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EXPLORING THE USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO ENHANCE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AMONG ECE STUDENTS AT UPTM

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the usage of social media to enhance English language skills among Early Childhood Education (ECE) students at UPTM. The purpose of the study is to examine the English language proficiency of ECE students, with a specific focus on the influence of their regular use of social media on language acquisition. Adopting a mixed-method research design, the study integrates quantitative data analysis, utilizing descriptive statistics to examine the impact of social media usage on language proficiency, with qualitative analysis techniques to delve into the nuances of learners' experiences and perceptions of. Grounded in Behaviorism Theory and Second Language Acquisition (SLA), the research seeks to understand how social media serves as a platform for language learning and development. The findings and discussions highlight the significant role of social media in providing access to authentic language input, opportunities for practice, and social reinforcement, thus contributing to the enhancement of English language skills among ECE students. However, despite the social media exposure, ECE students struggle to apply English in class, revealing a learning environment gap. Consistent integration of English practice is crucial for effective language acquisition.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the English language teaching and learning in the Malaysian education system has experienced notable transformations. The purpose of these modifications was to enhance the English language proficiency of Malaysian students. A significant development in English language education in Malaysia is the introduction of the English Education Road map 2015-2025, a key component of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (Abu Bakar et al., 2021). As stated by Azman (2016), the Road map was designed to offer a structured framework for the growth of English language educators. It aimed to establish key syllabus components, teaching resources, and globally recognized assessments for students at all educational stages. Furthermore, in recent years, English has become widely recognized as a global language and is commonly used for teaching purposes in higher education (P'ng Syn Huey, 2020). Thus, acquiring proficiency in the English language becomes crucial for establishing global connections.

Students in the Early Childhood Education programmed at UPTM have evidently faced challenges in achieving a high level of proficiency in the English language. This is apparent from the observation from Padmanathan et al. (2021) that a considerable portion of preschool educators demonstrate restricted English proficiency and lack confidence in teaching the language. Such Shortcomings could be attributed to their prior training in non-English-centric early childhood education or deficiencies in their grasp of English instruction, notably in terms of content knowledge and pedagogical methodologies. These challenges were marked by a lack of knowledge in effectively applying various language skills. In order to prepare future bilingual educators, it is crucial to enhance the English language skills of these students. Furthermore, the lack of English language proficiency among students can be partially attributed to the limited incorporation of English in their classroom environment. The restriction on using the English language in the classroom will decrease the chances for students to gain practical experience with the language (Brevik & Rindal, 2020).

There is a need of future generation that can compete globally. Thus, teachers play a vital role to support children in early childhood setting. Teachers should have knowledge and skills to support basic language skills during their preschool years. However, it is revealed that early childhood educators are not practicing English frequently in class since they have low self- confidence (Loy & Abdul Wahab, 2020; Abdul Aziz, 2020; Padmanathan, Mohamed Isa, & Nadarajan, 2021). It is due to lack of knowledge and pedagogy skills in teaching English and lack of motivation (Padmanathan, Mohamed Isa, & Nadarajan, 2021). It was found that the nature of the course that use non-English language and not well trained during study also contribute to the low English proficiency with children in classroom setting (Zamin, Lotfie & Salleh, 2022). This shows that the importance of Early Childhood Education undergraduates ought to have better English language skills in order to teach children.

Numerous social media platforms offer valuable resources for Early Childhood Education (ECE) students to acquire English language knowledge. Social media allows students to engage in authentic language use, interact with native speakers, and access a diverse range of authentic learning resources (D'almeida & Ramachandran, 2023). Despite the availability of these resources, the utilization of such knowledge in honing English language skills within classroom settings remains limited. Consequently, ECE students experience a notable gap between a theoretical understanding gained through social media and the practical application of English language skills. Therefore, this study was carried out to identify the usage of social media to enhance English language skills among ECE students at UPTM.

