modifying activities to improve the learning experience and allows students to cultivate their listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities. Ahmadi (2017) emphasizes the importance of teaching methods in facilitating language acquisition, while Becker (2000) notes that computers serve as essential instructional tools in well-equipped classrooms. Research by Clements and Sarama (2003) highlights the usefulness of appropriate technological materials, while Harmer (2007)

advocates for technology-based activities to foster cooperative learning. Moreover, multimedia tools, such as print texts, films, and the Internet, provide students with authentic materials to enhance linguistic knowledge and cultural context [5].

Modern technology has revolutionized English teaching methods by making lessons more engaging and productive [18]. Multimedia resources have replaced traditional blackboard-based teaching, offering students various ways to interact with vocabulary and language structures.

8. Social Media and English Language Learning

Educational institutions increasingly embrace technological advancements, including social media, to improve traditional teaching methods. Yunus and Suliman (2014) highlight the benefits of the Internet in enhancing English learners' fluency, while Haque (2023) underscores the role of social media in fostering real-time collaboration and global interaction. Social media platforms motivate students to learn by offering opportunities for peer feedback and access to native speakers, which improve their listening, speaking, and writing skills.

Students can also use social media tools such as YouTube, podcasts, and audiobooks to enhance their language skills. Creating English-focused groups on platforms like Facebook allows students to practice regularly and collaborate on tasks [17].

9. The Advantages and Disadvantages of Social Media in Language Learning

Social media is a powerful tool for language learning, but it comes with potential drawbacks. It enables students to access authentic materials, form study groups, and share educational resources. However, over-reliance on social media may lead to distractions, ineffective learning, or misuse of platforms for non-educational purposes. Effective utilization of social media necessitates a balance between harnessing its benefits, such as access to global resources and real-time input, and addressing its problems, like distractions and the absence of face-to-face engagement. Educators and parents must guide students on responsible usage to maximize the benefits of social media for learning [15].

10. Social Media Beyond the Writing Classroom

Zheng, Yim, and Warschauer (2018) explored the role of social media in supporting writing activities beyond formal classroom instruction. Their research highlights how social media platforms enable learners to engage in informal writing practices, such as microblogging and online journaling, which contribute to language development and self-expression. One significant benefit of using social media outside the classroom is enhancing digital literacy skills. By navigating and interacting on these platforms, learners develop essential competencies, including online communication, information evaluation, and critical thinking. These skills are vital in the digital age, enhancing language proficiency and preparing learners for future academic and professional challenges.

Similarly, Al-Jarrah, et al (2019) investigated the impact of social media on improving students' writing skills in English. Their study revealed that engaging in reading and writing activities on social media exposed students to diverse writing styles, genres, and vocabulary usage. Integrating social media into English education at the school level can significantly enhance students' writing abilities. Through authentic writing practice, peer collaboration, and access to real-world language use, students can develop their English writing proficiency while staying motivated and engaged.

11. Social Media and Distance Education in Teaching English

Pratiwi, , et al Kurniawan (2021) emphasized the capacity of social media as an effective instrument for enhancing remote education and overcoming the constraints of physical classroom environments. Using social media in distance education for teaching English offers numerous benefits, including improved communication, collaboration, multimedia resources, and exposure to authentic language and cultural content. By effectively leveraging these platforms, educators can design engaging and interactive learning experiences for students, irrespective of their geographical location. However, to maximize the potential of social media in teaching, educators must carefully plan and tailor their strategies to meet their learners' specific needs and objectives. Addressing connectivity issues, varying technological skills, and maintaining student engagement are essential to ensuring a productive online learning environment.

12. Research Methodology

A research design outlines the methods and procedures for effectively collecting and analyzing data to address research questions and problems.

This study investigates the impact of social media on learning English, with a specific focus on Libyan students enrolled in the English department at the university. The research adopts a correlational approach and utilizes a quantitative research design, employing a questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. Responses gathered from the questionnaires were analyzed to derive meaningful insights.

