

## The Role of Technology-Enhanced Social Media in EFL Learning Among Secondary School Students.

Waleed Salem Abu Sen

English Language Departmene, University of Darence Alahlia, Tripoli, Libya

[waleedabusen@gmail.com](mailto:waleedabusen@gmail.com)

دور التواصل الاجتماعي المعززة بالتكنولوجيا في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية بين طلاب المدارس الثانوية

وليد سالم أبو سن

قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، جامعة دارنس الاهلية، طرابلس، ليبيا

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### ABSTRACT

This exploratory study intended to explore the third year secondary school students' perceptions about the role of technology-enhanced social media in developing English language learning. It adopted an adapted questionnaire to collect data from students in order to see how social media can affect various aspects of language skills, such as, students' language skill improvement, motivation, confidence, and their learning attitudes. The participants included 55 students from two secondary schools in Tripoli. The findings of the study showed that secondary school students generally viewed social media platforms as an important learning resource for language learning which improved their vocabulary, communication, pronunciation, and listening skills. The findings of the study also indicated that the role of these social media platforms increased students' motivation and reduced their anxiety level when using social media for learning. However, students perceived the role of social media in improving their grammar and error correction as limited and weak. Furthermore, although many students preferred learning trough social media over traditional learning methods, enjoyment levels varied considerably, indicating various learners' preferences. The study concluded that social media can serve as an additional learning tool that supports independent learning but should be incorporated within formal

classroom instruction for language development. Finally, this study recommended that EFL education should involve adopting blended learning approaches and provide guided social media activities to maximize its learning outcomes.

**Keywords :** Media, language, learning, perceptions, motivation, anxiety, autonomy

## المخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة الاستكشافية إلى التعرف على آراء طلاب السنة الثالثة بالمرحلة الثانوية حول دور وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي المعززة بالتكنولوجيا في تطوير تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. وقد اعتمدت الدراسة استبانة معدلة لجمع البيانات من الطلاب لمعرفة كيف يمكن لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي أن تؤثر في مختلف جوانب المهارات اللغوية، مثل تحسين مهاراتهم اللغوية، والدافعية، والثقة بالنفس، واتجاهاتهم نحو التعلم. شملت عينة الدراسة 55 طالبًا من مدرستين ثانويتين في طرابلس. وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن طلاب المرحلة الثانوية ينظرون عمومًا إلى منصات التواصل الاجتماعي على أنها مورد تعليمي مهم لتعلم اللغة، إذ ساعدتهم على تحسين مفرداتهم، ومهارات التواصل، والنطق، والاستماع. كما أشارت النتائج إلى أن دور هذه المنصات أسهم في زيادة دافعية الطلاب وتقليل مستوى قلقهم عند استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في التعلم. ومع ذلك، رأى الطلاب أن دور وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تحسين قواعد اللغة وتصحيح الأخطاء كان محدودًا وضعيفًا. علاوة على ذلك، وعلى الرغم من أن العديد من الطلاب فضلوا التعلم عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على الطرق التقليدية، إلا أن مستويات المتعة تفاوتت بشكل ملحوظ، مما يشير إلى اختلاف تفضيلات المتعلمين. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يمكن أن تكون أداة تعلم إضافية تدعم التعلم الذاتي، لكنها ينبغي أن تدمج ضمن التعليم الصفّي الرسمي لتطوير المهارات اللغوية. وأوصت الدراسة في الختام بأن يشمل تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تبني أساليب التعلم المدمج، وتقديم أنشطة موجهة عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لتعزيز نتائج التعلم.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** وسائل الاعلام، اللغة، التعلم، التصورات، الدافع، القلق، الاستقلالية

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, the role of technology enhanced-social media has changed the way people live, interact and communicate. Many social media platforms including Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, WhatsApp, have become part and parcel of our daily lives. It provided language learners with much exposure to real-life language content and more authentic input. Integrating social media into students' everyday activities has increased a growing interest among language instructors and researchers to make use of its potential in order to support English language learning.