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One of the main difficulties arises when trying to connect the vast amount of language knowledge available on social media with the practical skills needed in an academic setting. Recognizing the importance of this context is crucial for improving the language skills of ECE students, as it allows for a smooth transition of knowledge from digital platforms to the traditional classroom environment. Understanding and successfully managing this shift is crucial for maximizing the advantages of both social media platforms and traditional classroom settings in the context of comprehensive language learning. The proposed research aimed to determine which social media preferred by ECE students to learn English language skills, and to investigate the effects of social media in ECE students' ability to adapt their English language skills in classroom setting.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Second Language Acquisition

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers to the process through which individuals acquire proficiency in a language that is not their native or first language (Hoque, 2017). It involves the development of linguistic, sociocultural, and pragmatic competencies necessary for effective communication in the target language (Hoque, 2017). SLA encompasses various aspects of language, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and cultural nuances (Pawlak, 2022). This process can occur in formal educational settings, informal environments, or through self-directed learning efforts. Second Language Acquisition is a dynamic and individualized journey influenced by factors such as age, motivation, exposure, cognitive abilities, and sociocultural context (Pawlak, 2022). SLA is a complex and multifaceted process that unfolds overtime as learners engage with the target language in various contexts. Unlike first language acquisition, which typically occurs during early childhood and is largely unconscious, SLA often involves conscious effort and deliberate learning strategies (Aljumah, 2020). However, like first language acquisition, SLA is characterized by stage of development, interlanguage development, and a gradual increase in proficiency.

Moreover, an essential aspect of SLA is the role of input, or exposure to the target language (Aljumah, 2020). Input can come in various forms such as listening to native speakers, reading authentic texts, watching videos, and engaging in conversations (Khasinah, 2014). Comprehensible input, which is language that is just slightly beyond the learner's current level of proficiency but still understandable, is particularly important in facilitating language acquisition (Khasinah, 2014). In addition to motivation, which plays a crucial role in SLA, learners' intrinsic motivation, driven by a genuine interest in learning the language for personal reasons, tend to make greater progress than those who are extrinsically motivated by external rewards or pressures (Puteri & Soleha, 2023). Positive attitudes towards the target language and its speakers, as well as willingness to take risks and make mistakes, can also enhance motivation and ultimately contribute to successful language learning. Furthermore, the age at which SLA occurs can significantly impact the process and outcomes. While it is possible to learn a second language at any age, there is evidence to suggest that young learners, particularly those who begin learning before puberty, may have certain advantages in terms of pronunciation and naturalness of language use (Alzahrani, 2020).

This phenomenon is often referred to as the Critical Period Hypothesis. Moreover, sociocultural factors, including exposure to authentic language use in social contexts, cultural attitudes towards language learning, and opportunities for meaningful interactions with speakers of the target language (Mahmoud Al-Zoubi, 2018), can significantly influence SLA. Learners who have access to supportive language learning environments, where they feel comfortable taking risks and experimenting with the language, are more likely to experience

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success in their language learning endeavors (Ghafar, 2023). In conclusion, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is a dynamic multifaceted process influenced by a variety of factors including input, motivation, age, and sociocultural context. By understanding these factors and their interplay, educators and learners can optimize the language learning experience and work towards achieving proficiency in the target language.

2.1 Effect of social media on second language acquisition

The effects of social media on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) have garnered significant attention in recent years, as digital platforms have become increasingly integrated into everyday life. Social media platforms serve as dynamic avenues for language acquisition across various skills. They facilitate authentic interactions, connecting learners with native speakers worldwide for real-time communication (Purwanto et al., 2023) and offering cultural insights tailored to individual needs (Nathir Ghafar, 2023). Participating in language community's fosters motivation and exposes learners to colloquial language (Ali Seven, 2020), while also supporting practice in all language skills (Nguyen, 2023), notwithstanding challenges such as inaccurate models and distractions (Razak et al., 2022).

2.2.1 Speaking skill

The effects of social media on speaking skills in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) are multifaceted, encompassing various aspects of language development and communication. These platforms offer unique opportunities for language learners to practice speaking in the target language, engage in authentic conversations, and receive feedback from native speakers and peers. Social media platforms provide a platform for learners to engage in real-time conversations with native speakers and other learners from around the world (Erarslan, 2019). Through features such as voice and video calls, live streams, and interactive chat rooms, learners can practice speaking in the target language in a supportive and interactive environment (Erarslan, 2019).

Moreover, social media revolutionizes speaking practice by providing real-time interactions (Erarslan, 2019), diverse communicative situations (Sivakumar et al., 2023), and opportunities for fluency and pronunciation improvement through exposure to native speech (Albiladi, 2020). Platforms facilitate feedback from peers and native speakers, fostering continuous improvement (Dona Donny & Hafizah Adnan, 2022), and cultivate cultural awareness, enhancing flexibility and confidence in communication (Abdullah et al., 2019; Saharani, 2023). In summary, social media has a profound impact on speaking skills in Second Language Acquisition, offering learners increased speaking opportunities for pronunciation improvement, access to feedback and correction, and exposure to diverse cultural contexts. By leveraging the features and resources available on social media platforms, learners can enhance their speaking proficiency and develop the linguistic and communicative skills necessary for effective communication in the target language.