13. Sample and Instruments

This section details the sampling method and sample size. The study population consists of Libyan students in the English department, targeting a sample size of at least 50 participants. The sample was chosen to reflect the population representatively.

A quantitative research method was deemed most appropriate for exploring participants' perceptions and perspectives. Data was collected using a researcher-designed questionnaire tailored to examine the impact of social media on English learning among Libyan university students. The questionnaire addressed several dimensions, including social media usage patterns, benefits, challenges, motivation, and overall effectiveness in language learning.

14. Data Collection

Data collection was conducted through a questionnaire divided into four sections.

- A. **Demographic Information:** This section collected participant data, including gender, age, and academic semester.
- B. **Social Media Usage for Learning English:** This section utilized a Likert scale to capture participants' social media habits and preferences.
- C. **Motivation and Engagement:** This part assessed social media use's benefits and motivational aspects in English learning.
- D. **Challenges of Using Social Media:** The final section explored obstacles that hinder effective English learning via social media.

The questionnaire was distributed to at least 50 Libyan students, who received guidance to ensure clarity in responding. The data collection process spanned four days, during which participants were grouped

according to their academic semester (from the first to the eighth semester) to enhance the validity and reliability of the data.

15. Data Analysis Method

The study utilized statistical analysis through SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to ensure robust results. Various analytical techniques, including descriptive statistics and goodness-of-fit tests, were implemented to investigate the correlation between the independent variable (social media usage) and the dependent variable (English language learning), as well as Pearson correlation analysis and regression analysis.

Descriptive analysis provided detailed insights into respondents' characteristics, such as gender, age, and academic semester, and examined responses to the survey questions. Metrics such as means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were calculated to understand the influence of social media on English language learning among participants.

16. Results and Discussion

The study findings are based on responses from 50 Libyan students in the university's English department. The results explore students' language preferences, their confidence in using English in academic and daily contexts, and the challenges they face.

Key findings include:

- Factors influencing Libyan students' performance in learning English through social media.
- The difficulties encountered in applying English for academic purposes.

The results provide valuable insights into how social media can serve as both an enabler and a challenge in English language learning. The findings based on the questionnaire responses are summarized below:

A: Demographic Information and Its Relation to Social Media's Impact on English Language Learning

Table 1: Gender Distribution

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Male	17	34%
Female	33	66%
Total	50	100%

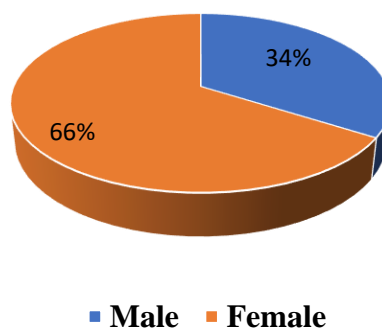


Fig 1: Percent of Gender

The gender distribution shows that **66% of the respondents are female**, while **34% are male**. This indicates a higher participation rate among female students, suggesting they might be more engaged in social media-based English learning or more active in responding to research studies. This gender disparity could also reflect differing attitudes toward using social media for educational purposes, which may influence the findings on social media's role in language learning.

Table 2: Age Distribution

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
18–20	34	68
21–23	12	24
24 and above	4	8
Total	50	100

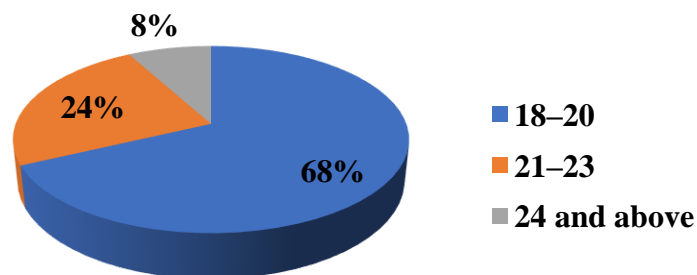


Fig 2: Percent of Age

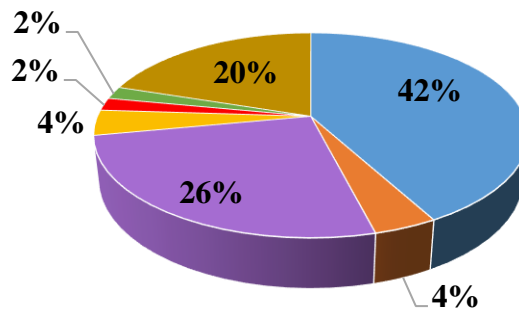
The age distribution highlights that:

- **68% of students are aged 18–20**, representing a significant majority.
- **24% fall within the age group of 21–23**, and **8% are 24 or older**.