Learners' English language proficiency is an important skill in global world today as traditional classroom teaching methods sometimes lag behind in exposing students

to a real-world language input. There is no doubt that social media can provide learners with a dynamic learner-centered atmosphere that can compensate for classroom formal instruction by enabling students to access various types of input, interact with others, and improve their language skills beyond the classroom environment. Moreover, social media can positively have a great impact on learners' motivation, confidence, and reduce their anxiety levels, which are main affective extra-linguistic factors in successful language learning.

Thus, this study is, therefore, dedicated to explore the perceptions of secondary school students about the role of technology-driven social media in learning English. By exploring how secondary school students perceive the impact of social media on their English language skills improvement, the extent of motivation, and learning styles, this study research aims to provide insightful findings into how social media can be incorporated effectively into English language teaching to complement traditional formal classroom instruction. The findings of this study will hopefully contribute to the current literature on the importance of social media for language learning and give a real picture of the educational value of social media in EFL education, thereby assisting language instructors and policymakers in creating more engaging and involving language learning approaches.

## 1.2 Statements of the Problem

The role of social media platforms is significantly essential in improving students' language learning skills by encouraging them how to learn and develop. In spite of all of this, many secondary school students continue to face real difficulties in English language learning, such as problems with communication skills and writing, low level of vocabulary development, and difficulties with listening comprehension skills. These challenges may be attributed to the limited use of social platforms for learning purposes or could be due to a lack of understanding of how social media can effectively enhance language learning. As a result, this study seeks to investigate the perceptions of secondary school students towards the effectiveness of social media platforms in language learning order to help language teachers to create and develop teaching methods and learning activities that may support

language learning in and beyond classroom setting. Based on the background, the researcher is encouraged to conduct her study about the perceptions of the EFL students towards the effectiveness of social media in secondary school education. Thus, this study intends to answer these research questions :

### **1.3 Research Questions**

How do secondary school students perceive the role of social media in enhancing their English language skills ?

To what extent does social media affect students' affective factors, such as, motivation, confidence, anxiety and learning styles in learning English?

### **1.4 Research Aims & Objectives**

The purpose of this study is to explore the third year secondary school students' perceptions towards the role of social media in EFL learning.

The following are the main objectives of the study:

- To explore the role of social media in English language learning at secondary school level.
- To highlight the attitudes of secondary school students regarding the use of social media in English language learning.
- To make recommendations for integrating social media in English language education at the secondary school level.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is important since it addresses the growing increase for integrating digital technologies and social media in educational settings, more specifically in EFL contexts. Recognizing the perceptions of secondary school students can provide language teachers, material developers and curriculum designers with more insights in order to understand the potential benefits of social media in developing students' language acquisition, by exposing them to authentic language content, increasing their motivation, and providing them learner independence. Hopefully, the findings can provide language teachers, policymakers, and language training & learning

institutions deeper understanding of how to design more effective blended learning & teaching methods that incorporate social media within traditional classroom instruction to enhance English learning outcomes.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Technologically advanced innovations have transformed our way of life across the globe, especially with the emerging of social media as a powerful tool that complements traditional classroom instruction. A considerable number of research studies have examined how useful social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and TikTok may have impact on improving EFL learners' skills, language teaching, and learner motivation. Some studies found that digital technologies and social networks have a profound influence on learner's lifestyles and learning strategies and teaching practices (Sathish et al. 2020) indicating a significantly positive impact on foreign language teaching and learning (Leung & Valdés, 2019).

### **2.1 Social Media**

Social media is normally defined as a set of internet-based applications that rely on Web 2.0 technologies, allowing its users to create and exchange generated content or information (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010 ; Almohesh & Altamimi, 2024). It includes web-based services that enables its users to interact, collaborate, and share content with other individuals and communities (Hopkins, 2017). Kent (2010) gave a broad definition to any communication channel that allows its users two-way interaction, communication and feedback, while Kietzmann et al. (2011) emphasized the positive role of social media in creating interactive messages through virtual platforms for users to engage in real life situations. Some of these social media include Facebook, Watsap Twitter, TickTok, YouTube, and Instagram, all of which provide its users many opportunities for language learning by allowing them to share information and communicate (Gaytan, 2013).