2.2.2 Reading skill

Social media provides access to a wide variety of reading resources, which has a significant impact on reading skills. Social media networks provide learners a wide range of written content in the target language, such as articles, blog posts, news updates, and instructional tools (Rafiq et al., 2019). Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn act as central points for distributing written content, enabling users to delve into subjects of interest and broaden their reading material. A study conducted by Bawa Kojo et. al in 2018 emphasises the significance of offering pupils a diverse selection of reading resources to enhance literacy

development. Social media platforms provide a diversified and dynamic environment of written content that caters to a wide range of learners' interests and preferences (Hussain et al., 2021). Learners can enhance their reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and overall literacy abilities by interacting with a diverse range of texts on social media.

Similarly, social media significantly impacts reading skills by offering a diverse array of resources (Rafiq et al., 2019), enhancing comprehension and critical thinking through engagement with texts (Murphy et al., 2021; Ansari & Khan, 2020). Collaborative reading practices further deepen understanding and analytical skills (Thomas, 2021; Purwanto et al., 2023), nurturing a passion for reading and proficiency in the target language. Finally, social media provides various benefits for improving reading skills in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), such as offering a wide range of reading materials, interactive reading opportunities, personalized suggestions, exposure to real language usage, and collaborative reading activities (Kaban, 2021). Utilizing the features and resources found on social media platforms can help students improve their reading skills, foster critical thinking, and nurture a passion for reading in a new language.

2.2.3 Writing skill

Furthermore, social media plays a vital role in enhancing writing abilities by providing diverse opportunities for practice and interaction (Dewi & Rizal, 2023), fostering language acquisition and communication skills (Muftah, 2022). Collaborative projects and self-directed learning empower students to develop responsibility and confidence in their writing (Purnama & Asdlori, 2023; Zheng et al., 2017). Moreover, social media platforms offer a convenient and accessible space for students to participate in regular writing exercises, enabling them to explore various writing styles, structures, and genres in a supportive and engaging setting (Maksimova, 2021).

Additionally, according to Albiladi (2020), social media facilitates immediate feedback and revisions on students' writing by peers, teachers, and native speakers. Through comments, replies, and editing suggestions, students get personalized feedback to pinpoint areas for enhancement and enhance their writing abilities (Albiladi, 2020). Receiving feedback is crucial when crafting instructions, as it encourages self-assessment, editing, and improvement (Obilor, 2019). Additionally, social media enables students to participate in self-guided learning and personal writing endeavors (Purnama & Asdlori, 2023), giving them the freedom to follow their passions, delve into subjects that matter to them, and showcase their creativity through written work. Students have the option to develop blogs, microblogs, or online portfolios to record their writing progress, express their thoughts, and display their writing accomplishments.

2.2.4 Listening skill

The impact of social media on the development of listening skills in second language learners is substantial and complex, covering different areas of auditory understanding, language comprehension, and communication abilities. Social media platforms provide distinct chances for students to interact with spoken language input in the target language (Haque, 2023), granting access to a variety of audio content such as podcasts, videos, live streams, and voice messages. Lastly, social media platforms serve as crucial tools for developing listening skills by providing access to diverse audio content and interactive activities (Haque, 2023; Vani & Veeranjanyulu Naik, 2023), enhancing comprehension and analysis through engagement with spoken language (Bao & Guan, 2019), and ultimately improving communication abilities in the target language.

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Social media platforms provide a range of audio content for learners to interact with, helping them practise and improve their listening skills in real-life situations. Engaging with podcasts, videos, and audio lessons on social media can enhance learners' skills in understanding, connecting ideas, and assessing their understanding, ultimately boosting their listening and communication abilities.

2.3 Utilization of social media among tertiary education students

Utilization of social media among college students has surged in recent years, with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and LinkedIn serving pivotal roles in educational, social, and career spheres. These platforms foster peer support, knowledge exchange, and informal learning communities, enhancing academic performance and critical thinking (Omotayo & Salami, 2018). WhatsApp groups and Telegram channels provide virtual spaces for students to connect, share resources, and collaborate beyond the classroom, fostering camaraderie among peers.