The predominance of younger students suggests that this demographic is more inclined toward social media use, aligning with global trends of higher social media engagement among younger populations. This age group's familiarity with technology and preference for interactive multimedia content could enhance the effectiveness of social media as a tool for English language learning.

Table 3: Academic Year Distribution

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
First semesters	21	42
Second semesters	2	4
Third semesters	13	26
Fifth semesters	2	4
Sixth semesters	1	2
Seventh semesters	1	2
Eight semesters	10	20
Total	50	100



- First semesters
- Second semesters
- Third semesters
- Fifth semesters
- Sixth semesters
- Seventh semesters
- Eighth semesters

Fig 3: Percentage of Academic Year

The data indicates that:

- **42% of students are in their first semesters**, making up the largest group.
- **26% are in their third** and **20% are in their eighth semesters**.
- The remaining **12% are spread across other semesters**.

This distribution reveals a concentration of participants in their academic journey's early and final stages. First-semester students may explore new learning methods, including social media, while eighth-semester students may rely on such platforms to refine their skills and prepare for post-graduation challenges. The varying levels of academic maturity may influence how students perceive and use social media for English language learning.

Table 4: Daily Social Media Usage

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Less than 1 hour	7	14%
1-2 hours	10	20%
3-4 hours	9	18%
More than 4 hours	24	48%
Total	50	100%

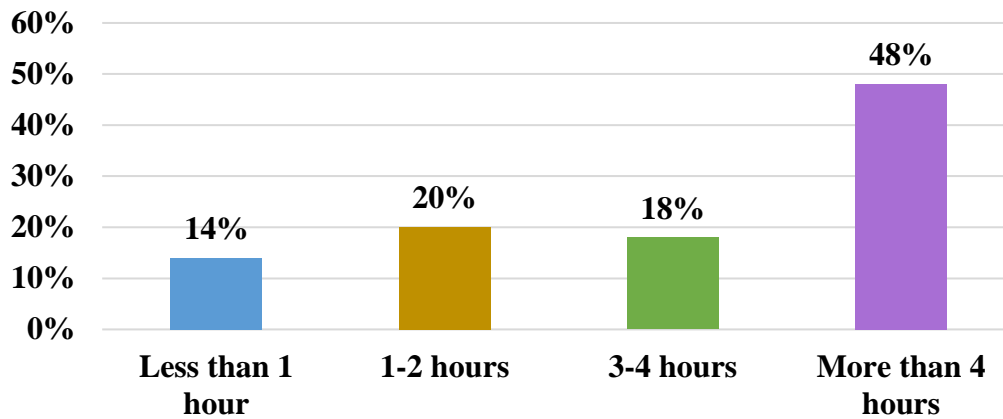


Fig 4: Percentage Daily Social Media Usage

The survey shows that:

- **48% of students spend more than 4 hours daily on social media**, making them heavy users.
- **20% use social media for 1–2 hours**, and **18% for 3–4 hours**.
- **Only 14% spend less than 1 hour daily**.

These findings suggest that most students are frequent social media users, which creates significant opportunities for leveraging these platforms for English learning. The heavy usage also implies a potential risk of distraction, highlighting the importance of structured and purposeful use of social media in educational contexts.