### **2.2 Social Media and Language Skills Development**

Most research studies highlighted the important role of social media by providing real life input, communication opportunities, and a plenty of resources necessary for enhancing learners' language acquisition. Social Platforms offer its users enough exposure to native language input, supporting listening, writing, pronunciation, and speaking skills (Haque, 2023 ; Khan et al. 2016). Studies have also shown that social media can increase vocabulary development through authentic conversations and content generated by its users (Khan et al (2016). However, research on the role of social media has indicated a limited improvement in grammar and error correction, which often requires additional explicit formal instruction (Kabilan, Ahmad, & Abidin, 2010).

Research studies on the role of social media platforms greatly highlighted its benefits. For example, Almurashi (2016) found that the impact of YouTube supported students' comprehension and engagement, while Ta'amneh (2017) reported that the integration of WhatsApp with traditional classroom instruction significantly enhances students' performance when compared to traditional teaching methods. The role of TikTok use among Chinese students gave different perceptions among students, indicating that while useful for oral communication, TikTok should be integrated within traditional teaching classroom instruction (Hu & Du, 2022).

Other research studies have confirmed the positive role of social media in improving students' vocabulary, grammar, and other language skills (Khan et al. 2016 ; Abbasova, 2016). For instance, Faryadi (2017) found that the use of Facebook did improve Malaysian students' vocabulary, increased their confidence, and motivation levels. Likewise, Pitaloka et al. (2020) found that 73% of prospective future EFL teachers valued social media as significantly enhanced their English language learning.

### **2.3 Motivation, Confidence, and Anxiety**

Some extra-linguistic factor or affective factors such as, aptitude, motivation, confidence, and anxiety have significantly a strong impact on language learning

outcomes. Some research studies reported that social media increased students' motivation by providing them with interactive and more engaging collaborative environments (Dhanya, 2016 ; Namaziandost & Nasri, 2019). Social media platforms offer language learners less anxiety levels and a low-pressure atmosphere where they can practice language without fear of making mistakes or being subject to judgment, thus minimizing their language anxiety (Blattner & Fiori, 2009 ; Belal, 2014).

Research has shown that the role of social media platforms increased students' encouragement, maximized their active participation in learning, enhanced their self-confidence, and encouraged their collaboration with peers (Rouis et al. 2011 ; Rahmat, 2019). Therefore, it can be argued that learners can gain benefit from using social media platforms to enhance their language skills in real-world contexts, strengthening their interactive communication abilities and maintains more engagement and exposure to the language

## **2.4 Attitudes and Preferences Toward Social Media Learning**

Students, today, are born digital natives who have positive attitudes towards the importance of social media as a supportive language learning tool. They value its accessibility and flexibility, information richness, and opportunities for real-life interactive communications (Asiri & Alqarni, 2015 ; Kutbi, 2015). Most students generally prefer learning through social media over traditional learning resources or using printed books, although some still appreciate spoon-fed and teacher-led instruction for explicit clarity and guidance (Williams & Adesop, 2017 ; Salih & Elsayed, 2018).

Over the last five years, teachers' attitudes toward social media have changed during the COVID-19 pandemic because social platforms supported online learning materials (Jogezai et al. 2021). This inherently highlighted the significance of integrating technology-enhanced social media to support traditional EFL education.

## **2.5 Social Media and Autonomous Learning**

Some research studies found that social media promoted learner autonomy or self-independence by allowing learners to control their learning pace, select content, and decide when interact, enhancing their self-directed learning (Sulaiman, 2019; Lai, 2015). This learning self-independence or autonomy has increased students' motivation beyond formal classroom settings. Thus, the role of social media increased students' reflection, self-

evaluation, and self-correction when learning (Al-Shehri, 2011), while interactive input promoted students' engagement and their autonomous learning (Loewen et al. 2019).