Social media platforms facilitate instant engagement with classmates, lecturers, and academic institutions, improving communication and teamwork skills (Purple's et al., 2022). Tools like Twitter and LinkedIn, coupled with cloud storage services such as Google Drive, streamline communication, file sharing, and collaborative work, enhancing productivity and academic success.

Moreover, social media plays a pivotal role in building professional networks and exploring career opportunities. Platforms like LinkedIn enable students to showcase their skills, connect with industry professionals, and access job listings and internships (Güney, 2023). By leveraging social media for networking, students broaden their career prospects and gain insights into industry trends, empowering informed career decisions.

Furthermore, social media allows students to develop personal brands, express themselves creatively, and share their interests and achievements with a wider audience (S, 2023). Platforms like Instagram and YouTube provide avenues for students to craft digital personas, share narratives, and build confidence crucial for success in the digital age.

2.4 Behaviorism Theory

Within the field of second language acquisition (SLA), behaviorism theory suggests that language learning happens through exposure to language input, reinforcement of correct responses, and imitation of linguistic models. The theory of behaviorism highlights the significance of external stimuli and environmental factors in influencing learning results. Emphasizing the significance of imitation and modelling in language learning, behaviorism suggests that learners observe and replicate linguistic patterns and structures demonstrated by proficient speakers. By observing and imitating native speakers, learners can pick up new vocabulary, grammar rules, and pronunciation features. According to Watson's theory of classical conditioning, the importance of imitation and observational learning in influencing behaviors is highlighted (Firmansyah & Saepuloh, 2022).

Moreover, reinforcement and feedback play a vital role in language learning processes, as per behaviorism theory. Students' language use is either strengthened or adjusted depending on how they respond. Encouraging positive language behaviors can help reinforce them, while pointing out and correcting language errors can assist learners in improving. Within the field of SLA, students are provided with reinforcement and feedback by

instructors, classmates, or their surroundings based on their language actions (L. Estremera, 2023). Receiving praise or encouragement can enhance desired language behaviors, while error correction and feedback can motivate learners to enhance their language skills. In addition, behaviorist principles have been utilized in different language teaching methodologies and instructional practices. One approach, such as audio linguicism, focuses on repeating, imitating, and reinforcing the correct language form. When studying audio linguicism, students participate in organized practice exercises like drills, pattern practice, and dialogues to master language structures and improve fluency in language usage (Alemi, 2016).

In a summary, the purpose of this conceptual framework is to provide a theoretical foundation for understanding and analyzing the complex dynamics of language learning behaviors (Hiver, 2022). This is accomplished by examining the interplay between English language skills, usage of social media, classroom application, and preferred platforms through the lens of behaviorism. |

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The research involved a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Using a mixed method approach helps to triangulate the findings, which ultimately strengthens the validity and reliability of the study results. A sample approach known as convenience sampling was chosen for the quantitative procedure that involved the questionnaire. Due to the fact that it is simple to access the participants, convenience sampling was selected since it enables efficient data collection regardless of the limitations imposed by time and resources (Golzar & Tajik, 2022). For the qualitative method of evolving interviews, snowball sampling was selected as the method of choice to locate participants through referrals from the participant pool that was first established. The utilization of snowball sampling enables the enlistment of participants who possess particular expertise or viewpoints that are pertinent to the aims of the study (Naderifar et al., 2017). The sampling of this study involved students in the Early Childhood Education programmed at University Poly-Tech Malaysia (UPTM). A total of 199 ECE students will be involved in the questionnaire, with an additional 10 students being interviewed. The study's key variables were assessed through 12 self-report questionnaires and 5 interview questions. The questions cover a range of language skills and seek to thoroughly evaluate how social media usage affects language learning and proficiency in early childhood education students at UPTM. The survey was distributed through Google Form, enabling the researcher to connect with a broad audience and making it more convenient for both the researcher and participants to access. The interview sessions took place via Google Meet, selected for its ease in scheduling meetings despite conflicting schedules that could impede in-person interactions. In order to uphold ethical standards, participants' informed consent was obtained in advance of data collection.

