

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 study examines ECE students' English language proficiency, focusing on how regular social media use influences 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 discussion highlight social media's significant role in providing access to authentic language input, opportunities for practice, and social reinforcement, thereby contributing to improved English language skills among ECE students. However, despite social media exposure, ECE students struggle to apply English in class, revealing a gap between learning environments. Consistent integration of English practice is crucial for effective language acquisition.

Keywords: *Early Childhood Education, Social Media, English Language Skills*

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INTRODUCTION

Over the years, English language teaching and learning in the Malaysian education system has experienced notable transformations. These changes aimed to enhance Malaysian students' English language proficiency. A significant development in English language education in Malaysia is the introduction of the English Education Roadmap 2015-2025, a key component of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (Abu Bakar et al., 2021). As Azman (2016) notes, the roadmap was designed to provide 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 programme at UPTM have clearly faced challenges in achieving a high level of English proficiency. This is evident in Padmanathan et al. (2021), who observed that a considerable portion of preschool educators demonstrate limited English proficiency and lack confidence in teaching the language. These shortcomings may stem from prior training in non-English-centric early childhood education or gaps in their grasp of English instruction, particularly in content knowledge and pedagogical methods. These challenges were marked by a lack of knowledge of how to effectively apply various language skills. To prepare future bilingual educators, it is crucial to strengthen these students' English language skills. Furthermore, students' limited English proficiency may be partly attributed to the limited use of English in their classroom environment. Restricting English use in the classroom reduces students' chances to gain practical experience with the language (Brevik & Rindal, 2020).

Future generations need to compete globally. Thus, teachers play a vital role in supporting children in early childhood settings. Teachers should have knowledge and skills to support basic language skills during their preschool years. However, research shows that early childhood educators do not practice English frequently in class because they have low self-confidence (Loy & Abdul Wahab, 2020; Abdul Aziz, 2020; Padmanathan, Mohamed Isa, & Nadarajan, 2021). This is due to a lack of knowledge and pedagogical skills in teaching English, as well as a lack of motivation (Padmanathan, Mohamed Isa, & Nadarajan, 2021). It was found that courses that use non-English languages and are not well-taught also contribute to children's low English proficiency in the classroom (Zamin, Lotfie & Salleh, 2022). This shows that Early Childhood Education undergraduates need strong English language skills 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, their use to hone English language skills in 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 conducted to identify how social media can be used to enhance English language skills among ECE students at UPTM.

One of the main difficulties is connecting 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 ECE students' language skills, as it allows knowledge to transition smoothly from digital platforms to the traditional classroom. Understanding and successfully managing this shift is crucial to maximizing the advantages of both social media platforms and traditional classroom settings in comprehensive language

learning. The proposed research aimed to determine which social media platform ECE students prefer for learning English and to investigate the effects of social media on ECE students' ability to adapt their English language skills in a classroom setting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

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 developing the linguistic, sociocultural, and pragmatic competencies needed 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 take 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 toward the target language and its speakers, along with a willingness to take risks and make mistakes, can also boost motivation and ultimately support 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, evidence suggests that young learners, particularly those who begin learning before puberty, may have advantages in pronunciation and the 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 toward language learning, and opportunities for meaningful interactions with speakers of the target language (Mahmoud Al-Zoubi, 2018), can significantly influence SLA. Learners with access to supportive language-learning environments, where they feel comfortable taking risks and experimenting with the language, are more likely to succeed 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 toward achieving proficiency in the target language.

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 communities 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).

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 allow learners to engage in real-time conversations with native speakers and other learners worldwide (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 to improve fluency and pronunciation 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 profoundly affects speaking skills in Second Language Acquisition by giving learners more speaking opportunities to improve pronunciation, access feedback and correction, and engage with 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.

Reading skill

Social media provides access to a wide variety of reading resources, which significantly impacts reading skills. Social media networks provide learners with 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 serve as central hubs for distributing written content, enabling users to explore subjects of interest and broaden their reading material. A study by Bawa Kojo et al. (2018) emphasises the importance 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 affects reading skills by offering a diverse array of resources (Rafiq et al., 2019) and 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 offers several benefits for improving reading skills in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), including a wide range of reading materials, interactive reading opportunities, personalized suggestions, exposure to real language use, 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.

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, accessible space for students to participate in regular writing exercises, enabling them to explore various writing styles, structures, and genres in a supportive, engaging setting (Maksimova, 2021).