Overall, mobile-assisted language learning technologies (MALL) and AI program software's like ChatGPT have significantly enhanced students' self-directed language learning by providing them with timely accessible content from various flexible resources (Hsu & Liu, 2021; Tram et al., 2024). Many research studies indicated the important role of learners' self-regulation and goal-setting in integrating these technologies in EFL education (Lai & Zheng, 2017 ; Liu et al. 2023).

Although most research studies reviewed have highlighted the positive effect Facebook on language learning at the university level, there remains a need to further examine how students, at the secondary school level, perceive the role of other social media platforms for learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Despite the fact that most research studies have focused on students at the tertiary level, very little has been done to investigate secondary school students' perceptions about the role of social media in language learning, especially those in developing countries, like Libya. As a consequence, the students' language learning habits, learning styles, and learning environments remain underexplored.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Design of the Study**

This study was quantitative in nature which employed a descriptive quantitative approach with the view of exploring the role of social media platforms in English



language learning among secondary school students. This descriptive research involves collecting and analyzing measurable data from the participants of the study population.

### **3.2 Research Context & Participants**

The study was conducted with 55 students of Althura Alarabia, and AlAsad Ben Furath, secondary schools, which are both located in Tripoli. The participants consisted of 33 male and 22 female students from the third year of secondary education. These students had been studying English for over 6 years. The majority of the participants were males and their participation in the study was voluntary.

### **3.3 Data collection**

This research used a quantitative method with the aim of exploring the secondary school student's perceptions. As stated by Creswell (2009) that case study is defined as a research which explores a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals genuinely to get a depth-knowledge about the action that we want to explore .

The data collecting technique which the researcher used to gather the data related to the focus of the research was a developed questionnaire based on the literature review on social media. In this study, the main instrument used for gaining data was a questionnaire. As stated by Bhandari, P. (2021) questionnaires are valid and reliable methods consisting of questions that address the research objectives, which place them in a useful order of importance and select an appropriate method for administration and are easy to analyze.

### **Questionnaire**

To design a questionnaire for the purpose of the study, the researcher had several steps to collect data as described below: The beginning step of research procedure was preparing the questionnaire of the research. The researcher modified the questionnaire from four studies which were suitable with the aims of this research. Then the questionnaire item was verified by some academic lecturers to see

whether the questionnaire items were appropriate with the study. Afterward, the researcher administered the questionnaire with 55 students. Then the researcher collected the questionnaires and data were analyzed

The construction of the questionnaire contained closed-ended questions used to collect the responses from the participants that most likely represent their views (Siniscalco & Auriat, 2005). The questionnaire was divided into two parts as follows:

In the first part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to indicate their gender and whether they use social media, how long they have been using social media, their experience or familiarity with the social media platforms, how often students log into Facebook, stating their level of engagement or dependency on the platform, what language(s) they use when using social media, most useful social media platform they use for learning English, providing insights into their language skills or preferences in digital contexts.

In the second part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to indicate their views about the role of social media on various aspects of their English language learning, the extent of their language skill development, motivation, confidence level and attitudes towards using social media platforms. The questionnaire was designed using the Likert type scale which ranges from 'Strongly disagree' to 'Strongly Agree' degree which facilitates the respondents to answer the question items easily.

The Likert scale questionnaire contained 20 items about the role of social media platforms including students' feeling about the use of social media for learning English and their language skill development. The questionnaire statements were adapted from Sharma (2019), Altam (2020). The questionnaire was written in Arabic to avoid any student misinterpretation or bias while answering the questionnaire.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of the study involved a Likert five-point scale which ranges from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", which was used to examine participants' responses to questionnaire statements. Calculations of means, standard deviations were obtained through Microsoft Excel to determine the perceptions of the respondents according to each item on the questionnaire. The interpretation of the five-point scale of the questionnaire was as in the following table (1):

Level of agreement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
Points	1	2	3	4	5
Weighted average of the five points Likert scale	1.00 – 1.80	1.81 – 2.60	2.61 – 3.40	3.41 – 4.20	4.21 – 5.00
Level of interpretation	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high