3.1 DATA ANALYSIS

Analyzing the data collected from the questionnaire involved by interpreting the responses from a pie chart. Meanwhile, the data obtained from interviews underwent content analysis to compute descriptive statistics, correlations, and inferential statistics for exploring relationships and patterns within qualitative data. Examining content involves a qualitative analysis approach that includes methodically coding and categorizing textual information to uncover themes, patterns, and significance in qualitative data sources (Shava et al., 2021). The behaviorist theory serves as the foundation for the analytical technique that was utilized in this research project. More specifically, the theory was concerned with gaining an understanding of the link between

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variables such as English language skills, usage of social media, English language application in the classroom setting, and preferred social media.

The application of English language skills in a classroom setting is the moderating variable that influences the reinforcement of language skills through structured learning environments. On the other hand, the preferred social media is the mediating variable that influences the reinforcement value of social media platforms based on individual preferences. This analytical technique is in line with the research design and aims since it offers a theoretical framework that can be utilized to evaluate and assess the interactions between variables that are associated with language acquisition and the utilization of social media among ECE students.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Interview questions based on the research objectives

Questions	Findings
1.4.1 What are the social media applications that you use the most to learn English language skills?	The most used social media platforms for learning English are Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook, with Instagram being favored for its English teaching accounts and YouTube for its vast array of learning videos.
1.4.2 What language skills you believe are the most useful for you from social media?	The most useful language skills from social media are writing, speaking, reading comprehension, and exposure to different writing styles.
1.4.3 What do you think is the most useful social media that you and your lecturer can use for teaching and learning process?	YouTube is the most useful social media platform for teaching and learning due to its abundance of educational videos and interactive features. Other platforms like TikTok and Twitter are also mentioned, but less frequently, and Telegram is highlighted for ease of use in communication and instruction.
1.4.4 What specific features or functionalities of these platforms do you believe contribute to their effectiveness in language learning?	Multimedia content, interactive features, and user engagement contribute to the effectiveness of social media platforms like YouTube and Instagram in language learning
1.4.5 In what ways do you incorporate social media into your daily language learning routines?	Individuals incorporate social media into their daily language learning routines by watching videos with subtitles, following English accounts, listening to podcasts, setting language learning goals, and actively engaging with educational content on platforms like YouTube.

The integration of social media platforms into daily language learning routines has emerged as a significant phenomenon among language learners across various demographics. This study underscores the multifaceted nature of utilizing social media for language acquisition and highlights its effectiveness in facilitating diverse language skills development. Drawing on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories,

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particularly the input hypothesis proposed by Stephen Krashen, and Behaviorism theory, as articulated by B.F. Skinner, we can analyze the patterns observed in the use of social media for language learning. The findings from the interview responses provide valuable insights into how individuals leverage platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and others for language learning purposes.

SLA theory posits that language acquisition occurs through exposure to comprehensible input—language that is slightly beyond the learner's current proficiency level but still understandable with context and cues (Ellis, 1989). Social media platforms offer a rich source of authentic language input in various forms, including written text, audiovisual content, and interactive communication with native speakers. For instance, participants in the study mentioned watching videos with subtitles on YouTube to improve comprehension, following English language accounts on Instagram, and engaging with educational content on Twitter. These activities align with SLA principles by providing learners with ample opportunities for exposure to authentic language input in meaningful contexts, essential for language acquisition (Khasinah, 2014).

A participant illustrated this by stating, "YouTube has many features and functionalities that can benefit our language learning. For example, if you want to learn a new language such as French, Mandarin, Korean, or even English, you can search for them on YouTube, and they will have captions or subtitles that help in learning." Another participant noted, "I mostly follow English language accounts or pages related to topics of interest." These examples demonstrate how learners use social media to immerse themselves in the target language, thereby enhancing their comprehension and linguistic competence.

Additionally, Behaviorism theory emphasizes the role of reinforcement, practice, and conditioning in learning (Ng'andu et al., 2013). Social media platforms offer features and functionalities that support these principles, contributing to their effectiveness in language learning. For example, platforms like YouTube and Instagram allow users to interact with content through likes, comments, and shares, providing immediate feedback and reinforcement. This engagement reinforces learning behaviors and encourages learners to actively participate in language learning activities. Moreover, the gamified approach adopted by some language learning apps aligns with Behaviorism's emphasis on reinforcement and conditioning, as learners are motivated to achieve goals and earn rewards through their language learning efforts (Naeem, 2022).

A participant reflected on this aspect, stating, "We can use the Hello English app because it's like learning a foreign language through a game. The app also uses gamification to make learning more engaging." This gamified experience makes language learning enjoyable and rewarding, thus fostering consistent practice and reinforcing learned concepts.