Additionally, Albiladi (2020) notes that social media facilitates immediate feedback and revisions on students' writing from peers, teachers, and native speakers. Through comments, replies, and editing suggestions, students receive personalized feedback that helps them pinpoint areas for improvement and strengthen their writing skills (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 engage in self-guided learning and personal writing (Purnama & Asdlori, 2023), giving them the freedom to follow their passions, explore subjects that matter to them, and showcase their creativity through writing. Students can develop blogs, microblogs, or online portfolios to record their writing progress, express their thoughts, and showcase their writing accomplishments.

Listening skill

The impact of social media on the development of listening skills in second language learners is substantial and complex, affecting auditory understanding, language comprehension, and communication abilities. Social media platforms offer distinct opportunities for students to engage with spoken language input in the target language (Haque, 2023), providing 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.

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.

Utilization of social media among tertiary education students

Social media use among college students has surged in recent years, with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and LinkedIn playing 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.

Social media platforms facilitate instant engagement with classmates, lecturers, and academic institutions, improving communication and teamwork skills (Purple 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 using social media to network, students broaden their career prospects and gain insights into industry trends, supporting 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 give students ways to craft digital personas, share narratives, and build confidence crucial for success in the digital age.

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. Behaviorism highlights the role of external stimuli and environmental factors in shaping learning outcomes. Emphasizing 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, imitation and observational learning play an important role in shaping behavior (Firmansyah & Saepuloh, 2022).

Moreover, reinforcement and feedback play a vital role in language learning processes, according to behaviorist theory. Students' language use is either strengthened or adjusted depending on how they respond. Encouraging positive language behaviors can reinforce them, while pointing out and correcting language errors can help learners improve. In SLA, instructors, classmates, or the environment provide students with reinforcement and feedback based on their language actions (L. Estremera, 2023). Receiving praise or encouragement can strengthen desired language behaviors, while error correction and feedback can motivate learners to improve 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 repetition, imitation, and reinforcement of correct language forms. In audio linguicism, students participate in organized practice exercises such as drills, pattern practice, and dialogues to master language structures and improve fluency (Alemi, 2016).

In summary, this conceptual framework provides a theoretical foundation for understanding and analyzing the complex dynamics of language-learning behaviors (Hiver, 2022). It does so by examining the interplay between English language skills, social media use, classroom application, and preferred platforms through the lens of behaviorism.

METHODOLOGY

The research involved a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. A mixed-method approach helps triangulate the findings, strengthening the validity and reliability of the study results. The quantitative procedure used convenience sampling. Because it is easy to access participants, convenience sampling was selected because it enables efficient data collection despite time and resource limitations (Golzar & Tajik, 2022). For the qualitative method of evolving interviews, snowball sampling was selected to locate participants through referrals from the initially established participant pool. Snowball sampling enables the enlistment of participants with particular expertise or viewpoints pertinent to the study's aims (Naderifar et al., 2017). This study sampled students in the Early Childhood Education programme at Universiti Politeknik Malaysia (UPTM). A total of 199 ECE students completed the questionnaire, with an additional 10 students interviewed. The study assessed the key variables through 12 self-report questionnaires and 5 interview questions. The questions cover a range of language skills and aim to thoroughly evaluate how social media use affects

language learning and proficiency among early childhood education students at UPTM. The survey was distributed through Google Forms, enabling the researcher to reach a broad audience and making it more convenient for both the researcher and participants to access. The interview sessions took place via Google Meet, chosen for its ease of scheduling despite conflicting schedules that could impede in-person interactions. To uphold ethical standards, participants provided informed consent before data collection.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis involved interpreting questionnaire responses using a pie chart. Meanwhile, interview data underwent content analysis to compute descriptive statistics, correlations, and inferential statistics to explore relationships and patterns within qualitative data. Content analysis involves a qualitative approach that methodically codes and categorizes textual information to uncover themes, patterns, and significance in qualitative data sources (Shava et al., 2021). Behaviorist theory serves as the foundation for the analytical technique used in this research project. More specifically, the theory focuses on understanding the relationship between variables such as English language skills, social media use, English language application in the classroom, 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 aligns with the research design and aims because it provides a theoretical framework to evaluate and assess the interactions between variables associated with language acquisition and social media use among ECE students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Interview questions based on the research objectives

Questions	Findings
1.1.1 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 favored for its English-teaching accounts and YouTube for its vast array of learning videos.
1.1.2 What language skills do 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.
1.1.3 What do you think is the most useful social media that you and your lecturer can use for the 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 mentioned less frequently, and Telegram is highlighted for its ease of use in communication and instruction.
1.1.4 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
1.1.5 In what ways do you incorporate social media into	Individuals incorporate social media into their daily

your daily language learning routines?	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.
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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 using social media for language acquisition and highlights its effectiveness in facilitating the development of diverse language skills. Drawing on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories, particularly the input hypothesis proposed by Stephen Krashen, and Behaviorism theory, as articulated by B.F. Skinner, we can analyze patterns in social media use for language learning. The interview responses provide valuable insights into how individuals use platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and others for language learning.