## 4. Findings

### Part I: Students' personal information on social media

Item	Options	Frequency (n = 55)	Percentage (%)
<b>1. Gender</b>	Male	33	60%
	Female	22	40%
<b>2. Do you use social media for learning English ?</b>	Yes	44	80%
	No	11	20%
<b>3. Which platforms do you use for learning English ?</b>	Facebook	33	60%
	YouTube	12	22%
	TikTok	2	3%
	WhatsApp	8	15%
<b>4. How long have you been using Facebook ?</b>	Less than 9 months	12	22%

	More than 1 year	23	42%
	Around 2 years	17	31%
	3 years or more	3	5%
<b>5. Languages used on social media</b>	English	11	20%
	Arabic	29	53%
	English and Arabic	15	27%
	Other	0	0%
<b>6. Frequency of using social media to learn English</b>	Daily	41	75%
	Every Other Day	8	14%
	Weekly	4	7%
	Monthly	2	4%
	Never	0	0%
<b>7. Most useful social media platform for learning English</b>	Facebook	36	65%
	YouTube	15	27%
	TikTok	0	0%
	WhatsApp	4	8%
	I do not use social media for learning	0	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table (2)****1–Students' personal information on social media**

As illustrated in table (2), the findings obtained from the first part of the questionnaire involved secondary school students' demographic information and their habits of social media use in (EFL) learning. The sample of the study included

55 students accounting for 60% males and 40% females. The findings showed that the majority (80%) of students used social media platforms for learning English, indicating a high level of engagement. Facebook was the most frequently used and most useful social platform for learning as perceived by 60% and 65% of students respectively indicating a high level of dominance. Moreover, around 75% of students used social media almost daily for English learning, representing a strong habit of engagement and indicating a regular use of social media. The study also found that more than half of (53%) the students use Arabic language when using social media. However, about 47% of the participants use English or a mix of English and Arabic when using social media. The findings also showed that most students (73%) had been using Facebook for more than 1 year, indicating their continuous exposure to using Facebook. However, other social platforms, such as, TikTok was found to have a minimal usage of (3%) and was not perceived useful by all participants (0%), indicating a low level of use, unlike other social platforms such as YouTube and Facebook.

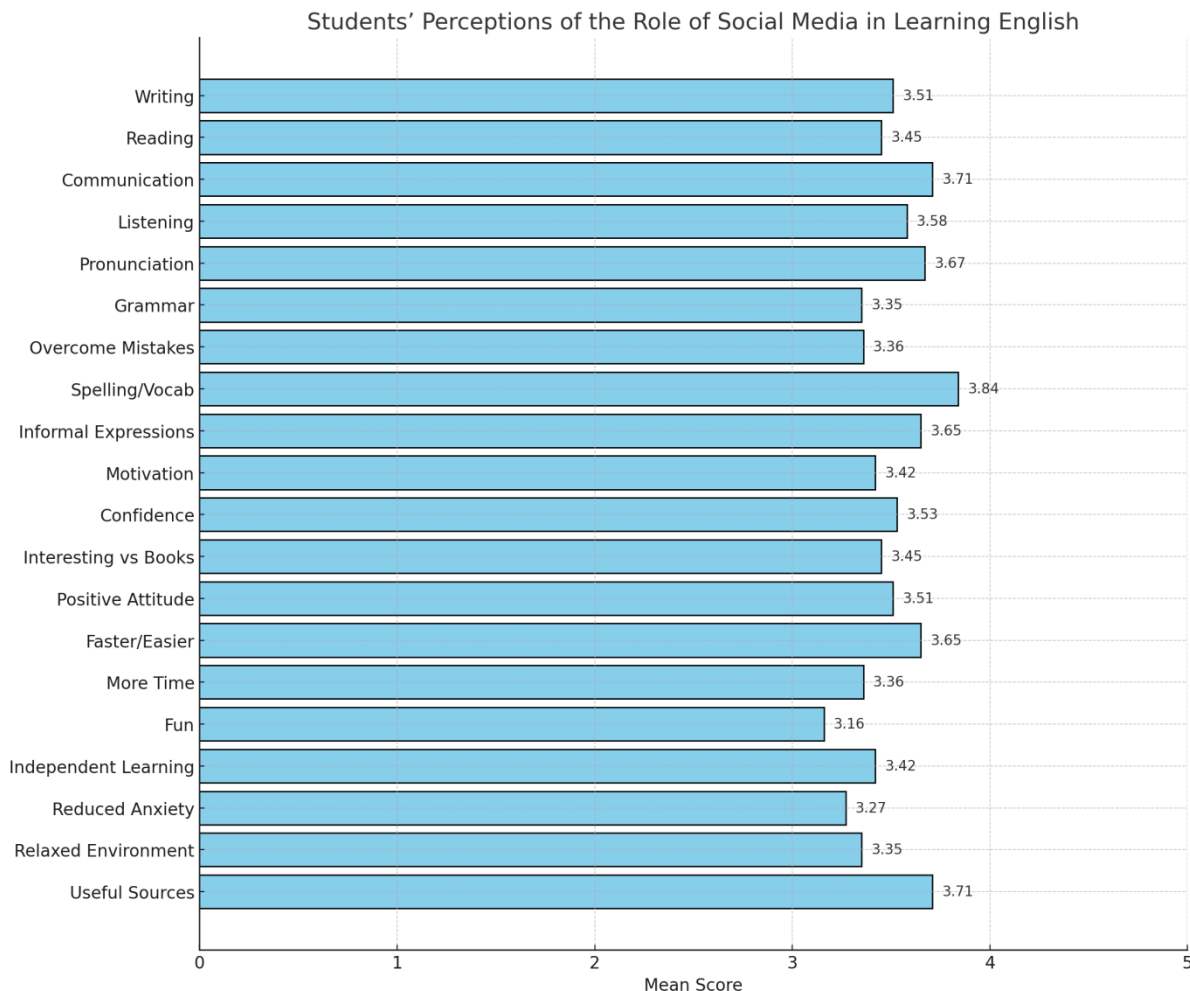
Overall, social media was perceived by secondary school students as a useful EFL learning tool, more specifically with the use of Facebook and YouTube being the most effective social learning tools suggesting that students today are digital natives.