The findings also highlight the importance of incorporating diverse language skills, including writing, speaking, reading comprehension, and listening, into social media-based language learning routines. This holistic approach to language learning reflects the interconnected nature of language skills development and aligns with SLA theories, which emphasize the importance of developing proficiency in all language domains for communicative competence (Myles, 2010). It is also important to acknowledge the role of social interaction in language learning, as emphasized by both SLA and Behaviorism theory (Maflah Alharbi, 2023). Social media platforms provide opportunities for learners to engage in authentic communication with native speakers and peers, thereby facilitating language practice and proficiency development. Interacting with others through comments, messages, and live streams on platforms like YouTube and Instagram allows learners to apply their language skills in real-life contexts, reinforcing learning through social reinforcement and feedback.

As one participant mentioned, "I believe that it's all the content on YouTube that allows us as users to engage through comments, likes, and sharing the content." Another participant added, "Platforms like YouTube or

Instagram offer a variety of multimedia content such as video, image, and audio, which cater to different learning preferences and help improve various language skills." These interactions not only improve language proficiency but also help learners develop cultural awareness and digital literacy skills, which are crucial in today's interconnected world.

Moreover, the personalized and self-directed nature of social media-based language learning aligns with contemporary theories of learner autonomy and self-regulated learning. Learners have the autonomy to choose the content, pace, and methods that suit their individual learning styles and preferences. This sense of ownership and control over their learning process fosters intrinsic motivation and encourages active engagement with language learning materials, which is essential for long-term retention and proficiency improvement (Madhu & Bhattachryya, 2023).

Participants echoed this sentiment, with one stating, "I also watch English language videos or listen to podcasts during leisure time." Another noted, "I follow language learning accounts that offer various language learning tips, vocabulary words, grammar explanations, and motivational quotes." These personalized learning activities enable learners to tailor their language learning experiences to their specific needs and interests, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of their learning efforts.

Furthermore, the accessibility and ubiquity of social media platforms make them valuable resources for language learners of all backgrounds and proficiency levels. Unlike traditional classroom settings, which may have limitations in terms of time, resources, and accessibility, social media platforms offer anytime, anywhere access to a vast array of language learning materials and opportunities for interaction. This democratization of language learning aligns with principles of inclusivity and lifelong learning (Pluskota-Lewandowska, 2010), as individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds can participate and benefit from social media-based language learning initiatives.

However, while the benefits of social media for language learning are substantial, it is crucial to address the challenges associated with transferring acquired language skills from social media to real-world contexts, particularly within the classroom setting. Despite extensive exposure to English language through social media, many Early Childhood Education (ECE) students may struggle to apply it effectively in classroom conversations. This discrepancy can be attributed to the lack of opportunities for English language application within their learning environment.

Behaviorism theory underscores the significance of environmental stimuli in shaping learning outcomes (Muhajirah, 2020). In the context of language acquisition, the classroom serves as a critical environment for language practice and application. By providing regular opportunities for students to engage in meaningful conversations, discussions, and activities in English, educators can create supportive learning environments that reinforce language learning behaviors and facilitate the transfer of language skills acquired through social media to real-world contexts.

Consistent exposure to English language input and interactions within classroom settings can help bridge the gap between informal language use on social media and formal language use in academic and professional settings (Muñoz & Cadierno, 2021). Through scaffolded instructions, collaborative learning activities, and authentic communication tasks, educators can scaffold students' language development and empower them to apply English language skills confidently and effectively in various contexts (Yildiz & Celik, 2020).

In conclusion, the integration of social media into language learning routines exemplifies how modern technology can enhance and complement traditional language learning approaches. By leveraging the principles

of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Behaviorism theory, educators and learners can harness the potential of social media platforms to create immersive and engaging language learning experiences that cater to individual learning preferences and objectives. This dynamic and innovative approach aligns with contemporary theories of SLA, Behaviorism, learner autonomy, and self-regulated learning. By embracing the affordances of social media platforms, educators and learners alike can cultivate rich, interactive, and personalized language learning experiences that not only foster language proficiency but also enhance cultural awareness and digital literacy skills in today's interconnected world.

The findings suggest that while social media platforms provide valuable tools for language learning, their full potential is realized when integrated thoughtfully with classroom instruction. Educators play a pivotal role in facilitating this integration by creating learning environments that encourage the application of language skills acquired through social media in real-world contexts. This approach ensures that learners not only achieve proficiency in a second language but also develop the confidence and competence to use their language skills effectively across various settings.