Table 5: Preferred Devices for Accessing Social Media

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Smartphone	41	82
Tablet	4	8
Laptop/Desktop	4	8
Other	1	2
Total	50	100

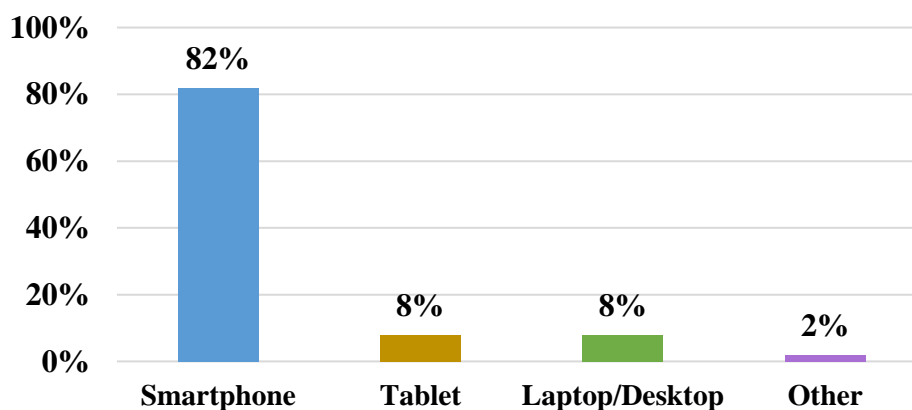


Fig 5: Percentage of the Preferred Devices for Accessing Social Media

The overwhelming majority (**82%**) of students access social media via smartphones, followed by tablets and laptops/desktops (each at **8%**) and other devices (**2%**). Smartphones' portability and accessibility make them the most convenient tool for engaging with social media platforms. This finding underlines the need for mobile-friendly learning resources to maximize students' engagement in English language acquisition.

Table 6: Social Media Platforms Used for Learning English

Valid	Frequency	Percent%
Facebook	2	4
YouTube	24	48
Instagram	11	22
Twitter	1	2
TikTok	8	16
Other	4	8
Total	50	100

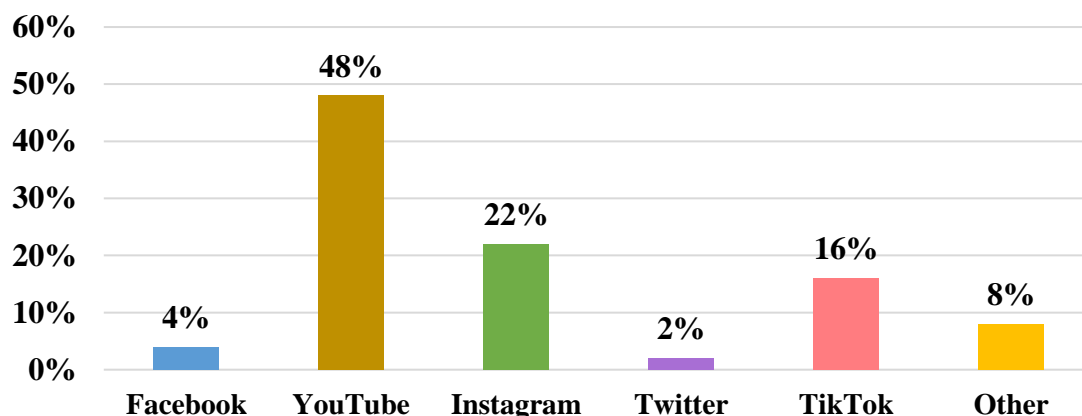


Fig 6: Percentage of the Social Media Platforms Used

The data reveals that:

- **48% of students use YouTube**, making it the most popular platform for English learning.
- **22% use Instagram**, and **16% rely on TikTok**.
- Other platforms like Facebook (**4%**) and Twitter (**2%**) have limited usage.
- **8% use other platforms**.

YouTube's popularity can be attributed to its vast array of free educational content, including tutorials, pronunciation guides, and grammar lessons. Instagram and TikTok's rise in usage reflects the increasing appeal of short, engaging content for younger audiences. These platforms provide an interactive and dynamic way for students to learn English, mainly through videos and creative content.