## Part II Students' Perceptions of the Role of Social Media in Learning English

The role of social media in learning English	Mean	S.DV	Rank	Level
1) social media has improved my writing skill in English	3.51	1.25	9	High
2) social media has improved my reading skill in English	3.45	1.19	11	High
3) social media has improved my English communication skills.	3.71	1.20	2	High
4) social media has improved my listening skill in English	3.58	1.22	7	High
5) social media has improved my pronunciation skill in English	3.67	1.25	4	High
6) social media has improved my grammar skill in English	3.35	1.30	17	Moderate
7) social media has helped me overcome my language mistakes.	3.36	1.27	15	Moderate
8) Social media has improved my spelling and vocabulary.	3.84	1.14	1	High
9) Social media has exposed me to everyday and informal English expressions	3.65	1.25	5	High
10) social media has increased my motivation to communicate in English.	3.42	1.17	13	High
11) social media has increased my confidence level to communicate in English.	3.53	1.22	8	High
12) social media makes learning English more interesting than printed books	3.45	1.25	11	High

13) I have a positive attitude towards the use of social media for learning English	3.51	1.33	9	High
14) social media makes learning English easier and faster.	3.65	1.30	5	High
15) social media has encouraged me to spend more time in learning English.	3.36	1.24	15	Moderate
16) Learning English through social media is fun and pleasing.	3.16	1.35	20	Moderate
17) Learning English through social media reinforces self-independent learning.	3.42	1.27	13	High
18) Social media reduces my anxiety towards EFL learning.	3.27	1.34	19	Moderate
19) Social media offers a more relaxed and stress-free language learning environment.	3.35	1.19	17	Moderate
20) Social media offers a wide range of useful sources for learning English.	3.71	1.27	2	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>1.26</b>		<b>High</b>

Table (3)

**Figure (1) : Students' perceptions of the role of social media in learning English**

## 2. Students' personal information on social media.

As shown in table (3) the majority of the participants indicated a high positive attitude towards the role of social media in learning English with an overall ( $M = 3.51$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ) showing a general agreement with the role of social media in improving their English language skills.