By continuing to explore the intersection of social media and language learning through empirical research and practical application, educators and learners can unlock new possibilities for language education that are engaging, accessible, and effective. This integration represents a forward-thinking approach to language learning that leverages the power of technology to meet the diverse needs of learners in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

Table 2: Questionnaires based on English language skills

Language Skills	Findings
<p>Speaking Skills</p> <p>Social media helps me develop my speaking skills</p> <p>I feel more confident in speaking after interacting with others on social media.</p> <p>Social media could help me to develop my pronunciation.</p>	<p>Approximately 95.9% of respondents agree that social media aids in developing speaking skills, with 63.6% strongly agreeing and 32.3% agreeing. Around 97% of respondents believe that interacting on social media boosts confidence in speaking, with 71.8% agreeing and 25.1% strongly agreeing. About 59.9% of respondents agree that social media can improve pronunciation, with 51.3% agreeing, 8.7% strongly agreeing, and 39% feeling neutral.</p>
<p>Reading Skills</p> <p>Social media helps me develop my reading skills.</p> <p>I read other people's comments when they are written in English.</p> <p>I frequently engage with English-language articles, posts, or blogs shared on social media platforms to enhance my reading comprehension skills.</p>	<p>About 79.5% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that social media helps develop their reading skills, with 51.3% agreeing, 28.2% strongly agreeing, and 20% feeling neutral. Approximately 97.5% of respondents engage with written English on social media, with 70.3% agreeing and 27.2% strongly agreeing. Around 73.4% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that they frequently engage with English language content on social media to improve reading comprehension, with 47.2% agreeing, 26.2% strongly agreeing, and 25.6% feeling neutral.</p>
<p>Writing Skills</p> <p>Social media can help me to develop my writing skills.</p> <p>Social media could help me to develop my grammar.</p> <p>I interact more with my friends using English when using social media.</p>	<p>About 92.3% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that social media can help develop their writing skills, with 52.3% agreeing and 40% strongly agreeing. Approximately 92.8% of respondents agree or totally agree that social media helps improve their grammar skills in English, with 68.2% agreeing and 24.6% totally agreeing. Around 76.2% of respondents either agree or totally agree that they interact more with their friends using English on social media, with 45.6% agreeing, 30.8% feeling neutral, and 22.6% totally agreeing.</p>
<p>Listening Skills</p> <p>Social media could help me develop my listening skills.</p> <p>Social media provides learners with access to more real-life language use.</p> <p>I follow language teachers on social media.</p>	<p>About 79% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that social media could help develop their listening skills, with 50.3% agreeing, 28.7% strongly agreeing, and 21% feeling neutral. Approximately 96.4% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that social media provides learners with access to more real-life language use, with 68.2% agreeing and 28.2% strongly agreeing. Around 90.8% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that they follow language teachers on social media, with 46.7% agreeing and 44.1% strongly agreeing.</p>

The responses provided by the respondents shed light on the perceived role of social media in language learning and development, offering significant implications for research in the field of Second Language

Acquisition (SLA) and Behaviorism theory. The overwhelmingly positive feedback regarding the utility of social media in enhancing various language skills—including speaking, listening, reading, writing, pronunciation, and grammar—aligns with Behaviorism theory, which emphasizes the importance of observable behaviors and environmental stimuli in shaping learning outcomes (Akbar & Al-Gharabally, 2020). Social media serves as an external stimulus, providing learners with exposure to authentic language use, opportunities for practice, and reinforcement through feedback from peers and language teachers.

The respondents' recognition of social media as a platform for accessing real-life language use underscores the significance of authentic input in SLA. A pie chart from the study indicated that 68.2% of respondents agreed that social media platforms provide them with authentic real-life language use, while 28.2% strongly agreed. According to Behaviorism theory, language learning occurs through imitation, practice, and reinforcement of correct language forms (Firmansyah & Saepuloh, 2022). Social media facilitates this process by exposing learners to diverse linguistic inputs from native speakers, promoting language acquisition through the observation and emulation of language patterns and expressions.