Table 7: Frequency of the Social Media Usage for Learning English

Question	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social media is an essential tool for learning English	46	40	12	2	0	1.72	0.834
Traditional resources are less accessible than social media platforms.	44	36	14	4	2	1.86	1.010
I often use social media to connect with native English speakers	24	30	20	16	10	2.64	1.382
Social media is my primary source of English learning materials	40	12	32	6	10	2.30	1.266
I spend significant time daily using social media for English learning	36	16	28	14	6	2.46	1.403

The analysis of Table 7 reveals key insights into the perceptions and usage patterns of social media among Libyan students for English language learning. A striking majority (86%) strongly agreed or agreed that social media is an essential tool for learning English, reflected in a mean score of 1.72 and a low standard deviation of 0.834. This finding underscores the critical role of social media in modern education, particularly in providing accessible and flexible learning opportunities. Similarly, 80% of respondents found social media platforms more accessible than traditional resources, with a slightly higher standard deviation (1.010), indicating minor response variability. On the other hand, only 54% agreed or strongly agreed that they often connect with native English speakers on social media, with a mean of 2.64 and a high standard deviation (1.382). This suggests that while the potential for interaction exists, all students may not fully utilize it. Additionally, 52% viewed social media as their primary source of English learning materials, and 52% reported spending significant time on social media for educational purposes, with standard deviations of 1.266 and 1.403, respectively, highlighting a diverse range of experiences.

Table 8: Frequency of the Benefits of Social Media in Learning English

Question	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social media has improved my vocabulary significantly	52	36	8	4	0	1.68	0.935
Social media has enhanced my grammar skills	44	30	12	10	4	2.06	1.284
Social media has helped me understand different accents	48	24	20	6	2	1.94	1.150

Watching videos on social media has improved my listening skills	52	24	16	6	2	1.86	1.143
Social media makes it easier to practice English speaking with confidence	46	32	18	2	2	1.82	0.941

Table 8 highlights the multifaceted benefits of social media in English language acquisition. Vocabulary improvement emerged as the most acknowledged benefit, with 88% agreeing or strongly agreeing, reflected in a mean score of 1.68 and a low standard deviation of 0.935. Similarly, 74% of students believed that social media enhanced their grammar skills, albeit with a slightly higher variability (mean = 2.06, SD = 1.284). Social media was also recognized for helping students understand different accents, as 72% agreed or strongly agreed. Watching videos was noted explicitly for improving listening skills, with a similar percentage of agreement (76%) and a mean of 1.86. Moreover, 78% of participants believed that social media enhances their confidence in speaking English, highlighting its significance in promoting interactive and engaging learning experiences.

Table 9: Frequency of the Motivation and Engagement

Question	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social media motivates me to learn English consistently	44	38	8	6	4	1.90	1.111
Interactive features like quizzes and polls keep me engaged	48	28	16	6	2	1.90	1.129
Social media content makes learning English more enjoyable	58	28	10	2	2	1.62	0.901
Social media encourages me to set new English learning goals	56	26	10	2	6	1.72	1.011
Cultural content inspires me to learn more about English-speaking countries	46	32	18	4	0	1.80	0.881

Table 9 demonstrates that social media is a significant motivator for English language learning among students. About 82% of participants concurred or strongly concurred that social media fosters continuous learning, shown by a mean score of 1.90 and a standard deviation of 1.111. Interactive features like quizzes and polls were equally influential, with 76% finding them engaging. Additionally, 86% of students noted that social media content makes learning more enjoyable, as evidenced by a mean score of 1.62 and the lowest standard deviation in this category (0.901). Furthermore, cultural content inspired 78% of students to explore English-speaking cultures, highlighting the platform's ability to merge linguistic and cultural learning.