The findings revealed that the highest mean scores were found in statement (8) vocabulary & spelling development with ( $M=3.84$ ,  $SD=1.14$ ), followed by statement (3) communication skills with ( $M=3.71$ ,  $SD=1.20$ ), and followed by statement (5) pronunciation with ( $M=3.67$ ,  $SD=1.25$ ) as the key language skills improved through the use of



social media. Further to that, statement (20) Accessing to a variety of useful learning sources was perceived by secondary school students as highly appreciated with (Mean = 3.71, SD=1.27) indicating their easy accessibility to various English learning content available on social media. Moreover, the findings also showed that other language statements regarding language skills improvement such as writing, listening and reading, were moderately developed through the use of social media with (Means between 3.4 and 3.6), indicating a moderate level of improvement in these language aspects as perceived by the participants.

In addition, participants reported that social media platforms increased their motivation with (M = 3.42, SD=1.17), maximized their confidence with (M = 3.53, SD=1.22), and arouse their interest with (M = 3.45, SD=1.25) in English language learning. They also indicated their positive attitudes towards the role of social media in language learning with (M = 3.51, SD=1.33) and that social media was more engaging than printed books with (M = 3.45, SD=1.25).

However, the lowest mean score was in statement (6) regarding the development of grammar with (M = 3.35, SD=1.30). This macro-skill, therefore, may need more emphasis on explicit language instruction, which social media platforms may not always make up for it.

On the whole, students' attitudes were highly positive towards the role of social media in language learning. although many students indicated the effectiveness of social media in improving their vocabulary performance, communication skills, and access to resources, there seems less agreement towards its role to reduce anxiety, improve grammar, or make language learning enjoyable.

## 5. Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that students generally had a high positive attitude about the role of social media in learning English, with an overall M= 3.51. It can be suggested that while social media cannot compensate for traditional classroom instruction, it has a supportive and supplementary role in improving students' English language skills. The finding of this study is similar to the finding of

Asiri and Alqarni (2015) ; Salih and Elsayed (2018) who indicated that students favored the use of social media not only to form social groups, but also to fulfill their educational needs and had a positive attitude towards the use of social media on their English language learning.

Further to that, the finding of the study showed that secondary school students indicated the role of social media was helpful in improving their spelling and vocabulary skills with ( $M = 3.84$ ), communication skills ( $M = 3.71$ ), and pronunciation ( $M = 3.67$ ). It can be interpreted that those students were regularly exposed to informal and more authentic English content through the use of social media platforms, which helped improve their spelling and vocabulary skills, communication and pronunciation in natural and engaging settings.. Therefore, this finding is in similar to the findings of Faryadi's (2017) ; and (abbasova, (2016 ) who found that the use of social media improved students' proficiency of English and helped them enrich their vocabulary and literacy skills.

Furthermore, the findings also showed that students' language skills of listening with ( $M = 3.58$ ) and writing with ( $M = 3.51$ ) were developed considerably due to the role of social media use. This finding is, therefore, similar to the result of Khan et al (2016) who showed that social media helped to enhance the four basic skills of English language i.e. Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing and similarly, Vocabulary building and Grammar competency of EFL learners

However, the findings of the study revealed that students' grammar skill ( $M = 3.35$ ) and overcoming language mistakes with ( $M = 3.36$ ) were moderately improved within the low level of social media effect. It can be implied that secondary school students may have not been exposed to sufficient explicit input on grammatical instruction through the use of social media platforms. Therefore, the finding of this study is similar to the finding of Kabilan, Ahmad, & Abidin, (2010) who found that social media led to a limited improvement in grammar and error correction , requiring more additional and explicit formal instruction.

In addition to that, secondary school students agreed that social media helped make learning English easier and faster with ( $M = 3.65$ ). They also indicated that social media increased their level of confidence ( $M = 3.53$ ) and motivation ( $M = 3.42$ ) to communicate in English. The finding of this study aligns with the finding of Faryadi's (2017) who found that the use of social media improved the students' proficiency of English and helped them enrich their vocabulary and had a positive influence on their attitudes, confidence, satisfaction, motivation, and perceptions of English language acquisition. This finding is also similar to the finding of Blattner & Fiori, (2009)

who found that social media enhanced learners' motivation and increased their confidence by providing low-pressure environments.