The inclination of respondents towards engaging with English-language content on social media also reflects Behaviorism principles. Behaviorism posits that language learning is a gradual process involving the formation of habits through repeated exposure and reinforcement (Estremera, 2023). This is evidenced by the fact that 47.2% of respondents agreed they frequently engage with English language content on social media platforms to enhance their reading comprehension skills, while 26.2% totally agreed. By actively seeking out and interacting with English language content, learners engage in habit formation, gradually internalizing language structures and conventions through consistent practice and reinforcement.

Moreover, the respondents' preference for following language teachers on social media highlights the role of social reinforcement in language learning, a key aspect of Behaviorism theory. Social media platforms offer learners the opportunity to receive feedback, guidance, and encouragement from language teachers and peers, thereby reinforcing desirable language learning behaviors and promoting continued engagement with language learning activities. Specifically, 44.1% of respondents strongly agreed that they follow language teachers on social media, while 46.7% agreed. These findings align with Estremera's (2023) research, which suggests that praise and encouragement can positively influence language behaviors, while error correction and feedback serve as motivating factors for learners to improve their language skills.

Overall, the findings suggest that social media plays a significant role in facilitating language learning and development, aligning with Behaviorism principles. By providing learners with exposure to authentic language input, opportunities for practice, and social reinforcement, social media platforms serve as effective tools for promoting language acquisition and proficiency in a second language.

In addition to the insights provided by respondents regarding the benefits of social media in language learning, it is crucial to address the issue of transferring acquired language skills from social media to real-world contexts, particularly within the classroom setting. Despite extensive exposure to English language through social media, many Early Childhood Education (ECE) students may still struggle to apply it effectively in classroom conversations. This discrepancy can be attributed to the lack of opportunities for English language application within their learning environment.

This observation highlights the importance of creating a conducive learning environment that promotes the continuous application of English language skills. While social media platforms offer valuable resources for language acquisition, their informal nature may not always translate seamlessly into formal classroom settings. ECE students may encounter challenges in applying the language skills acquired through social media to structured classroom interactions, where different linguistic norms and expectations prevail.

Behaviorism theory underscores the significance of environmental stimuli in shaping learning outcomes (Muhajirah, 2020). In the context of language acquisition, the classroom serves as a critical environment for language practice and application. By providing regular opportunities for students to engage in meaningful conversations, discussions, and activities in English, educators can create supportive learning environments that reinforce language learning behaviors and facilitate the transfer of language skills acquired through social media to real-world contexts.

Furthermore, consistent exposure to English language input and interactions within classroom settings can help bridge the gap between informal language use on social media and formal language use in academic and professional settings (Muñoz & Cadierno, 2021). Through scaffolded instructions, collaborative learning activities, and authentic communication tasks, educators can scaffold students' language development and empower them to apply English language skills confidently and effectively in various contexts (Yildiz & Celik, 2020)

In conclusion, while social media offers valuable resources for language learning, its effectiveness ultimately depends on the extent to which learners can transfer acquired language skills to real-world situations. By fostering a supportive learning environment that promotes the continuous application of English language skills in the classroom, educators can help ECE students bridge the gap between informal language use on social media and formal language use in academic and professional settings. This approach will ultimately enhance their overall language proficiency and communicative competence.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This research has explored the usage of social media as a potential tool to enhance English language skills among Early Childhood Education (ECE) students. Through a comprehensive analysis of survey data and discussions grounded in Behaviourism Theory and Second Language Acquisition (SLA), several key findings have emerged. Firstly, the findings highlight the widespread recognition among ECE students of social media's positive impact on various aspects of language learning, including speaking, listening, reading, writing, pronunciation and grammar. Respondents perceive social media as a valuable resource for authentic language input, engaging with language content, and receiving feedback from peers and educators. Furthermore, research underscores the importance of creating a supportive learning environment that promotes continuous application of English language skills within the classroom setting. Despite the extensive exposure to English language through social media, many ECE students struggle to apply acquired language skills in formal classroom interactions, indicating a need for targeted instructional strategies and interventions.

It has become evident that while social media offers valuable resources for language acquisition, its effectiveness depends on various factors, including the quality and reliability of content, learner motivation and engagement, and the extent to which language skills can be transferred to real-world contexts. Moving forward, future research in this area could explore the efficacy of specific instructional interventions aimed at bridging

the gap between informal language use on social media and formal language use in academic and professional settings. In conclusion, this research contributes to our understanding of the potential of social media as a tool to enhance English language skills among ECE students. By identifying key findings, discussing implications, and offering suggestions for future research, this study lays the groundwork for further exploration and innovation in the field of language education and technology integration.

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