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 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 giving learners ample opportunities to access authentic language input in meaningful contexts, which is 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 reflects the interconnected nature of language skills development and aligns with SLA theories, which emphasize 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 give learners opportunities to engage in authentic communication with native speakers and peers, supporting 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 can 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; one stated, "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, 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 be limited by 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 social media offers substantial benefits for language learning, it is crucial to address the challenges of transferring skills learned on social media to real-world contexts, particularly in the classroom. Despite extensive exposure to the English language through social media, many Early Childhood Education (ECE) students may struggle to apply it effectively in classroom conversations. This discrepancy may stem from limited opportunities to use English in their learning environment.

Behaviorism theory underscores the significance of environmental stimuli in shaping learning outcomes (Muhajirah, 2020). In language acquisition, the classroom serves as a critical environment for language practice and application. By giving students regular opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations, discussions, and activities in English, educators can create supportive learning environments that reinforce language-learning behaviors and help transfer 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, integrating social media into language-learning routines shows 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 social media

platforms to create immersive, 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 foster language proficiency while enhancing cultural awareness and digital literacy in today's interconnected world.

The findings suggest that while social media platforms provide valuable tools for language learning, they reach their full potential when integrated thoughtfully with classroom instruction. Educators play a pivotal role in facilitating this integration by creating learning environments that encourage learners to apply 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 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
Speaking Skills Social media helps me develop my speaking skills I feel more confident in speaking after interacting with others on social media. Social media could help me to develop my pronunciation.	Approximately 95.9% of respondents agree that social media helps develop speaking skills, with 63.6% strongly agreeing and 32.3% agreeing. About 97% of respondents believe interacting on social media boosts speaking confidence, 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.
Reading Skills Social media helps me develop my reading skills. I read other people's comments when they are written in English. I frequently engage with English-language articles, posts, or blogs shared on social media platforms to improve my reading comprehension.	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. About 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.
Writing Skills Social media can help me to develop my writing skills. Social media could help me to develop my grammar. I interact more with my friends using English when using social media.	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. About 92.8% of respondents agree or totally agree that social media helps improve their English grammar skills, 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.

Listening Skills Social media could help me develop my listening skills. Social media provides learners with access to more real-life language use. I follow language teachers on social media.	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. About 96.4% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that social media gives learners 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.
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The respondents' responses shed light on the perceived role of social media in language learning and development, with significant implications for research in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Behaviorism theory. The overwhelmingly positive feedback on the utility of social media in enhancing various language skills—including speaking, listening, reading, writing, pronunciation, and grammar—aligns with Behaviorism theory, which emphasizes observable behaviors and environmental stimuli in shaping learning outcomes (Akbar & Al-Gharabally, 2020). Social media serves as an external stimulus, exposing learners to authentic language use, providing opportunities for practice, and reinforcing learning 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 showed that 68.2% of respondents agreed that social media platforms provide 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 supports this process by exposing learners to diverse linguistic input from native speakers, promoting acquisition through observing and emulating language patterns and expressions.

Respondents' inclination to engage with English-language content on social media also reflects Behaviorism principles. Behaviorism posits that language learning is a gradual process of habit formation 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 form habits and gradually internalize 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 give learners the opportunity to receive feedback, guidance, and encouragement from language teachers and peers, reinforcing desirable language-learning behaviors and promoting continued engagement in 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 motivate 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 respondents' insights on the benefits of social media in language learning, it is crucial to address how learners transfer language skills from social media to real-world contexts, particularly in the classroom. Despite extensive exposure to the English language through social media, many Early Childhood Education (ECE) students may still struggle to apply it effectively in classroom conversations. This discrepancy may stem from limited opportunities to use English in 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 struggle to apply language skills acquired through social media in 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 language acquisition, the classroom serves as a critical environment for language practice and application. By giving students regular opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations, discussions, and activities in English, educators can create supportive learning environments that reinforce language-learning behaviors and help transfer 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 how well 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.

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. First, the findings highlight ECE students' widespread recognition 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 the continuous application of English language skills in the classroom. 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 is evident that while social media offers valuable resources for language acquisition, its effectiveness depends on several factors, including the quality and reliability of content, learner motivation and engagement, and the extent to which language skills transfer to real-world contexts. Moving forward, future research 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 social media's potential 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 language education and technology integration.

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