Students also indicated that the role of social media helped them reduce anxiety ( $M = 3.27$ ) and provided a stress-free learning environment ( $M = 3.35$ ) was only slightly positive. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Belal, (2014) who found that the use of social media reduced students' anxiety and improved their language production.

Moreover, the findings also indicated that social media may have offered language students autonomy and self-independence ( $M = 3.42$ ), not all students may be comfortable with or ready for fully self-directed learning. This finding is in consistent with the findings of Sulaiman, (2019) ; Lai, (2015) who found that students' autonomy was linked to social media which improved motivation and sustained language practice outside formal educational settings.

Finally, the findings indicate that social media provided secondary school students with a wide range of useful sources ( $M = 3.71$ ). It can be deduced that the strength of social media as an aiding learning tool can expose students to a wide range of language input in English, which exposes them to real-world content that is beyond what printed textbooks can offer. This view is therefore, supported by Haque, (2023); Khan et al., (2016) who stated that social platforms offer its users enough

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exposure to native language input, supporting listening, writing, pronunciation, and speaking skills

### **Limitations of the Study**

While the findings are insightful and promising, some limitations must be acknowledged:

First, the Third year secondary school students' perceptions do not always reflect actual language improvement. Further to that, the effects of social media on language learning may vary depending on the specific platform or type of content consumed. Learners' digital literacy and self-discipline may affect how effectively they use social media for learning. Despite the valuable findings obtained from this study, a number of limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study was carried out on secondary school students, which restricted the generalizability of the results to other groups of learners, such as, university students, or adult learners in different contexts. Second, the information collected was based on self-reported questionnaire, which could be influenced by social bias or incorrect self-assessment, which may not properly reflect students' actual improvements in their English language proficiency. Further to that, the nature of the study aimed to examine students' views at one single point in time, which makes it difficult to determine whether the role of social media as perceived by students was maintained over the long term. The lack of objective measures to assess language learning outcomes was another limitation since the study did not carry out assessments such as writing tests, vocabulary activities, or pronunciation testing that could provide a significant evidence of the students' language improvement. Moreover, the context of the study, where the study was conducted within a specific geographical setting, may restrict the generalizability of the findings to different cultural or educational institutions.

### **Conclusion**

This exploratory study intended to explore the third year secondary school students' perceptions about the role of social media in developing English language learning.

It adopted an adapted questionnaire to collect data from students in order to see how social media can affect various aspects of language skills, such as, students' language skill improvement, motivation, confidence, and their learning attitudes. The findings of the study showed that secondary school students generally viewed social media platforms as an important learning resource for language learning which improved their vocabulary, communication, pronunciation, and listening skills. The findings of the study also indicated that the role of these social media platforms increased students' motivation and reduced their anxiety level when using social media for learning. However, students perceived the role of social media in improving their grammar and error correction as limited and weak. Furthermore, although many students preferred learning through social media over traditional learning methods, enjoyment levels varied considerably, indicating various learners' preferences.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. language teachers should integrate social media into their EFL curriculum, including social media activities through social platforms to reinforce students' vocabulary learning, communication skills, and target language cultural.
2. language teachers should adopt social media as a supplementary learning tool, not as a substitute for classroom instruction : although social media is essential in language learning, it should complement, not replace printed textbooks or formal classroom instruction, particularly in learning grammar rules and writing skills.
- 3– language teachers should provide secondary school students with feedback and guidance on the learning uses of social media. They should train students on how to use social media effectively for language learning, highlighting the educational value of interaction and content selection.
- 4– language teachers should address the issue of student anxiety. They should incorporate social media tools with additional supportive classroom practices that directly address students' language learning anxiety.

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5– language teachers should encourage students 'critical engagement. They should motivate students to reflect on their social media experiences and find the English content that helps improve language learning and sparks students' personal interests.

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