Table 10: Frequency of the Challenges of Using Social Media

Question	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Distractions reduce my focus on English learning	38	28	20	12	2	2.12	1.118
Informal content affects my ability to learn proper English	30	28	22	6	14	2.38	1.227
It is hard to identify reliable English learning resources	52	24	10	6	8	1.92	1.226
Overwhelming information complicates English learning	46	24	16	4	10	2.02	1.186
Time constraints limit my ability to use social media effectively	38	28	24	4	6	2.10	1.111

Table 10 outlines the challenges students face when using social media for learning. Distractions were a prominent concern, with 66% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing, resulting in a mean score of 2.12 and a standard deviation of 1.118. The informal nature of the content was another challenge, as 58% felt it hindered their ability to learn proper English. Difficulty in identifying reliable resources was reported by 76% of students, with a mean score of 1.92 and a standard deviation of 1.226, reflecting moderate variability. Overwhelming information was also identified as a complicating factor, with 70% acknowledging this issue. Additionally, 66% cited time constraints as a barrier to practical social media usage, indicating the need for structured and time-efficient approaches.

Table 11: Frequency of the Comparison with Traditional Learning

Question	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social media is more effective than textbooks	46	24	14	6	10	2.06	1.252
Provides more up-to-date learning resources	60	16	16	4	4	1.76	1.117
Complements classroom learning effectively	64	24	10	2	0	1.50	0.763
Helps apply English skills in real-world situations	58	34	4	2	2	1.56	0.837
Preferred tool over traditional resources	72	18	4	2	4	1.46	0.908

Table 11 compares the effectiveness of social media with traditional learning methods. Most students (70%) agreed or strongly agreed that social media is more effective than textbooks, reflected in a mean score of 2.06 and a standard deviation of 1.252. Social media's ability to provide up-to-date resources was acknowledged by 76% of respondents, while 88% agreed that it complements classroom learning

effectively. Furthermore, 92% highlighted its role in applying English skills in real-world scenarios, with a low mean score of 1.56 and a standard deviation of 0.837. Notably, 90% of students preferred social media over traditional resources, with the lowest mean score in this category (1.46) and a standard deviation of 0.908, indicating strong consensus.

The results demonstrated that social media significantly impacts English language learning among Libyan students, offering diverse benefits such as vocabulary enhancement, motivation, and real-world application. However, challenges such as distractions and the reliability of content need to be addressed. These findings highlight the need to incorporate social media within formal education frameworks while addressing its limitations to maximize its potential as a learning tool.

17. Conclusion

This study's outcomes highlight social media's critical impact on English language learning among Libyan students. According to the findings, social media platforms are widely utilized as an essential tool for acquiring and improving language skills, with most students perceiving them as more accessible and engaging than traditional learning methods. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok have proven particularly effective in providing authentic linguistic exposure, interactive content, and opportunities for communication with native speakers. The data further suggest that social media enhances students' vocabulary, listening comprehension, and pronunciation skills while fostering greater confidence in speaking English.

Another key finding is the motivational aspect of social media in English language learning. Interactive features such as quizzes, polls, and cultural content encourage students to set new language learning goals and maintain consistency in their studies. The engaging nature of social media content makes learning more enjoyable and relevant to real-world contexts, increasing student participation and language retention. However, despite these advantages, the study highlights several challenges students face when using social media for educational purposes. Distractions, exposure to informal language, and difficulties in identifying reliable learning resources emerge as major concerns. Additionally, the overwhelming amount of information available on social media can sometimes complicate the learning process rather than facilitate it.

A comparison between social media and traditional learning methods reveals that many students prefer social media due to its accessibility and up-to-date content. Many students perceive it as a more effective and dynamic tool than textbooks, particularly in developing practical language skills applicable to real-world situations. However, the study also highlights the need for a structured approach to integrating social media into formal English education to mitigate its challenges while maximizing its benefits.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that educators and policymakers recognize the growing influence of social media in language education and develop strategies to harness its potential effectively. Incorporating structured social media activities into the curriculum, guiding students in selecting credible learning resources, and promoting responsible social media use can enhance the learning experience. Future research should explore how social media can be further optimized to address the challenges identified in this study and better support students in their English language learning journey.

In conclusion, while social media presents opportunities and challenges for English language learning, its integration into educational frameworks offers immense potential for enhancing students' linguistic competence. By adopting a balanced approach that leverages its strengths while addressing its

limitations, social media can be a powerful tool for improving English proficiency among Libyan students.

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